



Clawhammer Style

ROBERT BEAVER/TM

Part of life: Music performance major Frank Ceballos started playing banjo as a joke, but immediately connected with the instrument. He said the instrument was something that was missing from his life.

Banjo player takes the 'funny' out of playing

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Music major Frank Ceballos goes to class to practice singing, play the piano, and the guitar, but when he goes home he picks up his banjo.

He strums the five-string instrument using a two-finger picking style known as "Clawhammer."

Ceballos alternates between his middle finger and thumb as he strums, while his other hand forms various chord shapes. Together, his hands produce a twangy, melodic sound.

The unpredictable instrument

Originally, Ceballos bought his Epiphone MB 500 banjo thinking it would be a great joke to share with his music friends at Cerritos College.

He did not know that he would become a folk artist.

"It started off as a funny thing," Ceballos said. "Everybody plays guitar and I just wanted to try something different."

"I thought it was going to be easy like guitar, but after some research, I found out that I was in over my head. It's totally different than guitar. You can't even compare the two," he said.

As it turned out, Ceballos started playing his banjo more often than any of his five guitars, bass guitar, keyboard and eight harmonicas.

"Out of all my instruments, this one has the most character," Ceballos said.

"After a while it wore into the way I played it. The neck is bent the way I like it and the

head is worn from my fingers. I modified it a few times as part of my self-expression."

His banjo reads, "This train is bound for glory," which is a quote he pulled from a book called "Bound for Glory," written by folk icon Woody Guthrie.

Ceballos said that his banjo, with all of the modifications, has become an extension of his body and a significant part of his personality.

"It's a piece that was always missing from my life," Ceballos, who also plays to relieve stress, said.

"As soon I got it out of the box, put it together and played it, I realized this is something I'm going to have on me at all times. This is something that is going to be a big part of my life."

"The sound is what drew me to it in the first place. It's loud and harsh sounding. It's something you would recognize if you heard it," he added.

Ceballos said it was hard at first, but he eventually "broke through" and got the hang of playing.

Playing a new kind of music

To date, he has been playing banjo for seven months.

He can now play various folk songs like "Worried Man Blues," by an unknown artist, and "This Land is Your Land," by Guthrie, who is one of Ceballos' personal heroes.

In each song, Ceballos adds his own style.

"They're songs that have been passed down long ago," Ceballos said. "There's so many ways to play them. When you learn the songs you develop your own way of playing them."

Ceballos said his favorite place to play on campus is on the grassy hill near the Music Department Building.

He said it is a good place for people to hear and appreciate his music.

"You get to meet a lot of interesting people there," Ceballos said, "But the staircase in the Social Science Building is also a good place to play. You get some pretty good sound there because it echoes all the way up the stairs."

Remembering the beginning

Some of his friends can recall the day when Ceballos bought the banjo.

"I can remember before he could even pluck it," Javier Segura, nursing major, said.

"I thought it was a pretty sick instrument. Nobody plays it so it was cool to see (Ceballos) take on the challenge. It was really ran-

dom.

"He got better and it was entertaining to hear him play. I can see him actually doing something with music."

Ceballos was already a fluent musician when he first picked up the banjo. He started playing music seven years ago when found an old dusty guitar in his garage.

He got more serious with music as a senior in high school.

"It was then when I decided that all I wanted to do, was music."

"There are so many rules in life that you can't deviate from. In music, if your creative enough, you can make your own rules. Music is second to breathing in my life and just above eating," Ceballos said.

Ceballos has also performed live in various venues in the local area.



ROBERT BEAVER/TM

From a hero: Frank Ceballos' banjo reads, "This train is bound for glory," which he pulled from the book "Bound For Glory," by Woody Guthrie, a folk icon and one of his heroes. Scan to view a slideshow of Ceballos playing the banjo.

'Assassin's Creed III' to be one of the top video games

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"Assassin's Creed III" will be the next video game coming out from Ubisoft this fall on the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 consoles, as well as for the PC.

"Assassin's Creed III" will mark change in setting from the games that it preceded. This time Assassin's Creed III will take place during the American revolutionary war in 1775.

