Blue Dolphin Will Make You Shout "OPAH!"

Kristen Wehling
Feature Editor

Looking for a new cuisine, but a menu with a little variety that mixes in some popular American dishes as well?

Well look no further and say, "Opah!" to Blue Dolphin. Blue Dolphin has been a downtown favorite for many years and offers up traditional Greek dishes as well as some more familiar American foods, such as their sandwich list which features a B.L.T. and Monte Cristo.

My family accompanied me downtown to 502 S. Burdick where the Blue Dolphin restaurant is located (down the street from the State Theater). I was a little deterred by the exterior of the restaurant, which was weathered down and in desperate n eed of a paint job. However, after stepping inside we realized the beauty of the restaurant.

The dining room was gorgeous. The walls are painted bright white with blue accents, the colors of Greece. Paintings and murals of Greece adorned the walls of Blue Dolphin. Dim lighting in the establishment made it difficult to see at times.

To start off our meal we ordered some appetizers. My dad insisted on ordering the Original Saganaki ($5.25) which is a popular item among diners at Blue Dolphin. This spicy and sharp cheese is served at your table and lit on fire. I decided on the Tzatziki Spread ($3.95), a sour cream, yogurt, and cucumber dip for warm, lightly seasoned pita bread. Both were absolutely delicious. However, the Saganaki became gradually more chewy as it cooled down.

Our main course consisted of a Greek Pita Pizza ($4.95) for myself with feta, mushrooms, and mozzarella cheese. The pizza has a list of toppings to choose from, three being the maximum. My family ordered the Turkey Club Sandwich ($5.75) which came with a side salad, the Grilled Patty Melt ($5.50) with a side of French fries, and the Athenian Chicken ($9.25) accompanied by a Greek potato and side salad. Everyone enjoyed their meals immensely. The side salads which accompanied the meals were topped with feta cheese, kalamata olives, and a greek dressing which was surprisingly good and tasted similar to a tangy and spicy Italian dressing.

The Greek Pita Pizza was good with hot and perfectly melted cheese that pulled apart as I took a bite of it. The mushrooms tasted like they came straight out of a can, but the pizza was good nonetheless.

The Turkey Club was huge and well worth the $5.75. The sandwich was triple-layered with loads of turkey and bacon. The only complaint I heard about the Turkey Club was that the bacon was too well done and became difficult to chew.

My family also enjoyed the Athenian Chicken. The chicken came served in a large portion with a good combination of Greek seasonings and was very moist and tasty. I heard no complaints about the Grilled Patty Melt or the fries that came on the side. The steak fries were not greasy and were served very warm.

The service at Blue Dolphin was excellent. We never had to request refills for our drinks and service was always with a smile. The owner came around to every table two or three times asking the patrons how everything tasted.

Our total bill came out to be $40.97 for five people which included two soft drinks. Everything at Blue Dolphin was reasonably priced. The most expensive menu item was the Dolphin Cut Prime Rib (16 oz.) for $18.95. Blue Dolphin also serves lobster, but the cost is based on market price. On average, a dinner for two would cost around $20.00 and is extremely reasonable.

Blue Dolphin was an excellent restaurant and I would not hesitate to go back there again. Everything was tasty, the atmosphere was excellent, and the prices cannot be beat for delectable Greek food. I suggest you gather around a table, order an Original Saganaki, and shout "Opah!" at Blue Dolphin.

KRISTEN WEHLING / KNIGHT LIFE

(From top to bottom): The triple decker Turkey Club Sandwich ($5.75) garnished with a pickle, the Original Saganaki ($5.25) after the flames settled, and the Athenian Chicken ($9.25) with a deliciously seasoned Greek potato.

