

Get ready for an amazing adventure from Pixar!

DMB rocks fans with new GrooGrux

OUR TAKE: ★★★★★☆

By Chris Ernst
Staff Writer

"GrooGrux" is a term coined to describe a band member's style and self. The name "Big Whiskey and the GrooGrux King" is Dave Matthews Band's tribute to deceased band member Le-Roi Moore. The album is full of love and energy and plenty of GrooGrux to go around. It's their first since 2005 and has definitely not been rushed. It has a slow-cooked quality of thoughtfulness and confidence rarely seen in today's industry of rapid-fire singles.

This album is definitely not an archive of singles and filler. Having so much success, the band can afford to do as they please, free from the pressures of executives and the need to establish themselves. Each member's love for their craft becomes apparent though their obvious skill.

There is a balance among the many instruments that is refreshing and interesting. It is not very often there are saxophones, trumpets and banjos on the radio.

Too often, bands are just the backup to the lead vocalist. The band has many solo moments, but do not stop jamming when Matthews starts singing.

Matthews himself is not an amazing singer. However, he does his job well. Like Bruce Springsteen, he puts it all out there and keeps the focus away from his lack of classical skills. Instead what draws the listener in is the overall combination of all the elements together.

Each song is different from the last, and the tempo rarely slows below a head-nodding jam. However, when it does, the calmer moments punctuate the faster ones.

One of the best songs in the album is "Shake Me Like a Monkey." Right from the get-go, the GrooGrux is there. After a moment of jamming, the song becomes more rock-inspired and guitar-heavy. It has some more traditional elements that make it accessible to even a casual fan, and should be instantly identifiable by any passer-by as Dave Matthews Band.

Another great song is "Alligator Pie." It is pretty light on lyrical content, but extra heavy on general awesomeness. If you're still confused about what GrooGrux is, listen to this song. There is banjo, a hint of harmonica and drums to spare.

Overall, it is a very solid album. It is one of the best so far of the year, and for good reason. There is never really any specific unifying theme beyond life, love and happiness, but many moments ring true and sweet.

FILM
<i>Up</i>
GENRE: Animation, Action
STARRING: Edward Asner and Jordan Nagai
DIRECTORS: Pete Docter and Bob Peterson
RATING: PG
RELEASED: May 29, 2009
OUR TAKE: ★★★★★★

By Robert Solomon
Contributing Writer

See a cantankerous old coot tie a bunch of balloons and fly away! Watch as this old timer is mercilessly henpecked by an overenthusiastic kid! Giggle at the talking dog! You might walk into *Up* expecting only these things, but what you will likely not expect is the emotional punch that it offers.

This is a movie about dreams, and how the failure of those closely held dreams can lead to life's greatest disappointments.

It's easy to overlook the fact that this is the first Pixar film to feature humans as the main characters. Before, Pixar could dress up a social class metaphor by having the lower class be literally rats, as in *Ratatouille*. It allows for a comfortable feeling of distance, leading to an emotional impact that rarely penetrates beyond the surface. With *Up*'s human characters and despite the questionable physics of the flying house, never has an animated movie in recent memory been more grounded in the trajectories of everyday life.

Carl Frederickson is a man nearing the end of a life of modest accomplishments. Recently widowed, Carl's deferment of childhood dreams of adventure has manifested itself as grouchy bitterness. At a crucial moment Carl

strikes a construction worker, who has nearly destroyed something that is precious to Carl, with his cane. When the cane is pulled back, we expect a bruise, or perhaps a large lump. This is animated movie for kids, right? Instead, we see a gash, and blood.

Up does not shy away from consequence, and rarely pulls its emotional punches. Carl is not introduced as an elderly man, but instead as a young child, meeting his future wife, Ellie, over a shared admiration of adventurer Charles Muntz. This is followed by a wordless montage of Carl and Ellie's life together, which manages to pack a lifetime into only a few short minutes. Expect to stifle a tear early. Despite Ellie's short time on screen, her presence lingers.

