



Two Aggie Players interact in a scene from last fall's production of "Tango."

from four to six. In addition to teaching, Wenck says four of the new faculty will be directing plays, one will be a full-time designer and one will be a full-time costumer.

In addition to the increasing enrollment, the type of student will also change in the fall, Wenck says.

"In the past, since we had no department, most of our students were people that would change majors after they had been here a while and discovered us," he says. "But now that we've got the department, and we've put in some scholarships, people are choosing A&M out of high school. You know, coming as freshman and majoring in theater. So a lot of our majors starting this fall will be freshman, like in other departments."

Wenck says the new department has nothing but opportunity for growth because right now it's so

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"Culture, contrary to what seems to be the local idea, is not something you bring into the community," he says. "It's something the community builds for itself."

"So you don't get culture in a community by bringing in outside plays and outside concerts — that's cultural awareness. The best way to become a cultured community is to do plays and to develop your own musical and artistic and dramatic base."

"It may still be that our local culture is too much beer and the Hall of Fame and not enough Aggie Players and Stage Center and Community Orchestra (other local art programs) but all those programs are getting stronger and stronger."

"I think we're getting there — I think this area is not nearly the cultural wasteland that a lot of people think it is."

Two supergroups' new albums fizzle

By KARL PALLMEYER
Music Reviewer

IT'S BETTER TO BURN OUT THAN to fade away."

Neil Young sang that line about Johnny Rotten a few years ago. Neil was saying that Johnny Rotten had passed on in the true rock 'n' roll spirit. The Beach Boys should listen to Neil Young.

The Beach Boys have a hallowed position in rock 'n' roll history. The band's singles from 1962 to 1966 are brilliant. Although their lyrics weren't much — surfing, cars and girls — their music, especially the vocals, was innovative and different.

Brian Wilson, the genius behind the Beach Boys, suffered a nervous breakdown in late 1966. Rock 'n' roll was changing too fast and Wilson felt he couldn't keep on top of it. The songwriting fell to other band members. They were good at copying Wilson's style, but they couldn't take it any further. When Wilson started writing again he never recaptured his brilliance — he could only copy what he had done before.

Today the Beach Boys spend most of their time giving concerts. It's nice to hear the old songs about youth but it's sad to see fat old men singing them. Every other year the band tries to recapture their former glory by putting out an album of new material — a lot of musical garbage that buries a few moments of brilliance. Their newest album, "The Beach Boys," is no exception.

It contains one good song, two fair songs and seven bad songs. "Where I Belong" is the album's best song, and the best Beach Boys' song since "Sail On Sailor" in 1971. Written by Carl Wilson, this song achieves what the band has tried to do for the past 19 years. "Where I Belong" is just another love song, but it is a great love song. The lyrics are ten-

der and sensitive while the music is tasteful and appropriate.

"Getcha Back," which has been getting lots of airplay, isn't too bad. It has the body of a Beach Boys' song but it lacks the spirit. "I'm So Lonely," one of the few new songs written by Brian Wilson, is almost a masterpiece but, once again, something is missing.

The album's worst song is "California Calling." This shameful combination of three of their greatest hits ("Surfin' U.S.A.," "California Girls" and "Help Me, Rhonda") uses some Valley Girl-style lyrics to try to make the song sound contemporary. Most of the other songs are just as bad. The Beach Boys try to bring themselves up to date by using synthesizers and drum machines, but this only forms a background drone. They aren't using their voices like they used to. In the good old days the Beach Boys would use their voices to harmonize in many varied and unique ways, but now they just drone along with the synthesizers.

For the most part the Beach Boys are history. I don't know if I can justify a whole new album every other year for an occasional good song. Maybe they should give it up. As long as we can still go to the beach or the lake or even the pool with

"Endless Summer" on the jam box, we shouldn't have to ask for anything more from the Beach Boys.

MEN AT WORK'S FIRST LP, "Business As Usual," took the country by storm in 1982. The storm lasted well into 1983 when the band released "Cargo." Two years later the effects of the storm have died down. "Two Hearts" is not an album to start another storm.

When we first met Greg Ham, Colin Hay, John Rees, Jerry Speiser and Ron Strykert, these men from Australia surprised us. Their music was a combination of rock, blues, reggae, ska and few other styles. They used guitars, bass, keyboards, percussion, saxes, flutes and other instruments in a unique fashion. They sang about paranoia, Australia, love, war, robots, society, conversation, growing up, social classes, stardom and Vegemite sandwiches.

"Business as Usual" was a fun album. It was also one of the top selling albums of 1982 and 1983. The band tried unsuccessfully to repeat the formula with "Cargo." That album had a few fun songs as well as several songs that compared the complexities of love to the complexi-

ties of international politics. "Two Hearts" has so many of these love-is-politics songs that it's depressing to listen to the album.

"Two Hearts" is the product of the "new" Men At Work, minus Rees and Speiser. Ham, Hay and Strykert, who were its songwriters, have worked with session players to produce the new album. Gone are the unique instrumentations. Gone are the fun lyrics.

Only three of the ten songs on the album deserve mention. "Everything I Need," the song you hear on radio and MTV, shows the decline of Men At Work. The music is another bland love-is-politics song and the video is boring. The videos from "Business As Usual" were very influential in the selling of the album and the development of rock videos to come.

"Maria" is definitely the best song on the album. It is about a country girl who sails across the sea to find her dream. As typical in these stories, her dreams are crushed as she ends up working in a factory. The song has a slow Italian feeling with accordians in the background while a sitar is used for lead passages. Although not a happy song, "Maria" has a unique sound.

The last song on the album bothers me. "Still Life" is a nice song, a song about love never fully realized, but it doesn't sound like Men At Work. "Still Life" would be more at home with Journey, Kansas, Toto, REO Speedwagon, or any other typical American pop band. Maybe Men At Work is trying to sound like a typical American pop band — that's what bothers me.

Rock history is full of one-hit wonders. Several bands have released an album that shattered the charts, they racked up tons of awards and then they faded away only to be remembered in trivia contests. With "Two Hearts," Men At Work has placed themselves in the one-hit wonder category.

Albums courtesy of Camelot Records

