



Midland following Serj's fairytale

The Dallas rockers find themselves championed by the frontman of SOAD

musicpreview

Fair to Midland

With Serj Tankian
Sunday, 16 March at 8pm
Shaw Conference Centre

KATHLEEN BELL
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Progressive folk-metal: it's not a hyphenation you hear very often, but it's the self-appointed genre of Dallas-based Fair to Midland, one of the few bands signed to Serj Tankian's label, Serjical Strike Records.

From somewhere outside Fresno, California, Fair to Midland's bassist, Jon Dicken, takes a break from a friend's BBQ to warn would-be fans that the description shouldn't be taken too seriously, as the band was just messing around—kind of.

"I think that was more just a goof-off," Dicken explains in his easy Texas drawl. "We're all into folk music and metal music, all that kinda stuff. But I wouldn't describe ourselves as folk."

Yet underneath every weighty riff or thrashing drum beat lies the haunting swing of a sea shanty or the whisper of a ghostly folktale—though, that whisper often lifts and finishes as a scream. Track by track, the theme of a macabre fairytale rises from the album, and while Dicken swears it just kind of happened, once they compiled

the songs, they decided to succumb to its fantasy feel and name the record *Fables from the Mayfly: What I Tell You Three Times is True*.

"Every story had certain characters in it. They were kind of tall tales, or whatever. We were like, 'It would be a good idea to maybe make it a book of fables,'" Dicken explains. "It kinda worked itself out and ended up being kinda cool."

"Serj is actually a really, really laid back, smiley guy. A lot of people don't know that."

JON DICKEN
FAIR TO MIDLAND BASSIST

Recorded in Toronto, *Mayfly* is the band's first studio album. Although Dicken makes it seem like their sound just materialized like a ghoulish fairy godmother, as with any good fable, the process yielded a few lessons.

"It taught me that I need to—we all need to—practice a lot more," Dicken says with a chuckle. "We're very bad about second-guessing ourselves, you know, changing and re-writing and never being satisfied with certain songs or certain parts of songs. It kind of helped to just have more of an open mind about what we've already done as opposed to how we can make it better [...] being content with what's there."

It also helped to have David Bottrill

producing.

"We were all very impressed with his catalogue. He's worked with Tool, Peter Gabriel, [and] Muse, so we had a lot of confidence in him. It was our first time with a producer, and he had a lot of ways of being able to push us in the right direction, but not force us in the right direction, if that makes sense."

And if that wasn't enough, Serj Tankian, best known as System of a Down's ever-intense lead singer, was standing by in New Zealand, just an email away, ready to earn his executive producer credit.

"Serj is actually a really, really laid back, smiley guy. A lot of people don't know that," Dicken explains. "He wasn't really in the studio with us or anything. We just sent him MP3s over email, and then he would reply back saying, you know, 'This sounds good' or 'What about this for here?'"

Now they get to spend more time with the relaxed, smiling Tankian they know and love on a jaunt up and down North America in support of Tankian's solo project. But contrary to what their album would suggest, don't expect Fair to Midland to collect any new band-related lore or campfire tales out on the road.

"We're not really troublemakers. We've had a few bad luck instances, mostly car trouble, stuff like that. Your van breaks down, and your bus breaks down, and you're left stranded. Boring stuff. We're a pretty boring band."

MARKET RESEARCH INTERVIEWER



- Conduct interviews over the telephone from our centrally located call centre, accurately enter data into a computer system.
- Absolutely no sales involved.
- Position requires excellent telephone manner and typing skills.
- Flexible scheduling with shift choices.
- Company benefits plan.
- \$11.00 / hour to start, with performance based reviews.

Please mail, fax or email your resume to:
10147 – 104 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5J 0Z9
Fax: 780-485-5085
Email: HR@TrendResearch.ca
Phone: 780-485-6558

TREND HIRES ON AN ONGOING BASIS

PROFESSOR OF THE WEEK



TERRY GANNON
MATH 225

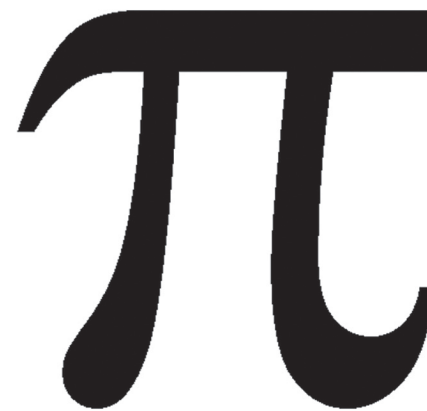
Professor Gannon lectures at a good pace, giving lots of examples and explaining at every step what he is doing. He tries to show us the importance of the course and its real life applications. Not only does he follow in the same order as the textbook – so it's easy to follow along – he includes in his notes ways to check that you're proceeding in the right direction, and tips such as easier methods to compute matrices to save time on exams.

Do you have a professor that's unique and shows their value of undergraduate teaching? Nominate them! Email avpa@su.ualberta.ca.

Nominations can also be picked up and submitted at any Faculty Association or InfoLink desk, or the SU executive offices front desk.



March 14 is Pi Day.



There will be no pie administered on this day.

GATEWAY ARTISTS
Distinguishing pastry from Pascal since 1910

culturaobscura

Rickrolling
www.internetisseriousbusiness.com

MIKE KENDRICK
Design & Production Editor

This week marks one of the most important anniversaries that the music industry and the Internet will ever share. On 12 March, 1988, Rick Astley's pop single "Never Gonna Give You Up" hit number one on the Billboard Hot 100 charts, laying the groundwork for a level of fame that Astley himself could never have predicted.

While its success on the charts was short-lived, Astley's tune has been resurrected within the Internet meme community as the Rickroll—one of the past year's most frustrating Web pranks.

Here's the setup: in the midst of a heated forum discussion, a poster enters the thread and posts a blind link that's seemingly relevant to the topic at hand. It could be a political debate, but more commonly, it's a thread devoted to the posting and appreciation of nudie pictures. The lure is that the video link posted will be an especially hot work of pornographic artistry. As the steam-

est part of the video is about to occur, it suddenly cuts to the "Never Gonna Give You Up" music video. What began as a recurring prank on 4chan has exploded into yet another inexplicable Internet phenomenon. It's become so big that it's become the theme of the global "Anon vs Scientology" protests, and has even grabbed some mild attention from a local Fox News source.

It's the web's version of getting Punk'd, and this week, it's bigger than ever. Keep your guard up when you click your next link because April Fool's hasn't come early—you've just been Rickroll'd.