

SITES UNSEEN

By Niloy

RECENTLY, I came across a few sites devoted to the underground: military trenches, bunkers, fortresses, and especially abandoned, hidden (US) nuclear missile silos. The appeal of the underground on the net is obvious: it matches with internet's own obscure nature, and the fascination with concealment, conspiracy and secrecy.

But there is a deeper irony here: that these missile silos were created to carry out a war of indescribable violence, and so was the internet. It began with the need to create a communication technology that could carry on after a nuclear strike that would allow data to be transferred even when telephone exchanges were smoking ruins. The Pentagon's DARPA NET was the great-great grandfather of the system that now allows us to download pictures of pop stars nude. It was designed to evade control, to seek ways around information blockages, because it was supposed to survive the end of the world.

In the same way, those nuclear silos were dug deep and scattered across the loneliest parts of America, to evade detection and make it impossible to knock out the country's nuclear capability with one blow. Those dank bunkers are the unlikely cousins of the internet: both are the children of the Armageddon that never took place.

Stuff to discover

www.24-7media.de/BWS/
A true example of what a website of the next generation will be. Stunning design, striking graphics, excellent background music and, well, huge sized 2 megabyte pages that demand a super fast broadband connection. This is the kind of website you will come across every day, in a few years.

The website is about safaris... and it has nice content. But it's nicer just to hang around and experience the next generation futuristic qualities of the sites. Seriously, this site isn't for anyone with an internet connection that is less than 20kbps.

Stuff to watch

www.gumblonds.com

So, what do you do with a chewed-up chewing gum? Stick it into someone's chair or seat? Or just spit it away and litter our littered town even more? Well, there is some guy out in the net who doesn't do any of these... He creates elaborate and gorgeous artwork (something like a painting) with chewed-up chewing gum. Visit this site to check out his bizarre and colourful work.

Stuff to download

www.sourceforge.net
A site for the power users... with thousands of quality software downloads for all popular platforms. Very useful site for the ones who's always being creative with their PCs. The source codes of all the softwares are also available, if you feel like a programmer.

Get a break now

www.worth1000.com
The world is full of people with a PC with Photoshop installed and lots of time to waste. At least that's what you would feel if you come across this site. Hundreds of Photoshop enthusiasts creating bizarre but admirable pieces of tweaked artwork and photographs showcase their work in this site. They compete for creating the coolest piece for funny competitions with titles like "Day jobs for Super Heroes" or "I solemnly swear that I'm up to no good". Very funny and always worth a look.



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Then get happy

maddox.xmission.com
It had taken a lot of thinking to finally make up my mind and pluck up my courage to recommend this site. Undoubtedly, this site would be "unsuitable" for many of my dear readers. Finally, I make the decision and present you **the best page in the universe**. Seriously, it's indeed the best! You will soon understand what this site about when you visit the site; but please, please don't visit the site if...
...you are scared of strong language
...you are younger or older than 18
...you have any intention of suing RS (or me, my family, my editor, my colleges, my friends, my friend's doggy, our President, Saddam Hussain, Bush, Microsoft or God)
...you don't have any sense of humour
...you are planning an assault on me

If the descriptions stated above don't match you, then you are actually someone cool. Congrats, you are free to browns and enjoy the best page ever in the history of mankind (and also of alienkind).

Or get sad

www.iworkwithfools.com
Life isn't nice, warm and cosy. Pretty soon, we'll have to peruse our careers and, as we go on with our career, we are very likely to find it pretty boring. And unsatisfying... and nauseating... and pretty unbearable. This is mainly because we would probably be working in a cubicle... in a large, gloomy, grey building, calculating balances, signing files and writing official reports. All these, just for earning some money. Of course, there are exceptions... but they are pretty rare.

Anyway, the people around the world is facing boredom... and stupidity along their career. This is a website that gathers and presents the truly outrageous and idiotic moments that people face during their career. Most of the stories here are funny and some are plain dumb. Still, they are good for a nice laugh. But after you finish laughing, consider the fact that within a few years, you would probably be someone facing the labyrinth of a typical boring career.

Hmm, lets end things here. I hope you enjoyed it. Anyway, if you are interested about any particular subject, let me know (niloyx@yahoo.com). I might just have a good link for you. Until then, happy web surfing.