This is Music: Post-Rock

Sean Stoto
A&E Editor

It's about to rain. You can feel the air cooling your hand outside the window. The scent of moisture is rolling into the car, and suddenly everything smells like an early-morning, early-winter frost. A few drops fall onto your hand, onto the windshield, so up go the windows and on goes the heater. The rain is starting to fall a little harder. The light refracts off of the drops and onto your hand, onto the dashboard, and everything is blended with shadow. In the distance there is a rolling rumble, like a giant tumbled onto the highway two exits away from you. Eight seconds of waiting finally brings the flash of electricity, and the downpour sets in. Rain beats on your windshield, vision is blurred, and every sign for miles is washed clean.

This is post-rock; intense, almost orchestral music built up from a soft, melodic intro.

Post-rock is, in essence, non-rock music made with traditional rock instruments. In other words, it is indeed an orchestra of guitar, bass, synthesizer, and drums. It incorporates the musical characteristics of genres such as jazz, electronica, experimental, ambient, and new age to make a truly atmospheric sound.

Rock music typically utilizes the guitar for its power chords and riffs. This isn't the case for post-rock, where the guitar is used for texture and timbre, adding layers of sound much the way shoegaze bands often do. Bass is no longer used to drive the songs, but instead used to add atmosphere and ambience.

Where rock music is rebellious and angst-driven in nature, post-rock is melodramatic, androgynous, and euphoric.

A lot of post-rock will feature little to no vocals. Vocals, instead of being used to convey a message, are usually used as a melodic instrument. One example of this is the Icelandic post-rock band Sigur Ros. They sing in Volenska, also known as Hopelandic, a language they made up for the sake of the band. It sounds like gibberish to any unknowing listener, but each vowel and every consonant is crafted to blend with the music to make a shimmering soundscape lush with heart-wrenching melancholy.

Post-rock has been gaining in popularity in the past few years, seemingly due to the file-sharing possibilities presented by the internet. There was a moot point for the genre in the early years of this millennium after being birthed and fizzling out in the 1990s. It lost most of its popularity and seemed to be at a creative standstill.

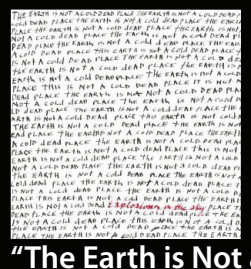
Newer bands are emerging now, taking in the influence of original rock bands like Slint, Cul De Sac, and Bark Psychosis. You can find the works of Explosions in the Sky, Mogwai, and 65daysofstatic at your local Barnes and Noble or F.Y.E., which isn't a common outlet for music of such an obscure genre.

The up-and-down popularity is coincidentally fitting, though, to a genre of music that is so eclectic in its tempo and nature. Intense in emotion, like the rain and thunder, post-rock comes and goes like a mid-spring-time storm, and is a refreshing change just the same.

Albums to Check Out

"Young Mountain" by This Will Destroy You

"Mr. Beast" by Mogwai



"The Earth is Not a Cold Dead Place" by Explosions in the Sky

"Ágætis Byrjun" by Sigur Rós

Behind The Set With Stage Crew

MADISON KAY / KNIGHT LIFE

Junior Logan Jenson takes apart the walls of Skid Row from this year's musical "Little Shop of Horrors." The stage crew spent countless hours putting together the set to make Skid Row come to life.

Madison Kay
Web Master

"Don't poke the bear, drop the stick and run," can be heard backstage of any Loy Norrix play, from the mouth of any stage crew member describing LN Auditorium Manager Doug Blickle.

As LN's auditorium manager, Blickle has to supervise and maintain the auditorium and its systems. There is no way that Blickle could do this all by himself, so he has eleven students that volunteer their time to help keep the auditorium and LN plays in working order.

These eleven students spend their time every Thursday after school for 2 hours helping Blickle clean, and prepare for upcoming shows by setting up lights, building sets, and climbing through the attic to change lights.

When there is nothing to do Blickle sometimes throws parties for the crew members.

"When we have parties we bring in an Xbox, and play "Halo" or "Guitar Hero," Doug brings down the big projector so we can play it on there," said Dyami Hernandez.

Hernandez is one of the four who works spotlight during performances at LN. Hernandez had been on stage crew for 2 years, his most recent show was this years musical "Little Shop of Horrors." He, along with Kasandra Bradshaw, Christina Minar, Amanda Lawlass, Baza Miller, all worked spotlights.

