



GORDON P. SHUMWAY

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Why Not Ole Miss?

The phrase 'Wait till next year' has become so common in The Grove that I may vomit on command if I hear the words again. Seriously. Try me.

Year after year, the Rebels are predicted to finish near the bottom of the SEC. Even with a guy named **Eli Manning** running the offense, Ole Miss has never been seen as a contender by the mass media across the Southeast. Sure, they will sneak up on a nationally ranked powerhouse like Florida or Alabama every once in a while, but for the most part, we are the same Ole Miss.

The same Ole Miss that is the only team in the SEC Western Division yet to make an appearance in Atlanta for the SEC Championship. The same Ole Miss that has started out many seasons at 5-0 or 6-1 only to fall apart and finish a mediocre 7-4. Thanks **Cut**. The same Ole Miss that always has "outstanding" and "phenomenal" talent in practice but looks confused and overmatched once another team lines up across from them.

You get the idea. Always a bridesmaid, never a bride. The phrase 'Wait till next year' has become so common in The Grove that I may vomit on command if I hear the words again. Seriously. Try me.

Guess what, Rebel Fans? It's next year. **Head Coach Ed "Rehab's for Quitters" Orgeron** has managed to bring in a slew of playmakers to fix an otherwise broken record of a football program. Two of these players will have an immediate impact, this much we know so far.

Enter Quarterback **Brent Schaeffer**. The former Tennessee standout was released of his duties after his freshman year when a cell phone got the best of him and his emotions. You should see the other guy. I don't think the Ole Miss offensive line has to worry about protecting Schaeffer. He can hold his own.

A year at the College of Sequoias produced what was promised, a lot of great stats at the Junior College Level. In 2005, Schaeffer threw for 2,970 yards and 40 touchdowns. He can get it done on the ground as well, running for 860 yards and 10 touchdowns.

Enter **BenJarvus Green-Ellis**. The former Indiana Hoosier star was required to sit out a year and watch due to NCAA transfer rules. BJGV will be ready to continue his story on the field come September. As a ball carrier at Indiana, Green-Ellis rushed for 1,732 yards in two seasons.

The question still remains, will they produce? Hell, all he has to do is keep the offense on the field for longer than three downs and it will be an improvement from last year. That may be somewhat difficult if the running game gets halted. Ole Miss returns exactly one reception from last year at the wide receiving corps. Awesome.

But the real Ole Miss fans are not looking for improvement. The real Ole Miss fan wants all the glory. The real Ole Miss fan will be in the stadium an hour before kickoff instead of drinking mint juleps and eating caviar in The Grove in his stadium pants.

No more of this wait till next year crap. In fact, no more 'What have you done for me lately's' either. More like, "What have you done for me today?"

Just win, baby. And if you don't, at least hurt somebody. That's always fun to watch.

Gordon P. Shumway is the biggest, bestest, most super Rebel fan ever and he lives next door to you. See his website www.myspace.com/gordonpshumway



THE MODERN-DAY MUSICIAN PART ONE: REASON AND PURPOSE

by Bill Perry billmystery@hotmail.com

It seems that everywhere you look, musicians are either conforming to the sounds of today, or trying to break down barriers to establish a "new sound" amidst all the decadence we call music today.

Not to say there's not a great variety of good music today, which of course is a matter of taste and preference, but when you look at the state of popular music in this new millennium, the 21st century, it makes you wonder if this music now will be remembered and revered like Jazz, Blues, Rock, Country, and Hip-Hop were in the previous century.

Can we begin to compare, say, **Tupac Shakur** to **Miles Davis**? Will people speak of Tupac 50 years from now like we speak of him today? Will we discuss his body of work with the same reverence and respect we approach Miles' work? Well, considering that there are college courses that teach about Tupac's music and his life, I believe he will be remembered in such a fashion... but only time will truly tell!

Can we see traces of **Billie Holliday** in **Erykah Badu** or **Jill Scott**? Can our modern-day icons hold up to these legendary figures of music? I guess this is a matter of opinion and who you ask, but is there truly any "real" breakthroughs happening in music today, like when Be-Bop took over the Jazz scene in the 40's and 50's, or when **Jimi Hendrix** changed the way guitarists would approach that instrument after his avant-garde style? Well, if you're an optimist like me, you would like to believe that there is indeed a "new movement" emerging in the shadows of clubs and home studios throughout the world, especially with the internet in existence, which creates the widest musical variety humans have ever known... and it's steadily expanding!