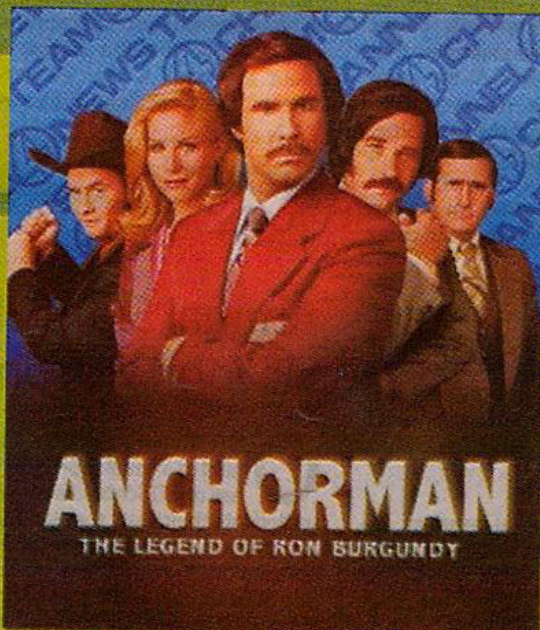
MOVIE REVIEW

Anchorman

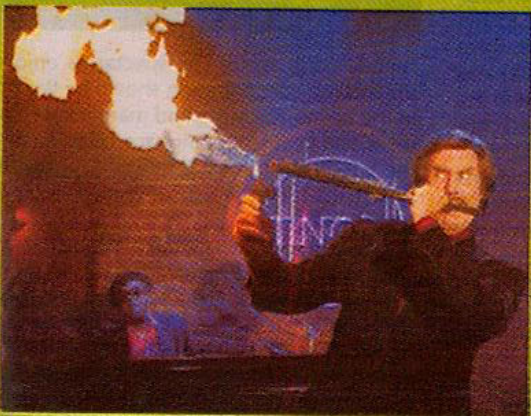
The Legend of Ron Burgundy

Review by Gokhra

Cast:
Ron Burgundy - Will Ferrell
Veronica Corningstone - Christina Applegate
Brian Fantana - Paul Rudd
Briq Tamland - Steve Carell
Champ Kind - David Koechner
Ed Harken - Fred Willard
Opposing Anchors - Vince Vaughn, Luke Wilson, Tim Robbins, Ben Stiller, Bill Lawson
Narrator - Bill Kurtis



IN "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy," Will Ferrell co-writes the story and stars in the title role of Ron Burgundy. He plays the ultimate dumb guy with so much aplomb as an Emmy-winning San Diego news anchor and local Casanova.

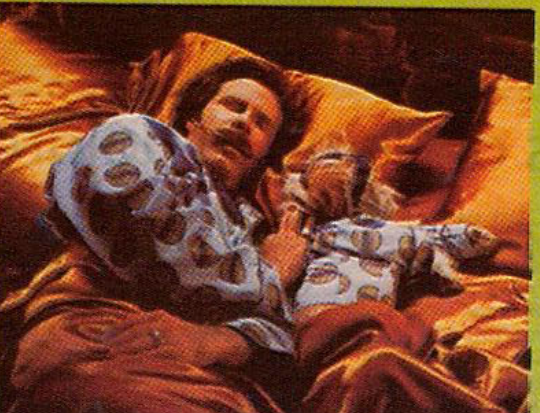


The plot: The story is set in the 70's sporting big silly hairdos, silly male chauvinism and further silliness in TV newscasting goofups. The date is 1973 and Ron is a charismatic but fairly empty-headed news guy who will read anything that is on his teleprompter (that's the machine newscasters read from leading to an empty trance-like stare common in BTN news). Ron has an award-winning "news team" as well that manages to land the prizes totally by fluke. The team comprises of a cowboy-hat wearing gay sportscaster Champ Kind (David Koechner), then there's a weatherman with a no brain and zero IQ with a very appropriate name, Briq Tamland (Steve Carell). Finally there's a field reporter, Brian Fantana (Paul Rudd) who is like Ron but only dumber. That's a lot of dumb guys in one boat. The four have a great time being macho and manly in a very satirical way. Into this post-adolescent phase comes Veronica Corningstone (Christina Applegate) who is the first in the news team to have a brain. She's dazzling, charming and

extremely efficient and wants to be an anchor herself. All this is fine but you have to remember the movie is set in the 70's with a very serious male chauvinistic attitude. Ron cannot stand such an intrusion so an all-out effort is undertaken to keep her covering silly things like cat fashion shows. But the determined news woman that she is, she finds a way to sneak into the real news stepping on Ron's toes.

