

Iron Man: First summer blockbuster heats up screen

Iron Man ★★★★★

Jon Favreau (dir.), Robert Downey Jr., Terrence Howard, Gwyneth Paltrow

By **Sabrina Ketel**
Staff Writer

It's eight o' clock at *Iron Man's* opening weekend in Paseo Colorado. Even forty-five minutes before the previews are set to begin, the line for the 8:45 showing has at least thirty people. From comic geeks to grandparents, teens to ten year-olds, everyone is coming out to see the summer's first big flick.

Based on the late-sixties Marvel superhero, *Iron Man* follows the fall of business tycoon and technological genius Tony Stark, and his subsequent rise as the invincible Iron Man.

Although the original *Iron Man* comic failed to generate much mainstream attention, and has remained somewhat of a cult classic

among comic readers, its counterpart film has been more than a success. Opening with \$102.1 million its first weekend—making it the tenth highest grossing opening weekend ever—*Iron Man* has rocketed through expectations.

There are two great things about *Iron Man*: special effects and Robert Downey Jr.

The movie is the pinnacle of advanced "technology," leaving viewers stunned at its whirring and whizzing machinery, and at how the recently formed Marvel Studios has so completely mastered the art of computer generated fight sequences.

Not to mention, Robert Downey Jr. is genius, alternately eliciting laughter and gasping applause. With rakish humor and a lopsided grin, Downey Jr. brings Tony Stark to life on the silver screen. His performance lights every shot; he is the perfect antihero.

Aside from Downey Jr., *Iron Man* features a star-studded cast. Terrence Howard plays Tony Stark's gruff sidekick Jim Rhodes, and Jeff Bridges is *Iron Man's* arch-nemesis, the Iron Monger. Gwyneth Paltrow also stars, sliding easily into her secondary role as Miss Pepper Potts, Stark's trusted secretary.

Although the movie ends with an obvious set-up for a sequel, it's perfectly and tastefully done. It would be advisable to keep eyes peeled for a second *Iron Man*, and while sequels are not viewers' typical cause for excitement, *Iron Man's* follow-up is sure to be just as good as its first. But a sequel isn't the only thing to be on the lookout for—it would be wise to hang around after the credits for a little something extra.

"I am Iron Man," says Robert Downey Jr. And indeed, he is.



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We Sing, We Dance, We Steal Things

Jason Mraz's new album highlights both individuality and musical prowess, featuring Colbie Caillat and James Morrison

By **Samantha Harrison**
Assoc. News Editor

Jason Mraz's new album came out Tuesday, May 13. This colorful album includes twelve new songs. *We Sing, We Dance, We Steal Things* presents a well-rounded and fulfilling variety of songs that all maintain Mraz's original style. The album's pleasant lyrical contents and variation of songs offers both former fans and new listeners music they can appreciate and enjoy. The CD also includes featured artists such as Colbie Caillat in "Lucky," and James Morrison in "Details in the Fabric," a melodious and acoustic song.

The album starts with a swift song, "Make it mine," which is about Mraz's ambitions for his tour and life. This lively song incorporates saxophones and trumpets for a full melody that accompanies Mraz's lyrics nicely. This song starts the album with an upbeat and joyous lift. "I'm Yours" follows "Make it Mine" as a delightfully melodic song incorporating cute lyrics about a wanted love, which includes a catchy yet original tune.

The song "Coyotes" has a much different sound than the rest of the songs. It begins with fast-spoken lyrics over light piano and leads up into a deeper bass and techno integrated sound. Accompanying the background of the chorus, towards the end of the song, a choir of children's voices repeats the chorus of the song with Mraz. Although this style stands out from the other songs, Mraz performs it skillfully.

The song "If it Kills me" is a delicate song about the love of a woman who has a boyfriend and the struggle of restricting love. The meaningful lyrics and charming melody make it a beautiful song with true intentions; a melodic background of violins and the piano certainly portrays this.

The album closes with a slow, mellow song with light acoustic guitar in the background. "Beautiful Mess" also draws in a choir to sing the background of the chorus and ends the CD in a solemn yet uplifting mood.

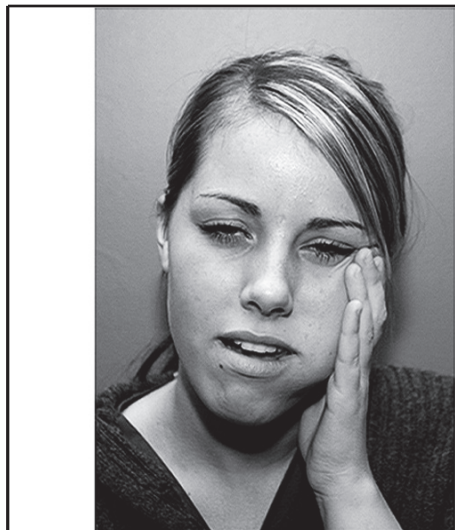
While the songs on this CD differ from Mraz's past albums, the essence of Mraz's individualistic style is still existent through his unique voice and encompass-

ment of various instruments including trumpets, violins, saxophones, and even a choir singing in a new, fresh mixture of songs. It is a soft CD, which lacks a misfit song. The songs create a range of emotions in a memorable and addictively good album.

After Mraz's successful album and tour for his Grammy nominated album *Mr. A-Z*, including his highly popular and hit song, "Wordplay," Mraz took a rest from the busy tour life. Months later he rediscovered himself and was inspired to write new song lyrics. From this came *We Sing, We Dance, We Steal Things*.

He is currently touring throughout Europe, from the UK to Germany and has limited concerts in the US. These are located in Detroit, Michigan, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Santa Barbara, California, which is his last concert and will be preformed for the West Beach Music Festival on September 12, 2008.

The songs create a range of emotions in a memorable and addictively good album.



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