I was having a casual conversation one evening with **Dennis Herring**, owner of the **Sweet Tea** studio and record label in Oxford, Miss., and I was rambling on about if we'll ever see another major breakthrough in music anytime soon, considering everyone seems to sound alike in a lot of ways, and he said that there's probably some kid somewhere in his or her room, rockin' out to themselves creating in private what will be as significant a change in music as **Charlie Parker** or **Jimi Hendrix** were in their lifetimes. I liked Herring's optimism about the whole thing, and his faith in musicians and their capabilities to expand and transcend beyond "the norm" and the ability to create something new... evolution is a fact in all things!

Getting back to the issue of popular music, during the times of **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** and **Ludwig van Beethoven**, their music was considered very popular, in the mainstream sense of the word, but their music was also profound and very

influential for future generations to grow from.

Can we truly grow from say, the lyrics of "Yeah" by **Usher**? Alright ladies, don't hate me for that... I dig some of **Usher**'s music. And not to say every song should hold within it some deep and profound message or statement buried in the music, but is it wrong to ask for a little substance from our artists?

By now I'm probably coming across sounding like a "purist" like Pulitzer Prize winning Jazz trumpeter **Wynton Marsalis** is accused of being because of his views on keeping Jazz music "real", but I'm trying to stress the importance of remembering the fact that music IS art first and foremost, and before you embark on any musical endeavors, you should always remember to maintain respect and humility for music... it's the only way you can grow as an artist.

Music is Divine! And as for the musicians who the public entrust to produce new and enlightening music, they must realize the importance in always trying to reach beyond oneself artistically, so they can produce something new. And the only way to do that is to look deep within you, as well as going against the "norm" and going through, not around, the conventional, orthodox styles of today. **In other words, we need a new musical revolution!**

As my father **Bill "Howl-N-Madd" Perry Sr.** puts it, music has the power to change the world around it, even during turbulent times. **Bob Marley**'s music got two opposing movements in his home country of Jamaica to join forces at one of his live concerts... and these two sides were killing each other at the time. But **Marley**'s music and positive outlook on humanity that rang through in his music inspired these feuding parties to lay down their differences, if for just one moment in time, to come together for this event. The power of music indeed!

And yes, there are those of us who see themselves as "the new movement" in music today, however pretentious and bold that may sound. Most artists in all genres of music see themselves as innovators, but frankly, you can still hear the "stylistic sameness" in every style of music that exists today, from Hip-Hop, Rock, and Jazz, to the "new schools" of music like Jungle, Techno, and Drum & Bass (*DnB), which the DJs of the world have claimed as their own "musical movement".

I struggle myself with trying to produce something new... it is an incredible task for all musicians to pursue. But if we don't try to look a little deeper into our sound, then we are forced to continue down the same paths that have already been traveled, and in turn become a generation of imitators.

For example, when I play jazz piano at any given event, I try to first "speak the language" of jazz musically to the best of my ability to establish a certain vibe, then I begin to search for a way to express Jazz piano from a "Generation X" perspective, while still maintaining the colors of Jazz.

And getting back to the DJs, I know and work with some DJs and I must say, they do seem to



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what's to come once they've made it, and this also creates a conflict of interest with wanting to succeed in the music industry. Becoming successful however does not legitimize your plight in becoming a "true musician" per se, but becoming successful in music enables you to inspire and entertain people beyond your own means of promoting your music to the masses.

And to be blunt, if you're "financially handicapped" (P.C. for "poor"...lol), you need to have some capital to build upon, enabling you to pursue your musical endeavors with more financial security for your efforts in promoting your sound to the world; your musical aspirations are only limited to your imagination.

Ultimately, if you truly desire to make music your life and a way of expressing yourself and your ideas, try to look for the Divinity in music.

What do I mean, you ask? Well, try to aspire for those rare moments when the music you hear around you takes you to that "other-worldly" place that only music can take you; when everything is "in the pocket" and the music is going smoothly. You can achieve this state of musical nirvana through performing music with pure passion as well as listening to music for its essence and how it makes you feel, rather than listening to a song simply because it's a "hit".