Soon Ron and Veronica are on the warpath but that doesn't mean they do not fall for each other. There's a scene in the movie where the dumb news group faces off in a backstreet rumble with a cameo rival newsgroup consisting of Vince Vaughn, a luckless Luke Wilson, pipe-smoking Tim Robbins and the usual insanely freaky Ben Stiller.

The movie is extremely stupid and hysterically funny. In fact the stupidity of the movie ends up working for itself. In fact you are looking for the "meaning of life" moments in this movie, well, there are none. Or maybe the message is that you should stop



The almighty Nintendo DS

Who said Nintendo isn't the best?

By Niloy

WELL, the console gaming industry is preparing for a massive transition... An advance to the next level of gaming. And each and every console giant is participating in this transition. Sony has the portable "PlayStation Portable" and Playstation 3. Big deal. Microsoft has its Xbox 2. Nintendo has the next Gamecube thingy, named Revolution... and the ultimate, innovative, almighty Nintendo DS (also portable). And if you already haven't gotten the impression that I'm impressed with the system yet, well, I am.

The Nintendo DS will seriously revolutionize how people approach, identify and enjoy games, while including additional options that enhance the game-play experience. It'll simply change your impression of what a game should be. So let's see what comes with the Nintendo DS...

Two screens, both much larger than GBA's one.

Both screens are touch sensitive (actually way more than simply "touch sensitive").

Excellent 3D graphics capability.

Built-in microphones that can be programmed to recognize voices.

Wireless networking (built-in).

Nice speakers.

Play Gameboy Advance (all Gameboy) gametoo.

These awesome features combine to make Nintendo DS the most innovative system.

The two screens aspect does open up a lot of opportunities, especially since the action can be spread out comfortably. I'm sure a lot of people will judge a game's creativity by how it's used. But at the same time, it's easy to cheat out and simply throw a map up there. Certainly helpful, but definitely not creative.

The Nintendo DS system is, in its current form, about the size of two Game Boy Advance SP systems placed side by side. It's approximately as wide as the original Game Boy Advance system, and designed in clamshell fashion exactly as the



performance when the two screens swapped the 2D/3D priorities. The hardware can pull off some nifty effects even in its early demos, from toon-shaded 3D to plasma-flame effects to transparent sprite and background overlays.

The touch screen technology is incredibly sensitive and mirrors the same amount of pin-point control that PocketPCs and Palm Pilots have been enjoying for years.

The two LCD screens are larger and higher resolution than the Game Boy Advance's, with much better lighting technology to illuminate the image in darkened situations. The lower screen has a harder, clear plastic over it for the constant abuse of the touch screen. Wireless connectivity is another one of the system's strengths and the system boasts its ability to have 16 players in a local network within a (modest estimate) 30 foot radius.

So far, so great. Let's see what kind of games these features will accommodate...

Use the stylus to draw an action hero... then bring him into life and fight enemies!

Play some games where you have to command or encourage the character you are playing... using your voice!

