

Welcome return of Pacific hip-hop

It's been exactly four years since Che Fu hit the top of the album charts with the multi-platinum selling *The Navigator* – and one imagines he might have been rolling his eyes at some of the drivel that's poured out of the New Zealand hip hop scene in his absence.

While the popularity of local hip hop and R&B has exploded of late, it's also brought with it a rather unwelcome "American-styled" flavour. But if anyone can return our local hip hop scene to its far more worthy Pacific roots, it will be Che Fu (God bless him).

This month he makes a welcome return with his latest

Music
Beneath the Radar – Che Fu
In stores now
Review by Catherine Westwood

album, *Beneath the Radar*, a mélange of hip hop, funk, reggae and soul.

The album's first single 2D, featuring Che's band the Krates, isn't my cup of tea, but will no doubt keep the underagers rocking down at the Viaduct.

Far more promising are the irresistibly funky beats of Lightwork, a track that has already earned its credibility with Che's live audience.

On the track, Che addresses

the "boast and brag" culture of many hip hop and R&B artists, and their negative effect on young people in his neighbourhood.

Other tracks to listen out for are Copylights, Control Tower and Mysterious Vibe, tracks that will make you beg for the arrival of summer.

The album's biggest miss is the morbid sounding Mock Battle featuring MCs Reborn and Fifth Child.

It sounds horrifically out of place among Che's otherwise chilled out grooves.

Beneath the Radar's strength lies in its lyrics. Every track has been carefully laid out and one

almost feels guilty for simply chilling out to the tunes.

But while lyrically strong, *Beneath the Radar* still falls short of *The Navigator*. In fact it could be *The Navigator's* older, more sensible sibling.

It simply lacks the catchiness that previous tracks like Misty Frequencies, Fade-Away and Top Floor have already provided. And while some may describe the album as adventurous, it often appears more hit and miss.

Still, welcome back Che Fu. And if you plan on leaving us again anytime soon: please take those posers with the faux-American accents with you and teach them a lesson or two.



Hopkins nails motor-sickle Munro

Meet Burt Munro from Invercargill. He spells it with one "l" to save ink, and he reckons it's the most beautiful city in the world.

Burt (Sir Anthony Hopkins) has a dream. Before he "falls off the perch", he wants to test his 1920 Indian "Scout" motorcycle at the Holy Grail of racing: Speed Week at the salt flats at Bonneville, Utah.

New Zealand filmmaker Roger Donaldson takes us along for the ride. The man who gave us *Smash Palace* and *Sleeping Dogs* puts Burt's story onto the big screen in *The World's Fastest Indian*. It's a laugh, cry, edge-of-your-seat tale – "a chick flick for guys", one reviewer suggested.

From his grandfather-ish shed with its shelves of offerings to the speed gods, Burt has put

Movie
The World's Fastest Indian
Opens October 13
Dir by Roger Donaldson
Review by Brigid Lynch

together a great bike. He melts down Chevy pistons, steals the hinges off kitchen doors and whips stoppers off brandy bottles in his quest for perfect parts for his beloved "motor-sickle".

Yes, Burt is a bit eccentric. With a pottery way of speaking, he is on the rough side of the spectacles, testicles, wallet and watch generation. He pees on his lemon tree, but he's a charming old codger.

Getting ready for his birthday bash at the local hall, he runs a comb through his foppish fringe and grinds down his toenails so they'll fit into his good shoes.

Afterwards he takes Fran (Annie Whittle) for a slap-up, stand-up feed at the local pie cart, then back to his crinkled single bed.

Their antics bring on a bout of angina, but Burt isn't going to let that stand in the way of his dream. He scrapes together a few quid – despite telling the bank manager all the wrong things – and takes his overwhelming optimism to the USA.

Gutsy and Mr Magoo-like, Burt seems just one step away from disaster in cynical 1960s America. It's enough to make your eyes water as he learns the hard way to keep a firm grasp on his greenbacks.

He makes friends easily, though. Setting off from his Hollywood motel – where the vibrating beds are more used to

being rented by the hour – Tina the transvestite (Chris Williams) dishes him a kiss. Fernando the used car salesman (Paul Rodriguez) wants to give him a job. Jake (Saginaw Grant) doles out powder for Burt's dicky prostate, and widowed Ada (Diane Ladd) throws some mid-West loving his way.