Now, one might be skeptical that such emotional flourishes are appropriate for an animated film, but Pixar has proven that contem-

plative moments of characterization do not harm the silly fun. In fact, they enhance it. It evokes a genuine affection.

In 3D, the depth of composition is emphasized, with cheesy "hand moving towards your face" effects being eschewed. When Carl's house finally arrives at its destination, the camera lingers on the landscape of Paradise Falls, letting its impact sink in, not through words, but through images. It is rare to see such assuredness in market-driven Hollywood cinema of sequels and remakes.

Even the talking dog gimmick, which could easily be imagined as disastrous, is handled adroitly with clever situations. How would a dog pour a bottle of champagne? It's funnier than you think.

Up is not just a triumph of animated film; it is a triumph of filmmaking, period. Pixar proves again to be a studio at the peak of their creative powers.

Drag Me To Hell thrills with gory humor

FILM
<i>Drag Me To Hell</i>
GENRE: Horror, Thriller
STARRING: Christine Brown and Justin Long
DIRECTOR: Sam Raimi
RATING: PG-13
RELEASED: May 29, 2009
OUR TAKE: ★★★★★☆

By Kenny Phillips
Staff Writer

There is a shadow that walks, screeches and howls in this world - this is the Lamia, the demon that terrorizes in the new Sam Raimi horror film *Drag Me to Hell*. Raimi brings ghastly to new heights in this tale of the black magic torment of Christine Brown.

Christine, played by Alison

Lohman, is a bank loan officer that has crossed the wrong crone—the evil-eyed Mrs. Ganush, played by Lorna Raver. After being informed by her supervisor that she should be less empathetic and make the difficult decisions, Christine rebukes the third loan extension of this aged homeowner and destroys her pride when she begs Christine for help. While assaulting Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Ganush incapacitates her, removes a simple coat button, gives it a powerful Romani curse and carefully returns it.

This curse summons the Lamia, which needs but three days before it is strong enough to drag its victim to Hell.

Christine's loving, yet skeptical, boyfriend Dr. Clay Dalton, portrayed by Justin Long, feels the need to go to any lengths for her in the name of love and seems to round out the academic view of