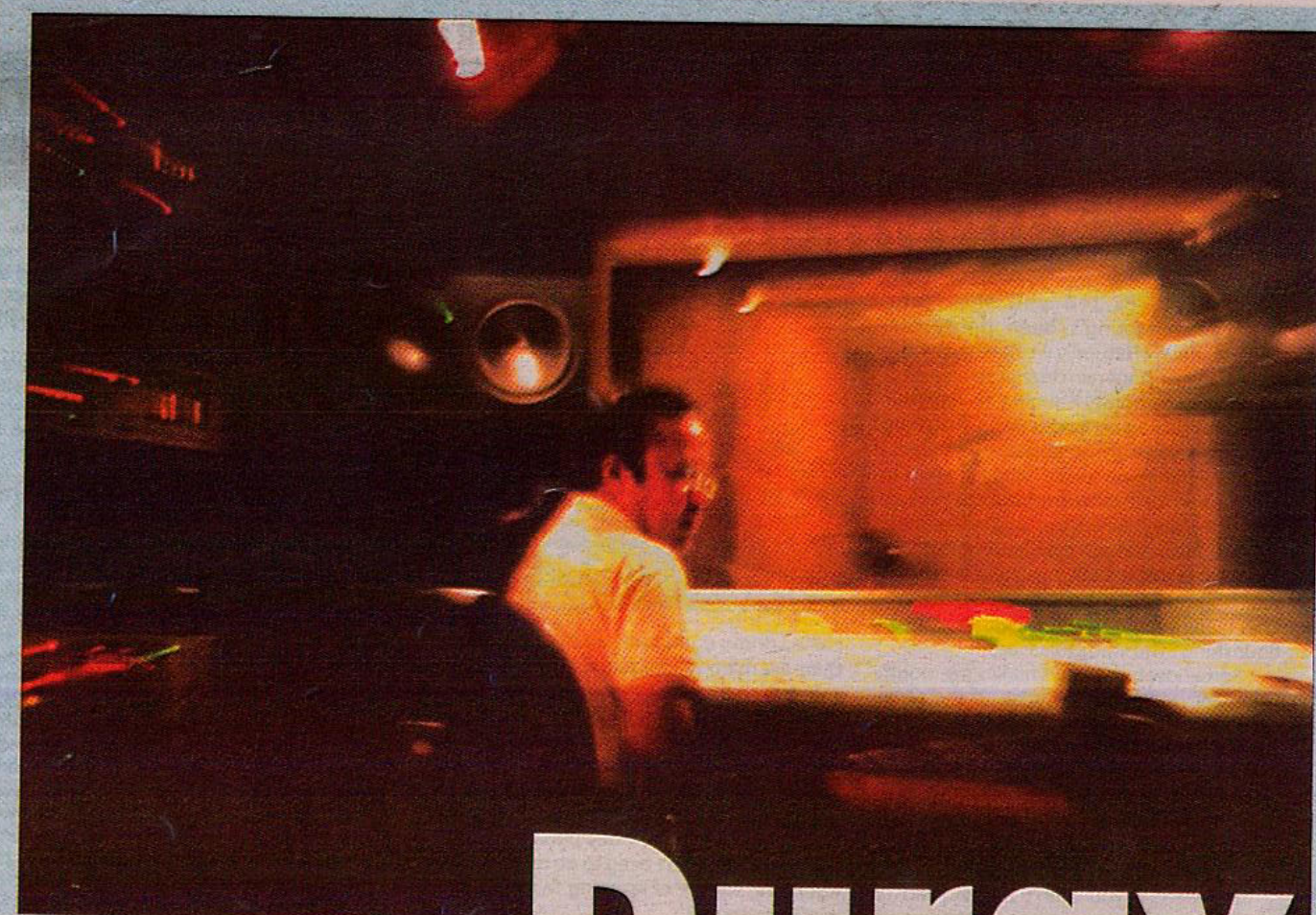
Play awesome 3D games.

Create a massive party with all your friends.

Just walk in an area where there are a few gamers with Nintendo DS and start shooting each other (in a game, that is).

Well, this awe-inspiring little piece of console is coming out later this year. The DS will be priced around \$180 (10800 Tk) and the games' price will be \$38 (Tk 2300) at max. Still, you shouldn't bother about money for a console that great! On the second thought, why bother about anything? We would surely be left out of this console revolution, thanks to our filthy console dealers. They would at least charge double for everything and won't bother about acquiring the latest games (by latest, I meant games released within a year). We are damned.

Anyway, if you have further questions or want more info, mail meatniloyx@yahoo.com



Isha Khan Duray

Bangla music recording prodigy of the 21st century

By AES & Faizul A Tanim



EVER wonder how the story goes behind each successful audio album from the market? Whether the tunes and compositions are arranged in perfect harmony?

