

Project A.R.T.: When good projects go bad



NIKI JONES
Assistant A&E Editor

In a city of filth and violence, where artists choose to perform murderous music, Project A.R.T. will attempt to change lives with its "Sound of Peace" program today. This year Project A.R.T.'s artist panel will discuss our city's rising violence.

Student Council gave them \$19,000 to do it. So what should we expect for \$19,000? Well apparently, not much.

Granted there's hip-hop legend KRS-1, but he's

only speaking for an hour. Unfortunately, he won't be performing. The other seven hours of entertainment could be found at your local dive bar's amateur night or a drunken karaoke extravaganza.

Surprisingly, most of the artists were chosen from auditions at the beginning of September. The "major" acts includes Kelz, a local artist who's "hit song," "Jeans Low" has an annoying chorus of "My jeans low, my jeans low, my jeans low" (big surprise, right?). I find it hard to use the word artist in the same sentence with his pathetic name. Frankly, Kelz is an embarrassment for all Detroit

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Cursive play the Magic Stick



ZACH NORTON
Chief Copy Editor

Last night's Cursive show was moved from the 1,000-capacity Majestic to the neighboring Magic Stick, capacity 210. If that's not an indication of fans' reaction to their latest album, I don't know what is.

The sad part is the new songs sounded much bet-

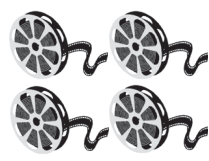
ter live than on the "Happy Hollow" CD.

Cursive opened the show with "So-So Gigolo" from their new album. Then they gave fans what they really wanted to hear with two songs apiece from their two previous full-lengths, "The Ugly Organ" and "Domestica."

The show featured a keyboardist, horn section and cellist (not former band member Gretta Cohn) in addition to the

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"Style Wars"



Originally a PBS documentary, "Style Wars" presents the many sides of graffiti in New York circa 1982. The film features hip-hop culture, the establishment, a mass-transit system and lots of spray paint.

Is graffiti art or a nuisance? The film shows how style, namely graffiti, spreads through society. It plagues some, but is a creative release for others.

Throughout the film, images of tagged-trains flow into heart-to-hearts about the positive and negative aspects of graffiti.

Seen, Skeme, IztheWiz and Kase2 are just a few who offer their thoughts on tagging. Meanwhile, the establishment, Mayor Edward Koch and a transit-system rep bash the art.

"I didn't realize that it had such a deep meaning to them," said a woman watching a wall get tagged. Almost immediately the film cuts to the mass transit rep complaining about the graffiti removal solution

ruining the trains.

"Style Wars" takes on "bombing" – not the tagged remains – but the talent involved. There are blacks, whites and just about every shade in between leaving their mark on New York society. Numerous accents tell the story of New York's infamous street art. There's even a talented graff-er who lost his arm in 'Nam.

Classic hip-hop tracks break up the monotony of interviews. Familiar songs by The Sugar Hill Gang, The Treacherous Three, The Fearless Four, Grand Master Flash, The Furious Five and others can be heard throughout the film.

The narrator takes it back to the '70s and talks about what it means to rock in the different elements. The film also touches on break dancing, another element of hip-hop. Crazy Legs and others B-boys even bust-a-move in the film.

DVD features include new interviews, "No Jumper

Eastern Market's Mantra Underground relocates to old Chinatown

BRANDI TRAPP
Assistant News Editor

There were drag queens, antiques, cocktails and pets. This is what happens when an antique store relocates? It seemed like a cross between a circus and a party. But this isn't any antique store, this is Mantra.

Formally known as Mantra Underground, the store was located in the basement of Eastern Market's Antique Mall for four and a half years.

Walking into the store is like walking into chaos. There is so much packed into every square inch. Initially it might be intimidating. But something catches the eye, and suddenly it all makes sense.

"Our inspiration was 'Pee-wee's Playhouse,'" said John Briggs, a partner at Mantra. "Other antique stores are stuffy, and we want Mantra to be fun."