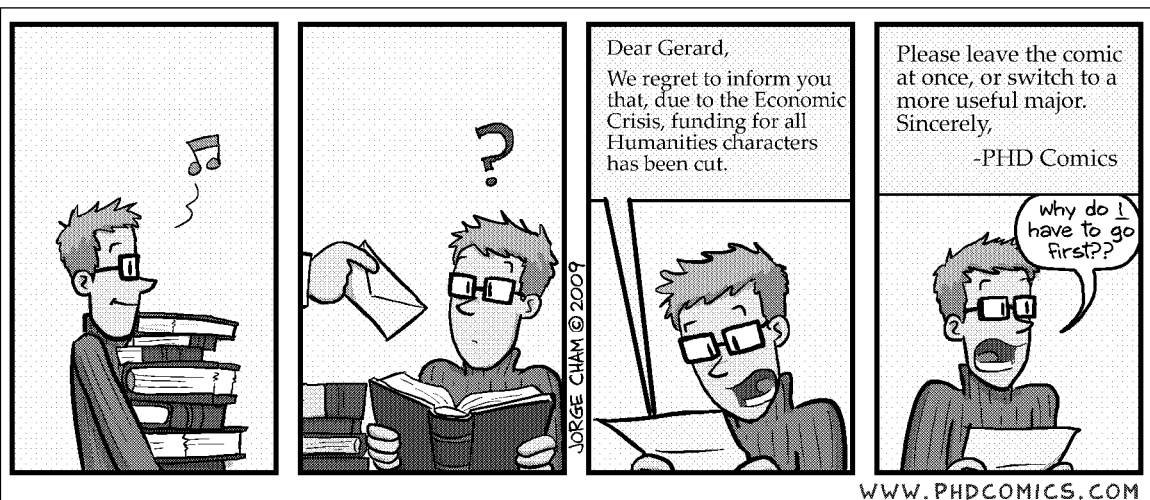
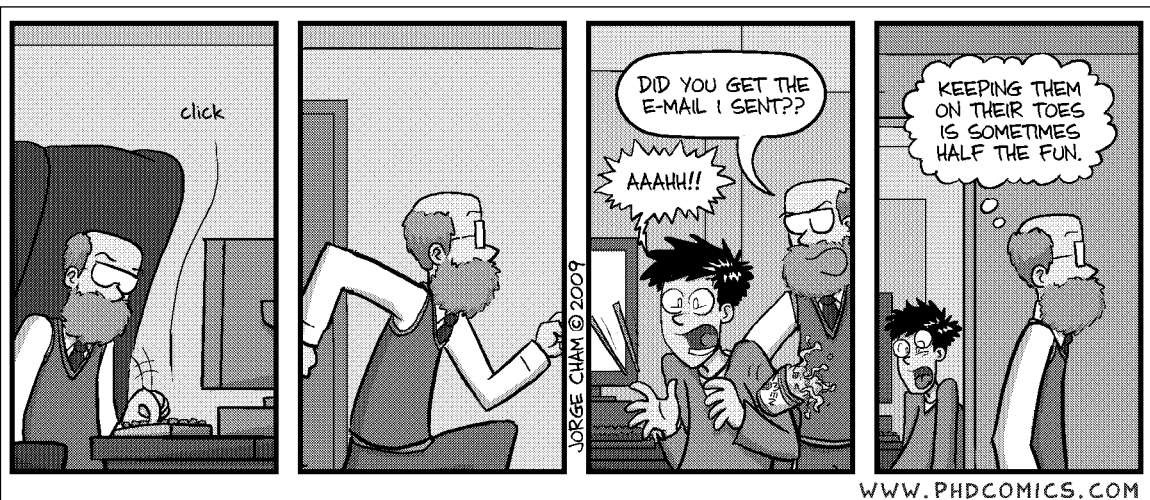