In Bonneville, the Speed Week regulars with their cowboy hats, bright white teeth and store-bought tyres mock his dreams and absence of brakes. "I'm planning on going, not stopping," says Burt.

Hannibal Lecter is nowhere to be seen as Hopkins masters the r-rolling and captures Burt's laconic, southern, plucky-bugger attitude to a T.

There aren't too many *Shortland St* faces in the crowd

scenes, you can't wipe the grin off Invercargill mayor Tim Shadbolt's face, and Tom (Aaron Murphy), the good keen lad, is a gem.

The film is peppered with golden lines, and while you may catch a glimpse of some modern houses as the countryside whizzes by, authentic touches like the old Plunket sign make up for it.

The racing scenes are refreshingly devoid of special effects, and the salt flats provide a bright, blank canvas. Invercargill looks suitably nippy.

At two hours, the film is very satisfying. Also satisfying, Burt's world record still stands. It goes to show that a big movie budget doesn't need to get in the way of a good motor-sickle yarn.

films

Media and Realpolitik film series
AUT, WT1505, Arts Faculty Building, Wakefield St

October 14, 3pm
Uncovered: The whole truth about the Iraq war
An in-depth look at the Iraq War, directed by Robert Greenwald.

October 28, 3pm
The Burning Season
The story of Brazilian rubber tapper and trade unionist Chico Mendes, whose campaign and media attention saved a large tract of the Amazon rain forest. He was assassinated in 1990.

For more information email wahanui@aut.ac.nz

Cinderella Man
Cinemas nationwide
From September 29
Set in New York during the Depression, this is the story of James Braddock (Russell Crowe), who takes up boxing to make money to feed his family, and ends up becoming quite famous in the process, eventually going up against champ Max Baer.



Pride and Prejudice
Cinemas nationwide
From October 10
Based on Jane Austen's classic 19th century novel about five sisters, Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty and Lydia Bennet, in Georgian England. Their lives are turned upside down when a wealthy young man (Mr Bingley) and his best friend (Mr Darcy) arrive in their neighbourhood. It follows the relationship between heroine Elizabeth Bennet (Keira Knightley, above) and the haughty Mr Darcy (Matthew Macfadyen). Directed by Joe Wright.

conferences

Pacific Islands Media Association New Zealand annual conference
AUT
October 7 - 8
"Our voices, our faces, our words, our dreams" is the theme for this year's PIMA annual conference, which focusses on the achievement of Pacific Islands people in the media.

planet fm 104.6

- Mon - Buddhist 1.35pm
Russian 5.25pm
Tongan Health 9.45pm
- Tue - Niuean 8am
Korean 9.40am
Punjabi 3.20pm
Maitreya 9.05am
Irish 10pm
Indie hip-hop 11.05pm
- Thur - Tokelau 6pm
Cook Islands 6.30pm
Samoan Health 7.40pm
- Fri - Catholic 2.10pm
Fijian 4.55pm
Swahili 8.10pm
- Sat - Spanish 10am
Turkish 7.35pm
- Sun - Jewish 9am
Croation 7.45

zoe's picks

Air New Zealand Fashion Week
Auckland Viaduct
October 18 - 21
Air New Zealand Fashion Week 2005 will be one to remember, as the event celebrates its fifth birthday with a top designer line-up and a host of newcomers.

The Art of Dr Seuss: Retrospective and National Touring Exhibition
Fishers Fine Arts Dealers
Now until September 29
For the first time in New Zealand, artwork by much loved children's author Dr Seuss will be on show. Featuring his advertising and book illustrations (below).

The Women
Concert Chamber, Auckland Town Hall
October 27 - November 12
The hit show of 2004 is back for another season. This is a cunning little comedy with dialogue so snappy it could have been written by a hairdresser. These women gossip and gloat, then gossip all over again, not caring about the consequences. These are truly the ladies who lunch, but who lunch on each other. Katie Wolfe's production is the ultimate girl's night out. Starring Anna Hutchinson, Mia Blake, Hannah Tolich, Sally Stockwell.

