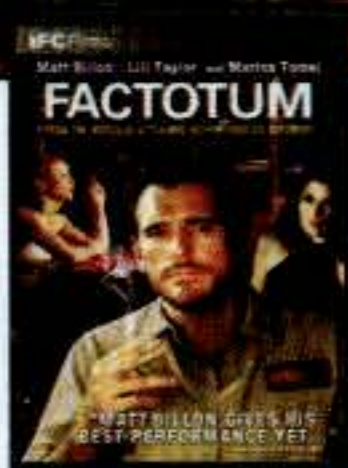


MISC. REVIEWS



FACTOTUM
IFC FILMS
RATED R



Often, one's first experience with Charles Bukowski's work is much like their first experience with sex: a bit uncomfortable and embarrassing, requiring the liberal use of alcohol, and ultimately, when all is said and done, depressing. Maybe that was just me, and perhaps that's why I also count myself among Mr. Bukowski's acolytes. The film adaptation of his second novel, *Factotum*, follows his alter ego, the freewheeling would-be author Henry Chinaski (Matt Dillon) from dilapidated bar to dilapidated bar, from explosive woman (Lili Taylor) to explosive woman (Marisa Tomei), and, with unmitigated frequency, from crummy job to crummy job.

Portraying the quasi-fictional Chinaski seems a particular challenge, as his most brazen character traits seem to outweigh his goals, pigeonholing him as simply a lazy lout, alcoholic and misogynist. But as Bukowski's body of work will attest, these aspects are merely a means to an end; the self-promoted and exaggerated blemishes of an author whose main ambitions were the pursuit of artistry and true love. Dillon performs his role with ennui and detachment, letting the inherent humor and horror of Chinaski's drunken exploits drift around him, ramshackle, like so much detritus. Whereas Mickey Rourke's 1987 portrayal of Chinaski in Barbet Schroeder's *Barfly* was cartoonish and bigger than life, Dillon's unsettling quiet and rare, unexpected vitriol expertly convey the character's complexity. This is a credit to Norwegian director Brent Hamer's open style, which allows the film to breathe: Thoughts are relayed through facial expression and body language more so than dialogue. The results are striking, and perhaps closer to Bukowski's vision than Schroeder's riveting-but-flawed take on the subject matter.

For many, *Factotum* will be seen as a mirthless cautionary tale, depressing and disturbing. But underneath the piles of spent racing forms, wet cigarette butts, dried vomit and dirty underwear lies a truly heroic vision: that his epitaph, "Don't Try," is just another way of saying, "Do."

Maurice Spencer Teilmann



FART PARTY
BY JULIA WERTZ
WWW.FARTPARTY.ORG

If a black hoodie and an iPod are your uniform, chances are you'll find something to relate to in Julia Wertz's *Fart Party*. In this autobiographical comic, Wertz's greatest asset is her fearlessness; she bares all, divulging what she does in the shower; tackling difficult questions such as, "When do I change my MySpace profile to 'single?'" and illustrating her most violent fantasies such as in "Don't Fucking Talk to Me," in which she rips the head off an intrusive weirdo and shits down his neck. The art won't have you mistaking her for Michelangelo, but the simple style enhances the intimacy of the anecdotal tales of San Francisco scenester life.

James Barone



GREEN DAY: UNDER REVIEW 1995 - 2000
MUSIC VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS
NOT RATED

Between chart-topping successes *Dookie* (1994) and *American Idiot* (2004), Green Day released three albums that were comparative failures, sales-wise. However, as *Green Day: Under Review 1995 - 2000* postulates, this decade of relative obscurity was necessary for the band's songwriting growth. The unauthorized documentary takes a closer look at *Insomniac*, *Nimrod* and *Warning*, with various music journalists, DJs and hangers on weighing in with varying opinions. Unlike some of the other *Under Review* titles, *Green Day* does not suffer from a lack of original interviews, and the interviewees aren't only there to verbally fellate the band; honest criticism balances out the hyperbole. Green Day enthusiasts and pop culture junkies take note.

Maurice Spencer Teilmann



LET ME TELL YOU WHERE TO STICK IT
BY JAY HOWELL AND
AUDREY ERICKSON
MT. ST. MTN.

The thing about Jay Howell zines is that the titles tend to be pretty accurate. His previous zine, *Dogs and Dog Information*, included only three things: a bunch of black-and-white drawings of dogs, a brief lesson on "How to Kick a Dog's Ass" and some bullet points about dogs' "wangs." His latest work, a collaboration with Audrey Erickson, is split into two halves: *Let Me Tell You Where to Stick It* on one end, and *Let Me Tell You Where Not to Stick It* on the other. And as promised, included inside are a bunch of illustrations detailing where to stick your own wang ("a bag of newborn bunnies," "somebody's vagina") and where not to stick it ("an owl's nest" "an ice-gina"). Truly brilliant.

Daniel Taylor



LOOK AT MY STRIPED SHIRT!
BY THE PHAT PHREE
BROADWAY

From the overzealous cell phone salesman to the incredibly hot, incredibly uninterested bartender, *Look at my Striped Shirt!*—by comedic group The Phat Phree—places you in the shoes of "the people you love to hate." The concept's funny; hearing a ticket-happy cop admit his power trip's rooted in his unpopular adolescence *should* be entertaining. But besides a few exceptions—a trapped frog telling a 13-year-old "shouldn't you be playing football or masturbating by now" had me chuckling—the book doesn't sustain interest for 170 pages. If hearing the thought process of that guy who constantly discusses fantasy football tickles your fancy, just visit www.thephatphree.com for free, because this book's not worth your hard-earned cheddar.

Matt St. John