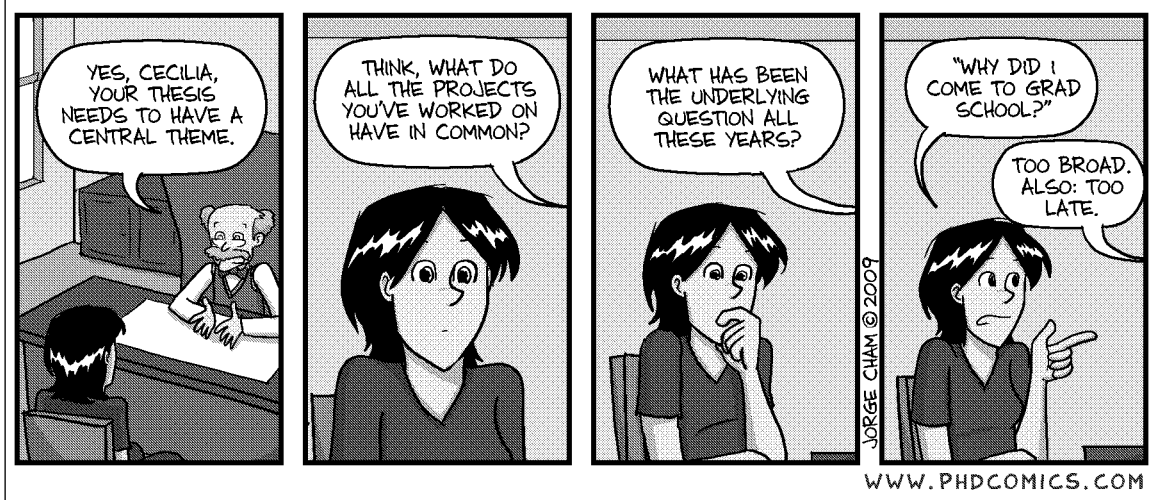
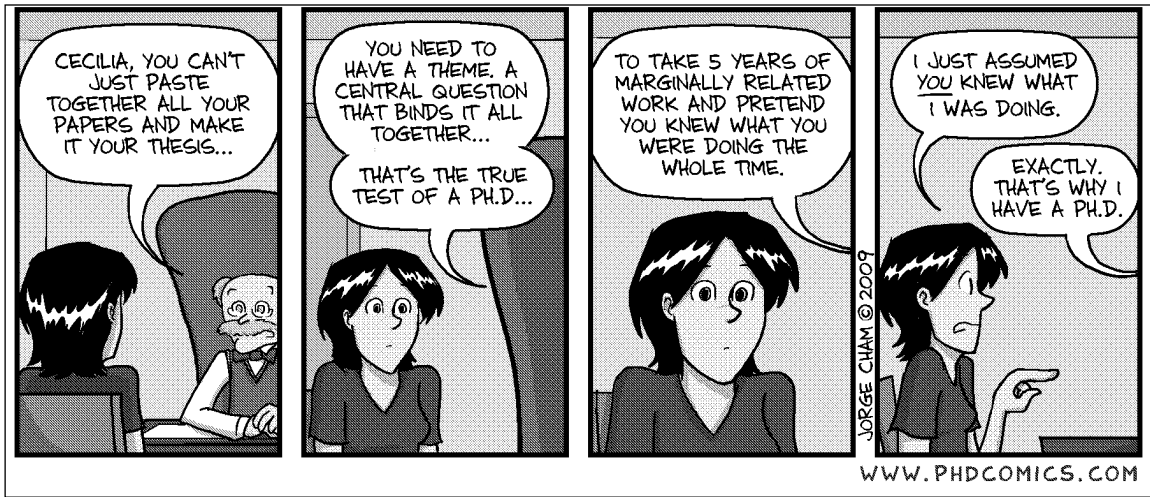
magic.

