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The Summer Obsession

This Is Where You Belong
Virgin Records
www.thesummerobsession.com

MIKE SMITH
Arts & Entertainment Writer

The Summer Obsession became one of the first bands to take advantage of MySpace's original purpose: to help showcase indie talent. However, even though they've used their site as a tool to garner a record deal with Virgin for their debut album, it still doesn't seem to change the fact that they sound like so many other groups that use that tactic.

While there's some solid musical talent evident in *This Is Where You Belong*, the band sticks to rather boring and predictable paths, and by track three, you'll find yourself looking at your watch. Nothing about the album pops out and makes you take notice, something that is a requirement in the overcrowded pop-punk

or emo genres. It's a typical fluff record that fits perfectly into a genre defined by cute boys and catchy hooks, but if you enjoy other generic pop-rock acts, I'm sure this one will be a worthwhile buy.

However, if you're looking for a little more substance, there are numerous other acts in the genre that have a hell of a lot more to say and use a lot more interesting musical composition to say it. As for me, the only way to save this record was to pop it into my Xbox 360 and use it as a soundtrack to zombie hunting in *Dead Rising*. At least then the monotonous tone of the album can become part of the background noise of some equally uninviting zombie groans.



Brandtson

Hello, Control
The Militia Group
www.brandtson.com

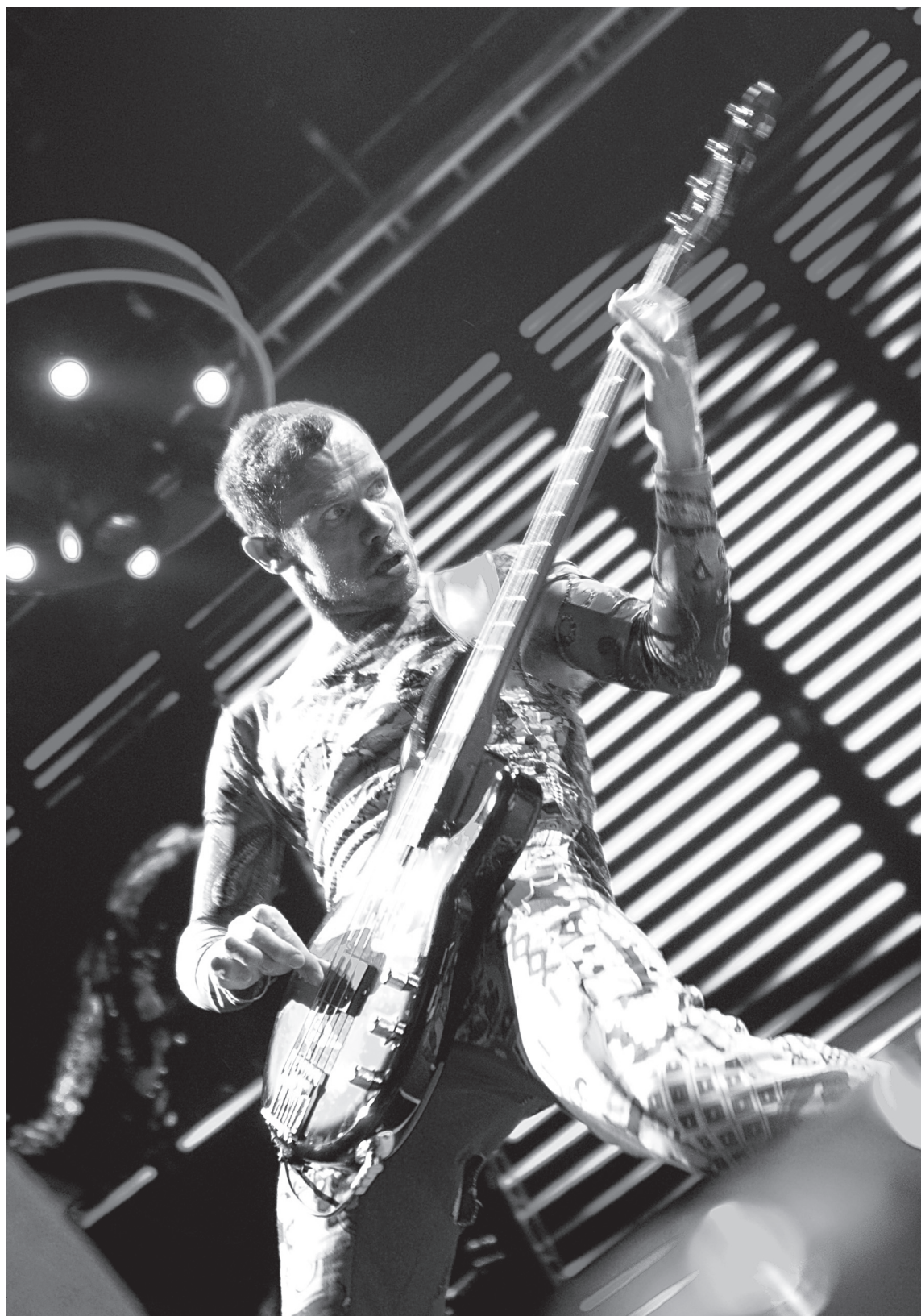
JOHN KMECH
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Generally, emo or indie rock labels don't register well in my book. It's just not my thing. Luckily for Brandtson, they've put out a record that's so full of catchy dance-rock that it's gotten stuck in my head. Due to this, they've escaped my indie rock chopping block and given me an emo CD I actually don't mind listening to now and again.

The group's original bassist left and was replaced by a member of a synth-rock group, and the influence shows on *Hello, Control*, Brandtson's sixth full-length album. Synthesizers and samples mix with clean melodic guitar lines, but Brandtson's real strength lies within the depths of their

vocalist Myk Porter. His voice carries the entire band's weight, which, for most of the album, generally takes a back seat to Porter's crooning. The album is also quite diverse, with tracks like "Parallels" sounding like a high school slow-dance song and "Stop Machine" boasting a harder-edged rock element mixed with hypnotic vibes.

Hello, Control is an excellent rock offering that will please fans of indie, emo and dance-pop. The band's sound has definitely changed due to the addition of pervasive (and sometimes annoying) electronic sounds, but the result is an album that you can't help but bob your head to.



KRYSTINA SULATYCKI

CHILLY PEPPERS? DAMN HOT! The Red Hot Chili Peppers rocked the house Sunday night at Rexall place. It was non-stop musical goodness all-round: hot vocals, sweet guitar riffs, bass awesomeness and wicked-ass drum-solos for all.