Fun is an understatement. Mantra is a cornucopia of all the coolest, most bizarre stuff from every decade, all in one store that used to be a pet shop.

"We went to the thrift stores and bought all the cool stuff. So you (the customer) don't have to drive all over town looking for something unique. It's all right here," said Briggs. "If you're coming for a garage sale this isn't the place."

On Tuesday, Greg Sobieraj, owner of Mantra, was still cleaning the mess from the store's grand opening.

"Everything in here is my favorite, I bought it," Sobieraj said. "There's got to be a uniqueness or quirkiness to it." He was able to show The South End some items that came with a funny story; like the children's bar for example.

"It's a red, 1950s, laminate, wrought iron, to-scale retro-bar for children. Something like this wouldn't fly these days because parents would accuse the toy company of encouraging children to drink," said Sobieraj while laughing.

"I tell people I bought it at Frank Sinatra's garage sale and that he bought it for his kids Nancy and Frank Jr."

He said people usually don't believe that story.

"I don't even remember where I got it," he said.

He also had a pair of 10-inch tall black, patent leather high heels he bought at the Council of the Blind. "I got them in some western suburb," Sobieraj said. "I like to think they belonged to a drag queen."

There was also a 1960's Sylvania "Halo Vision" television.

"I bought it at the Royal Oak Flea Market," Sobieraj said. "I like it because it's got sort of that Asian-inspired design."

A particularly peculiar item was a mug wearing cowboy boots. "I don't remember where that's from either," said Sobieraj.

Looking for a gift with history? Mantra can hook you up.

Mantra is located at 3401 Cass Ave. in Detroit (formerly Birdtown Pet Shop), at the corner of Cass Avenue and Peterboro Street, one block west of Woodward Avenue. Current hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



LINDSEY MULIOLIS / THE SOUTH END

Eastern Market's Mantra Underground has moved to old Chinatown, and is now simply Mantra. You can find a lot of cool stuff there.

LINDSEY MULIOLIS / THE SOUTH END



Okami Capcom

Playstation 2



Okami is set in Nippon, a place based on Japanese myths and history where everything looks like an ink-and-water-color print. The player assumes the role of Amaterasu, the Shinto sun goddess, in the form of a white wolf. ("Okami" is a pun meaning either "wolf" or "god," depending on how it's written.)

Nippon is in trouble — demons walk the land, and areas that were once beautiful are now dark and treacherous. In her quest to restore peace, Amaterasu fights evil and assists the denizens of Nippon with their various chores.

The game's best feature is the Celestial Brush, which is

used as a tool and a weapon. Hold down the R1 button and the world quite literally becomes a scroll. At this point, players can draw sword-mimicking slashes while in battle, fix a broken waterwheel with a quick scribble or even bring out the sun (Amaterasu is a sun goddess, after all).

Amaterasu's travel companion Issun, a bug-sized artist with a big mouth, serves as "Ammy's" voice and guide so he can steal Celestial Brush techniques. Issun and the rest of the colorful, witty characters steal the show. They speak in a singsong babble and often treat Amaterasu like an animal rather than a goddess.



The gameplay is equal parts action and RPG. Throughout, Amaterasu earns praise by helping villagers, hones her combat skills and learns new Celestial Brush techniques. The game is a treat for the eyes and simply fun to play.

Emily Roberts

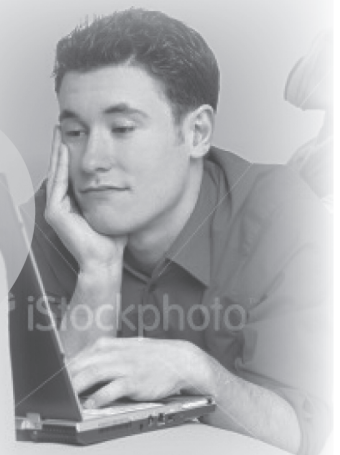
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