The answers all lie in the recording studios making the valiant effort of orchestrating the compilation. In addition, the engineer who steers his way to bring out a crisp CD becomes the focal identity of music's rise. One such studio sprung up—Sound Garden and the man who came up from that music factory to promote sophisticated rock music was Duray.

The mixed album producer Duray's work became a representation for the underground musicians. Charpotro, Onushlon... Dinbodol... he has done it all—the music drew the line that differentiated between the Metal crowd and modern Alternative traditions as the compilations made swift promotion of almost all the popular genres. It asserted emotions and styles from Metal, Alternative, Rock, Pop and anything underground as it allowed us to grip the craving within music enthusiasts.

And it all started like this:

"I was in an underground concert, greatly enjoying the music and sympathizing with the performing bands for the meagre support from the crowd and using the word 'crowd' is gross exaggeration as the turnout was extremely low. I enjoyed their music a great deal and was horrified, appalled even, to witness that people were completely oblivious of the fact that there are so many young musicians having such virtuoso in Bangladesh. So I conjured up a plan to help these musicians come to the limelight or at least get the attention they deserve. So I approached the underground bands and proposed to record a mixed album and the rest

is history the unveiling of Charpotro the first underground mixed album. We put a gargantuan amount of effort to bring out Charpotro. I remember working till 10 in the night putting up posters. Sumon and Khaled bhai helped a lot to bring out Charpotro and I couldn't have done it without their help and therefore I am indebted to them. Also I must add that Shakib helped a lot to get the sponsor."

Recent projects:

Duray is working on two mixed albums Lokayot and an Unplugged album. The latter is unprecedented and is expected to be the first unplugged mixed album in Bangladesh. He is also working on music videos and is working on a TV show titled Fast Forward.

Plans for the Future:

Duray dreams to release a mixed English album from his studio in the near future. He hopes and is quite confident that the English album will gain international accolade. "After cricket, music can bring fame to Bangladesh," said Duray. "Indeed these underground bands are Bangladesh's best kept secret."

Duray also added that he plans to go abroad after a few years and do some courses on music and come back to our motherland and open a Music School. He also plans to do a workshop to educate upcoming bands about the process of recording.

His rewards:

"I do not release these albums for monetary gains. My sole intention is to promote good music. My greatest reward is being addressed as Duray bhai by these young and talented musicians and I want them to know that that as long as I live I will always be by their side and always play the role of their Guardian Angel" held Duray in a voice choked in emotion. He added that it is very disheartening that most of the senior mainstream musicians are not doing anything to help these upcoming underground bands. "Only Azam Khan and a few others are trying to help these groups get the award they deserve."

What makes him different from other mixers and sound engineers?

"The fact that I love rock music and want to promote these musicians makes me different from others," replied Duray. He also added that he is different because unlike most people, he has great faith on the young prodigious musicians.

On the current standards of recording in Bangladesh:

As spoken to Duray, he emphasised on sound mathematical knowledge with good sense of music to comprehend sound frequency as a sequence to becoming competent sound engineer. He added the need for institution to learn sound engineering better, which is mandatory to master the album mixing. About the present technological scenario

of recording, he affirmed a lacking of 50 years from the international standard. He remarked the main deficiency as lack of quality equipment. An A class mixing console is the most important part of studio recording priced at 20 lacs alone and is unavailable to the local recording facility. It is the missing part of the puzzle why Bangladeshi recording standard is not rising. We are definitely behind international standards but won't be for long when these equipment stars to ship in.

On drugs and music:

Duray proudly claims that he is yet to witness any member of an underground band take drugs. He firmly believes that to become good musicians, drugs are not needed. Hard work, dedication and devotion are required to become good musicians. Therefore, he urges everyone to say no to drugs.

When it is all said and done, the musicians found an amazing similarity with the early 90's release of Hooray with the Duray's mixed compilation Charpotro. An uprising of bands sparked on release of that CD back then. It was a re-incarnation of the early 90's rock music revolution when that mixed compilation was launched in 2001. From the release of Charpotro in 2001 onwards, many people term it a 'rock music rebellion' taking place. The music admirers know what they deserve, not allowing commercial bands to have domination among the enthusiasts anymore.

