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Jane's Addiction headlines summer's hottest concert
Lollapalooza Festival rocks Dallas

By Kevin Robinson
The Battalion

As I walked into Dallas' Starplex Arena, it struck me as kind of an odd place for something that had been called the "Woodstock of the '90s."

The inside is carefully designed with modern food courts, restroom facilities, and a tree adorned landscape that gives it the appearance of an outdoor shopping mall or amusement park. The actual concert area consists of a covered area in front of the stage that contains the reserved seats for the shows, and a large sloping hill for general admission. Hardly the place to show off any kind of a non-conformist attitude.

The original idea behind the Lollapalooza Festival seemed like an interesting one. Jane's Addiction vocalist Perry Farrell had proposed a summer festival celebrating various aspects of a so-called "alternative" lifestyle. In addition to concerts by Jane's and other bands he would personally invite, there were plans for exotic foods, booths for local artists and craftsmen, stages for poetry readings and performance artists, and tables for organizations such as PETA and Greenpeace.

I don't know if that's the way the early shows really went, but by the time the tour found its way to Dallas on Aug. 23, the focus of the event was only on the music, with the rest of the festival thrown back behind the food courts selling beer and burgers.

As soon as I had staked a claim for myself on the hill with an old blanket, I wandered around looking for the rest of the festival. Alongside the obligatory concert souvenir booths selling shirts and buttons, the food courts were hawking overpriced edibles with the various bands names as a selling point. In one corner there was Jane's Addictive Food, Rockin' Rollins Beverages and Siouxie Shaved Ice. I had to stop and wonder who the marketing genius was that came up with the idea for having Butthole Burgers. It really makes you want to part with your money doesn't it?

A little after 1:00, the Rollins Band took the stage. Out of all

the acts of the day, I think I was most surprised to see Henry Rollins participate. Although he was in a kind of hazy spotlight in the 1980s as lead singer of the essential punk band, Black Flag, Rollins' solo career for the past few years has been relatively unknown outside of the punk underground. Since leaving Black Flag, Rollins has only become more intense and brutally personal. To see Rollins in a small club is to witness a painful catharsis enacted on stage. Seen in this carnival atmosphere, Rollins lost the sense of personal confrontation that feeds his club performances. The mood picked up when the Butthole Surfers joined the band for a 10-minute improvised jam, but Rollins' songs of anger, alienation and self-hate fell flat with most. At the party of Lollapalooza, Henry Rollins was like somebody getting sick in the car.

For those that have never seen these Texan acid-heads in action, a set list usually goes out the window by the second song. Surfers concerts usually seem to be determined more by the drugs they take backstage rather than any kind of logic. True to their reputation, the band lapsed into a long psychedelic medley of tracks from albums as old as 1986's "Rembrandt Pussyhorse" and the next year's "Locust Abortion Technician." They shied away from playing much of their more mainstream recent material, a move that proved popular with the audience and gave the band an excuse to do plenty of playing around with both the guitar distortion and vocal delay. All in all it was great stuff, but again somehow lacking the mood that this band usually generates by itself.

Although the general admission hill was crowded, many of the shaded reserved seats went empty for most of the afternoon. Seeing my chance, I got choice seats for Ice-T's performance, and the set proved to be one of the best of the afternoon.

I'd never really liked Ice-T all that much before. His macho posturing and gangster image has never been something that I considered all that hip, and his attitude about women put him on a low spot of rap performers that I

wanted to see. Nevertheless, it was Ice-T that got the entire crowd to their feet and dancing, even those baking on the hill. Strangely enough, it was Ice-T who had the most to say about the idea behind Lollapalooza, saying it was a chance for different people to experience different kinds of music and get to know each other. As if offering proof for what he had to say, Ice-T launched a rapid fire rap set that climaxed in his song "Colors" written as the theme for the film of the same name, and then immediately brought out his new band, Body Count, that tore into a set of hardcore songs provided the most intense set of the day. Just as Body Count seemed to be winding up their set, Henry Rollins made a reappearance and taking the mike from Ice-T, thrashed through the remaining three songs - this time really showing the audience the intensity he was capable of.

The appearance of the Violent Femmes shortly afterward only increased the excitement in the audience. Although rather lackluster after the assault of Rollins with Body Count, the Femmes had the advantage of familiarity with the audience. The band led the crowd through a sing along through most of their greatest hits, including "Blister in the Sun", "Add It Up" and "Kiss Off". Like the Butthole Surfers, the Femmes concentrated on their classic early material with only a couple of tracks from their new album, "Why Do Birds Sing".

Although the set didn't contain any of the bizarre cover song choices for which singer Gordon Gano is known, the band performed an upbeat set that put a relaxed edge on the crowd for the end of the first half of the day.

During the intermission, I had a chance to take in some of the people that were in attendance. I wish I could say that the crowd was really as varied as Ice-T had said, but from where I was sitting, it all looked pretty homogeneous. Sorry, but this was "alternative" in the MTVs 120 minutes category. And despite Ice-T's message of racial harmony, it looked like it fell on mostly young white ears.

Living Color emerged with on
See LOLLAPALOOZA/Page 6

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'Alternative Film Series' hosts foreign, avante-garde films

By Julia E.S. Spencer
The Battalion

Those of you who deplore Aggie's lack of an "art house" type movie theater will be happy to hear about Aggie Cinema's new Alternative Film Series, on Thursday nights this fall at 7:30 in the Rudder Theater.

Film series chairman Paul Alvarado-Dykstra says, "The series endeavors to provide our audiences with an alternative to standard Hollywood film fare," and specializes in "films from domestic independent [producers] and from foreign countries." He added that "an important quality for this series is that the films be critically acclaimed and/or award winners."

Programming for this series consists of foreign films, domestic and foreign avant-garde art films, and documentaries. Most of these movies never make it to smaller communities like Bryan-College Station because of the paucity of available screens and the smaller target audience.

The fall lineup begins September 12 with "Cyrano de Bergerac," a 1991 Oscar nominee for best foreign film (France), starring the ubiquitous Gerard Depardieu, in perhaps his finest performance yet; "La Femme Nikita," French director Luc Besson's stylish thriller about a beautiful but lethal hit woman (Anne Parillaud); and American comedy "The Tall Guy," starring Jeffrey

pard's satirical play; and "Ju Dou," (China) another 1991 nominee for Best Foreign Film.

"Iceicle Thief," "The Nasty Girl," "Heaven and Earth," "Metropolitan," "Subway," and maybe even David Lynch's "Eraserhead" are among the other films Aggie Cinema advisor Penny Ditton says will fill out the rest of the semester.

Regular Friday and Saturday night movies will continue, as well as the Midnight Series cult films and the December Animation Celebration. These movies are \$2 per person. The movie lineup for this fall includes "Silence of the Lambs," "Kindergarten Cop," "Sleeping with the Enemy," "New Jack City" and "The Rocky Horror Picture Show."

A fall schedule for September and October will be available in the Aggie Cinema cube, room 216 in the Student Programs Office. For more information, contact Penny Ditton or Paul Alvarado-Dykstra at 845-1515.