Remember when you were a kid and it didn't matter what you listened to, as long as it made you feel good you dug it? That's the innocence I'm asking you to "channel"...humble yourself before music like a child. Try to listen to music with your soul and your heart, as well as your ears, which many musicians tend to forget once they begin performing and recording music on a regular basis...even I have "lost touch" with that innocence at many stages of my musical development... every musician is susceptible to forgetting the essence of music.

We must all stay in the practice of maintaining humility in the presence of the divine entity, which is music! We must try to create with more substance and depth if we are to grow from our current creative stagnation in modern music. I'm trying to do my part by staying productive and maintaining love and respect for the art of sound. We must become "one with music", and in turn we become one with the universe through sound. Allow the Creator of the Universe to enter your soul through music, releasing sounds and visions within you that were once hidden from you.

So in closing my fellow musicians try to maintain a real sense of reason and purpose with your music. Music is only misunderstood to those who do not comprehend its true intent, which is to entertain, inspire, uplift, enlighten, and in its purest form, to simply be sound! I leave you with this quote I came across when I was reading the Autobiography of Miles Davis by Miles Davis and Quincy Troupe, "A musician's attitude is the music he plays". I bid you adieu fellow artists.

*Bill Perry, Jr. is from Abbeville, Mississippi and has played with **The Perrys**, **Enigma Jazz Project**, and **Stoneface**. Bill is currently playing keys in the jazz trio **Balance**.*

HOWLIN' WOLF IN GOOLSBY'S HAIR WORLD

by Chico Harris chico@oxfordland.net

The hair on the back of my neck had grown long enough to curl over like the high white tip of a big wave, so I walked over to **Goolsby's Hair World** to get that stuff cut off. **Goolsby's**, as you probably know, is the black-owned-and-populated barbershop across Jackson Avenue from the jail. It is one of the real Oxford places left in the wake of **James Food Center**, et al.

I expected to be the only white person in the joint, and I was. There were three barbers and four customers. The customers were all young teenagers, except for the last guy, who was in the last chair, getting a shock of white hair cut back.

He looked like **Howlin' Wolf**. I waited my turn and the first available chair was the one the look-a-like was getting out of. As I got my cut, he stayed by the chair talking with the barber working on me. I marveled at how much he looked like **Howlin' Wolf**. Everything. Shape of his head, starkness of his teeth and tint of his skin.

When the barber finished, I stood, looked the twin square-on and said, "You look like **Howlin' Wolf**."

The old black man said, "Who?"

"**Howlin' Wolf**," I said. "**Chester Burnett**."

He looked confused, so I quickly said, "They have a festival for him every year at West Point... that's where he's from folks are still making money off **Howlin' Wolf** and he been dead 40 years."

The old guy nodded. "Yeah," he said. "They still making money off **Presley**, too. Gobs of money."

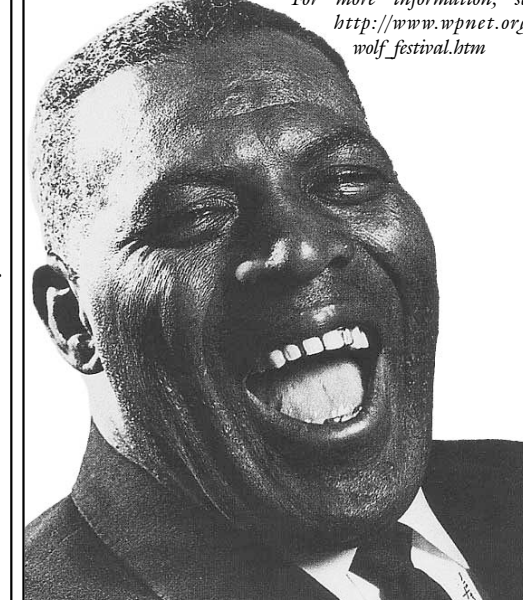
"There's lots of **Howlin' Wolf** records still being sold," I said. "I hope it's his family getting the cash."

He looked at me square-on for a moment and turned his head towards the windows and looked out where sunshine was blasting Jackson Avenue. I didn't know if the glistening in his eyes was emotion or the frailty of age.

"Somebody," he said, "is making gobs of money off **Presley**."

*Chico Harris is a writer originally from Tupelo, Mississippi. Contact him at chico@oxfordland.net The **Howlin' Wolf Blues Festival** is Friday, September 2, 2006 in West Point, Mississippi.*

For more information, see http://www.wpnet.org/wolf_festival.htm



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