I can say that *Drag Me to Hell* is a great accomplishment of Sam Raimi's know-how in spooking the audience, from epic one-on-one struggles that peak the audience's anticipation, to the surprise horrors that slam the viewers to the dark corners of their minds where they to question every shadow.

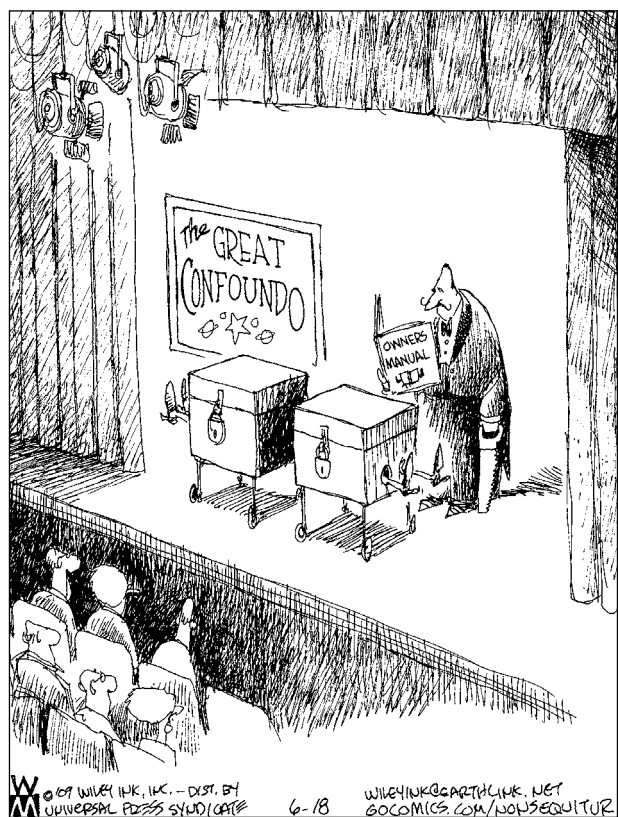
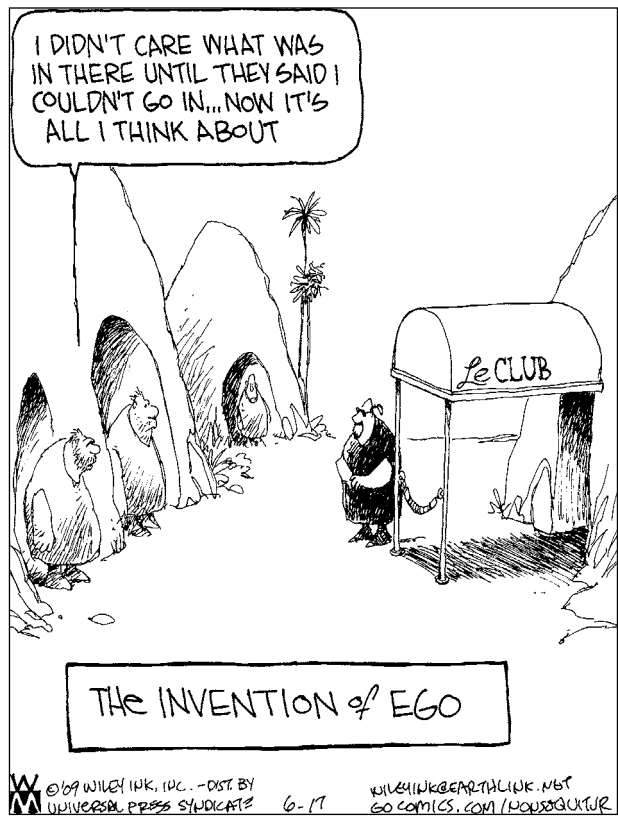
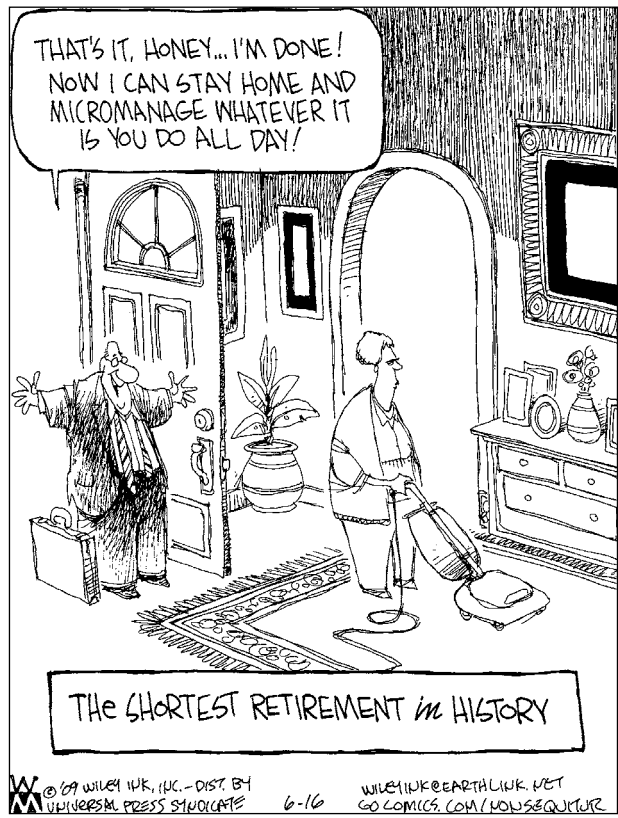
On top of this, the presentation of Christine's mental stress through gushing nosebleeds and the over-the-top anxiety gives a deep impression of how truly terrified she is. The special effects were of a suitable caliber for the film, making it a feast for the eyes that are brave enough to remain open. A gaggle of ghouls materializing in a séance and the massive number of baneful reappearances of creepy Mrs. Ganush are enough to make your head spin two pi radians.

PILED HIGHER & DEEPER BY JORGE CHAM

NON SEQUITUR BY WILEY



NON SEQUITUR BY WILEY



DILBERT® BY SCOTT ADAMS

