

Princess of parody comes to A&M

Anna Russell to voice her attack

by Dana Smelser
Battalion Staff

Anna Russell was a lumpy British schoolgirl. Her heart was set on becoming an opera singer. But there was one problem: her voice.

She studied music seriously at the Royal College of Music in London. But when her voice was declared "an inferior organ" by her music instructor, she turned her talents to parody. And the rest is history.

The "crown princess of musical parody," as described by Time Magazine, will lampoon the classical music scene November 6 in Rudder Auditorium.

Although she has a rigorous training in classical music, Russell has made a career by showing how stuffy and tedious classical music can be. She is probably best-known for her 20-minute parody of Richard

Wagner's *Ring* cycle, a series of four operas by the German composer. Russell's rendition is the only grand opera in the world that comes in the giant economy package.

Russell's routines, all of which she writes herself, might best be described as a cross between a musicology lecture and a nightclub act. She aims her guns at English folk music, French art songs, German *lieder*, Italian opera and Gilbert and Sullivan. No style, period or composer is spared from her attack.

The Canadian-born comedienne, 70, has served up tangy tidbits of her humor for 35 years and it all happened by accident. She was living in Canada and was asked to prepare some comic routines for a fund-raising concert by the Toronto Symphony. A take-off on Wagner's *Ring* cycle was the result, and it became one of the

most celebrated spoofs in music history. Recordings and a major career followed.

After playing in America from coast-to-coast for two decades, Russell retired to Australia where she did some television and radio shows. She also wrote a bi-weekly article for the Melbourne Sun.

Russell began touring again, however, and left Australia for Toronto where she now makes her home.

On her tour, Russell is accompanied by pianist Frank Bartholomew, who has been performing with her for the last 23 years.

If you want to see musical satire of the highest quality, then visit Rudder Auditorium on November 6 at 8 p.m. when Anna Russell takes the stage.

Tickets are \$4.50, \$5.75, and \$7.25 for students and \$5.25, \$6.75, and \$8.50 for non-students. The tickets may be bought at the MSC Box Office.



Anna Russell

New wavers should go on Rhino hunt

Adrien Belew, *Lone Rhino*, Island

Although this album has been out a couple of months, *Lone Rhino* is just beginning to catch on. The main reason for this is "Big Electric Cat," a modern man-loves-car adaptation which sounds like a duet for a chainsaw and weed-eater.

The big electric cat is a car that obviously must be seen to be believed, as Belew proudly proclaims, "Wherever she parks, the concrete crumbles and the night rumbles."

Maybe you haven't heard of Adrien Belew. *Lone Rhino* is his first solo venture after an already-illustrious career play-



ing guitar for Frank Zappa, David Bowie, Talking Heads and King Crimson.

It's obvious that David Byrne has influenced his vocal style and Robert Fripp has taught him some interesting guitar effects. This is evident on "The Momur," which weaves a strange and wonderful tale ab-

out his wife who periodically transforms into an uncontrollable beast. In one instance "she backed me into a corner, tried to kill me with a broom and shouted personal remarks across the living room."

Lone Rhino is packed with Zappa-like tunes: "Stop It," "Adidas in Heat," and the title cut, a pitiful tale of longing about a zoo rhino who says "I'll never see my good old mud-bath."

"Hot Sun and "Native Guitar" are instrumental interludes, but unlike the fillers found on Zappa's albums, are fine examples of technical expertise in creating purely emotive guitar passages.

Another moving example is "Man in the Moon," which is dedicated to Belew's late father. David Bowie's influence on the vocals is undeniable.

If you're a new wave enthusiast (is new wave still new?),

you'll like Belew. *Lone Rhino* is an absolutely wonderful collection of various styles that is well-worth hunting for. In these days of mechanical music, *Lone Rhino* is a dying breed.

— Vic Sylvia

Musical weekend planned by Basement Committee



The MSC Basement Committee will provide a variety of musical entertainment this weekend when Zen Archer and X-Spand-X take to the stage.

Friday night, Zen Archer, a rock band from Houston, will perform in Room 212 of the MSC. Although the committee usually holds its concerts in Rumours, they moved the performance to a larger room in order to hold the large crowds they anticipate at this event. Tickets will be \$1 at the door.

X-Spand-X, a new wave band will be MSC Basement Committee's guest Saturday night.

This four-piece band plays the kind of easy, fun music that lends itself to listening and dancing. As one of Austin's most popular progressive bands, X-Spand-X boasts an extensive repertoire of tunes and original songs.

The band has performed at Club Foot and the Back Room in Austin, and in numerous clubs in Houston.

This concert will also be in 212 MSC and tickets will be \$2 at the door.

Both concerts are part of the Miller High Life '82 Rock series.

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