

# FOCUS ON: REVIEWS

'Arc of a Diver' is breezy

## Winwood returns with a splash

By Kate McElroy  
Battalion Staff

Who is this Steve Winwood? Well, he's no spring chicken. During the reign of hard rock — approximately after the Beatles' *Sergeant Pepper* (1967) until about 1972 — Winwood was a driving force in the three British groups, most notably Traffic, that opened smoothed rock music's jagged edge with haunting jazz melodies.

So Winwood (influenced by late 50s American black music) was instrumental in developing that Chivas cool, I-don't-give-a-damn sound that America's Steely Dan has stylized.

But, alas, Winwood seemed to fade into the woodwork as disco beats and other late 70s concepts (roller boogie!) dominated, and rock music instead of being the popular music became

just a fragment of it.

But happily, one of rock's finest artists is back with a wonderful album that combines his early 70s' sounds with the late '70s' pulsating rhythms — *Arc of*

hit because from the opening note, it feels as clear and refreshing as a dip in the pool. But the words aren't that comforting — "When you see a chance take it/Find romance fake it."

These lyrics set the tone of the entire album — sort of a cynical pleasantry. The idea seems to be, in proverbial Aggie terms, to go for it — it's the attempt of the dive, not its splash that matters. The album's bitterness isn't obvious because Winwood's music gracefully dominates the lyrics written by Will Jennings, George Fleming and Viv Stanhill.

This concept continues, of course, in "Arc of A Diver," which is now receiving substantial airplay. Winwood's vocals are airy, constantly dipping into conversation, and his music is just as mellow. In "Second-Hand Woman," which features

a disco rhythm, the song's anti-hero becomes so bitter he's rude: "From a cut price lady to a second-hand woman/ You're society's slave babe/ You're an ugly rumor."

The first side ends on a down-note. "Slowdown Sundown" is sort of an old Rod Stewart white man's blues song, complete with mandolin and a organ. The song doesn't fit Winwood's style especially since the lyrics, not the music, stand out. Ironically, the last song on the second side, "Dust," suffers from the same problem. But so-so Winwood would be masterpieces for some of rock music's less-talented stars.

"Spanish Dancer," which leads side two, rivals "Arc of a Diver" for musical supremacy. It's reminiscent of some of the

early Traffic songs which were funky and cool instead of being slick and sophisticated like this number. And, for a change, Jennings' words exemplify the essence of the song: "I can feel the beat like a Spanish Dancer/ Under my feat making the world go 'round."

"Night Train" features the most mystical beat of the album. Though the words are asinine — "Paris to Spain/Countries in Pain ... Out in the dark/ All the wolves bark" — this is one song perfect for those tiny head-phone stereos.

*Arc of A Diver* is the first Steve Winwood album in a little more than three years, but it proves that talent, even when locked away like a treasure chest, will always emerge.

### RECORDS

*A Diver.*

*Diver*, for the most part, definitely fits Winwood's breezy style. Like the diver in the title track, Winwood succeeds when his music flows "so effortlessly."

The first number, and so far the album's big commercial success, is "When You See A Chance." No doubt the song's a

## University aids art lovers

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arts in Bryan-College Station, the community may never find its own artistic identity until it separates itself from the University.

"The people must think of themselves as a community," Christensen cautioned, "and not as a bedroom of the University. As a Bryan-ite that offends me."

Although it is easy to combine the efforts of the community and the University, one can't take too much credit for the accomplishments of the other.

"This community kids itself if it thinks it has a good arts program," said Christensen. "This is a company town, and it's been satisfied to sit back and let the University take care of its needs."

A large portion of work by the Arts Council is done apart from Texas A&M. Bates is currently planning for an artist-in-residence in the Mumford school district west of College Station. Previous artists have participated in the program in Mumford and Bryan. The series of outdoor concerts in College Station is its latest

effort, and the Council is also working on a complete history of the City of College Station.

Christensen supports the work done by the Arts Council, but goes a step further. "The Arts Council does as much as it can," he said, "but

**Bryan-College Station has an excellent facility for the arts in the Brazos Center.**

I don't see why more ad-hoc groups can't be formed and sponsored by banks and other businesses. I see no need for it (participation in the arts) to be so centralized."

With recent budget cuts proposed for the National Endowment for the Arts, the picture nationwide may look rather bleak. Locally, however, the arts have some things in their favor.

Unlike some communities of its size, Bryan-College Station has an excellent facility

for the arts in the Brazos Center. The center is attractive, convenient and relatively inexpensive to use. Although it is seldom utilized to the fullest, it has tremendous potential for community participation in the arts.

Bryan-College Station may not stand to lose as much as a result of budget cuts since it didn't have much to start with. Texas ranks 50th nationally in state funding of the arts. Only about 2 percent of its funds are earmarked for arts support.

"Hopefully things will be cut in proportion," said Bates, "but even if it's cut in half it will only go from 1 to 2 percent."

Whether or not the growing community of Bryan-College Station moves ahead in the arts is up to its people. The facilities are available, the money difficulties are surmountable and the audience exists. All that seems to be missing a group of well-established citizens willing to work for a program of its own that will last.

## COLLAGE

*Aversion to nudity kills art career*

**MEMPHIS, Tenn.** — A young art student who found nude models morally objectionable has had to drop her major at **Memphis State University.**

The dean "told me there was no way I could major in art without drawing nudes," said Renee Burbridge, a 26-year-old sophomore. Soon after she voiced her objections, art department faculty voted unanimously to continue the use of nude models in figure drawing.

One instructor volunteered to teach Burbridge independently, but the department rejected the plan. "These kinds of allowances just can't be made for students," said Art Chairman Lawrence Edwards. He drew an analogy to English students objecting to certain books, or biology students refusing to dissect frogs.

Burbridge's objections were made on religious grounds. She said nudity in the classroom "was a disrespect to God, and it seemed to feed on the baser instincts. Why should Christian tax money be used to pay for nude models?"

— Collegiate Hedlines

*Toothbrush doesn't excite Hartford U.*

**HARTFORD, Conn.** — Artist Claes Oldenberg got a large brush-off recently from the **University of Hartford** board of regents.

The regents voted 3-2 to reject placing an Oldenberg sculpture on the UH campus, even though it wouldn't have cost the school anything. The proposed sculpture was a 23-foot-long toothbrush in red, white and blue.

The National Endowment for the Arts awarded the school a \$25,000 grant for the piece, and private donors matched that amount. But campus officials said the idea of spending that money on artwork while scholarship funds were lacking rubbed some people the wrong way.

"I think it reflects a sense that the university should not appear to be investing a large sum of money in something like this when we are being financially prudent with faculty salaries and scholarships," said UH President Stephen Joel Trachtenberg.

Oldenberg's previous works include giant lips on the Yale campus, a 38-foot flashlight at the University of Nevada and a baseball bat spanning more than 100 feet in Chicago.

— Collegiate Hedlines

## FOCUS

Editor..... Cathy Saathoff

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