While some of the students work spotlights others run the lightboard and make sure the props are where they need to be. They also just make sure that stage is clean and looks good.

"We are not assigned to a certain position unless we are doing a show. Other than that we get to chose what we would like to do," said Bradshaw.

Bradshaw has been on stage crew for three and a half years. For those three years she has chosen to work spotlight for all of the shows that she has been a part of. Bradshaw likes being on crew because she gets to hang out with her friends and do things that she likes to do, like working on the performances.

Logan Jenson, Rebecca Kissinger, Megan Moshier, Ryin Zummach, Phil Cragin and Sandi Weileba during the week before the musical spent an extra 4 hours a day at LN building the set for the most recent show. This included painting scenery and building the set.

Many of the current crew members have been recruited by past members or by current crew members. Most of them have joined because they were told that stage crew is very fun but also hard work.

They live by the standard that there would be no shows without stage crew because the actors would not be able to do what they do.

"Without us, the shows would not look as good as they do, and we also would not be able to do the show with out the actors and actresses," said Hernandez.

Quick Picks

Alison Alessi
Assistant Editor-in-Chief

MUSIC:

"The Bridge Over River Qua" by The Bridge Over River Qua

The self-titled album that the local band Bridge Over River Qua recorded in 2005 was to be their only full length recording released before the band split. Even though the band is no longer together, they certainly left their mark on Kalamazoo with the simple yet mesmerizing tones of "The Bridge Over River Qua." The calming effect of the band's music is almost inescapable as deep drums and simple melodies keep from overwhelming the mind of the listener while still managing to keep the music far from boring.

The band uses a myriad of various instruments to add to the mellow flow of their music, including the bassoon, which although not commonly used with guitars, drums, and bass, nevertheless adds extra interest and makes vocals almost unnecessary in the song "Rebels and Scientists." From the build up at the beginning of "Ferment In June," to the grand finish that is "Matriarchy," the Bridge Over River Qua's first and only CD is worth a listen to anyone interested in hearing some of the best music to ever come out of Kalamazoo.

BOOK:

"Abarat" by Clive Barker

When the name Clive Barker is mentioned most people think of the author best known for his work in the genre of horror writing. With the book "Abarat," Barker strays from the horror genre and shows off a different side of his writing.

"Abarat" tells the story of Candy Quackenbush from Chickentown, Minnesota, who one day finds herself compelled to walk to the fields just outside Chickentown.

Before she knows it, she is caught up into a conflict between a unique bunch of brothers known as The Johns and an agent of The Prince of Nightmares, Christopher Carrion. Becoming the accomplice of The Johns, Candy unintentionally gets swept up as the fields of waving grass become a sea that takes her to the Islands of the Abarat where she meets various new people while trying to avoid Carrion.

The book doesn't seem to be lacking in any department. The characters are creative and diverse, the setting is well thought out and well described, and the small details add extra quirks to an already fantastic world.

This book is more than just written beautifully, the text is also accompanied by multiple paintings that Barker created to go with his fantasy novel. Each painting is a colorful rendering of the Islands of the Abarat and the fantastic people who inhabit them. This book is a definite must read.

MOVIE:

"The King of California"

"The King of California" is a movie detailing the relationship between a 16 year old girl, Miranda (played by Evan Rachel Wood) and her father Charlie (played by Michael Douglas) as they try to find the lost treasure of a Spanish explorer who Charlie has become obsessed with.

Miranda has lived a good portion of her life scraping together a living after her mother abandoned her and her father is locked away in a mental institution.

When Charlie is released from the institution, Miranda's world is turned upside down as her father obsesses over the lost treasure that he eventually decides is buried under a Costco. Pulling his daughter along for the ride, Charlie hatches a plan to excavate inside the Costco while it is closed for the evening.

This movie goes from being hilarious to suspenseful to extremely sad all in a matter of minutes. Mike Cahill directed a masterpiece in "The King of California.