In the past Assassin's Creed games, you had to play in the crusades of the Renaissance Era.

The main protagonist from the previous games have you take control of either Altair or Ezio.

Like in previous games, you

get to see this through the eyes of Desmond Miles, a descendant of prominent assassins.

This time around, Desmond will play a bigger role in Assassin's Creed III than the games that preceded it.

The new main protagonist in "Assassin's Creed III" is named Connor, a half Native American and British man who is sworn to protect the 13 colonies from a powerful group that is threatening their freedom.

The game will have you playing in memorable landmarks like the battlefields of Lexington and Concord, the streets of Boston and New York, and the snow covered Appalachian wilderness.

A new feature in Assassin's Creed III is naval battles, this new feature will have players take con-

trol of a ship and its artillery, as well as board other ships as Connor.

Another feature that is new to the Assassin's Creed is hunting, where you are tasked to kill various forms of wildlife, the player will benefit based on how quickly and efficiently they hunt.

These new features will offer something fresh to the already fantastic game play that Assassin's Creeds is known for.

New weapons in "Assassin's Creed III" will be the tomahawk, hidden blade, bow and arrow, pistol, musket, rope dart, and the sawtooth sword. These new weapons will add more interesting ways of playing the game.

The supporting cast in Assassin's Creed III will feature George Washington, Benjamin Franklin,

Charles Lee, and many other important figures during the American revolution.

The multi-player modes that are announced so far is Domination, where two teams of four players try to capture three different zones, and Wolf Pack, where you and four other people are tasked to take out enemies in a specific amount of time.

In the previous Assassin's Creeds games, the multiplayer modes that were offered before are Wanted, Manhunt, Escort, Chest Capture, Deathmatch, Artifact Assault, Assassinate, Training Ground and Alliance.

"Assassin's Creed III" will be released on Oct. 30 on the PlayStation 3, Xbox 360 and PC.

'Resident Evil: Retribution' is a full action packed film

Movie Review

Resident Evil: Retribution

Starring: Milla Jovovich
Director: Paul Anderson
Rating: ★★☆☆

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"Resident Evil: Retribution" is and will be the most action packed and exhilarating movie of the fall.

Don't see this newest Resident Evil film if you have not seen the previous films.

It has action, betrayal and loss but in reality, nothing is what it seems.

You may not fully understand what is going on.

It is one of the best movies out now.

The fifth installment of the Resident Evil is written, produced, and directed by Paul W.S. Anderson.

"Resident Evil: Retribution" is mind-blowing because people will see favorite and beloved characters in a way they never thought you would see them.

This movie has what any action movie fan would want, which is heavy artillery weapons, big sharp deadly knives, grenade launchers, and best of all an unstoppable evil company that wants to take over the world.

What more could you ask for?

The fact that iconic characters such as Claire Redfield and Chris Redfield will not return this is not such a major disappointment.

The main reason they are gone is because they need to make room for new characters and new plots.

This is a good idea because they can be sent away so they can later bring them back and they make more of a connection with the new upcoming plots and cast members for future films.

Fans will be excited when they do return and with their absence it will give people to more reason to watch this and other up and coming Resident Evil movie.

This movie, by far, tops the last four "Resident Evil" movies currently out on DVD and will remain No.1 for weeks to come.

It will be very enjoyable and very interesting to fans of the Resident Evil franchise from both the game and film because they get to see their favorite characters in new plots for the film.

This will make fans rethink if a character is still a favorite after watching the film.

The film is bringing in characters from the game such as Ada Wong, Leon S. Kennedy, etc., and giving them their own plot that differs from the game. This is very clever and well-thought.

The best actress of the night was Milla Jovovich.

Jovovich portrayal of Alice has gotten better since the first Resident Evil movie. There has never been a more dedicated actress a job than her.

The worst acting came from actress Li BingBing as Wong.

Her acting did not fully give off that same vibe you get from the Wong character as you get in the games.

There's nothing special in BingBing's acting because she's not getting into the action of the movie.

The money that is spent to watch the movie will be a great profit for action fans.

This movie gets two thumbs up.

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