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From AFRICA to **AGGIELAND**

Overcome with A&M's spirit and traditions, an African actor/student finds a world of difference between his hometown and Aggieland

> By Terri Welch The Battalion

n internationally ac-claimed black actor from South Africa has become

an Aggie. Rapulana Seiphimo, a freshman theater arts major from Soweto, a black township near Johannesburg, decided to attend Texas A&M for its ethnically diverse theater program. But it was the university that found

him and not vice-versa.

Dr. Roger Schultz, the professor-director who instituted multicultural theater at Texas A&M in 1985, recruited Seiphimo through the African Arts Fund (AAF), a non-profit support group in New York. "Multicultural theater in-

volves selective casting of individuals of various ethnic backgrounds in roles traditionally assigned to Anglos," Schultz said.
"The objective is to enhance the

play's meaning by creating characters of greater depth and more resonance. But Seiphimo has experienced much more than just the theater in his first month here at

"I went to the L.S.U. yell practice and game," he said. "I never imagined so many people coming together for such events.

It was strange, but fun.' Aggie traditions are not the only dif-ferences between Seiphimo's life in South Africa and his life in Texas. English is now a part of every aspect of his activi-

"I learned English mostly by talking to other people who spoke it and by talk-

ing with the white people in South Africa," he said. "But we also used it in junior high and high school to learn every subject. It was used as a formal language."
Seiphimo has spoken so much more English than he is

used to that he said he has even started dreaming in English. His native language is Tswana, used in the general area of South Africa

Having to grow accustomed to seeing and hanging around with so many Anglos and learning the culture are part of these new experiences for him.

"I am used to seeing lots of black people," Seiphimo said. "It is kind of scary on this side and there is a tendency here to be more loose about things that in



TED ALBRACHT/The Battali

Rapulana Seiphimo, freshman theatre arts major from Soweto, South Africa, wil play three roles in the Aggie Player's production of Shakespeare's 'The Merchant of Venice" on Oct. 3

my culture would be considered immoral.

For example, people here call out a name and mean come here by wiggling their finger toward them. Seiphimo said it is considered very rude to use a gesture to call someone in his culture.

a tendency here to be more loose about

"You can't say just 'Hi' to someone," he said. "You have to

ask how they are, if they are feel-

ing well, and if there are any

to him, but Seiphimo said he is

in terms of first year course, sec-

ond year course and so on, not in

and professors," he said, "It's

hats off. The professors take so

much time to make sure we un-

he and the students he is in class

He is not sure if it is because

These differences are funny

problems before settling down.

them as time goes on.

terms of hours.

derstand.

things that in my culture would be

considered immoral."

with are freshmen, but Seiphir said that in South Africa all the professors do is lecture and or answer questions on their ow time, if they have time. the "It is rewarding for an index vidual to be able to ask que shr

tions," he said. "At A&M

our hand and professor to "I am used to seeing lots of black people. plain something It is kind of scary on this side and there is

> to graduate f A&M in four ye but it is hard away from home

-Rapulana Seiphimo me," he said. "

It is quite tough, but I write all and that helps." His family includes one old brother, two younger brother and a younger sister who are good or ha still at home. He is sure th

would love to come here, but the

adjusting and going along with would be a difficult thing to them to do. "It is a far-fetched dream on it to tell his

The school system is something he said is also very different. In South Africa, they speak go the United States because to him. If and money," Seiphimo said. "It's nearby with a hard enough just to go and many more Capetown from Johannesburg Seiphimo is a long way fro

his home cities, but here he is no When it comes to lectures far away from another home, stage. He will make his coll giate debut when he plays three roles in the upcoming Aggit band in Mian Players' production of Shake not being cen speare's "The Merchant of the same thin Venice" on Oct. 3.

Guns

think they could use keyboardist Dizzy Reed as a permanent member of the band (even though I can hardly hear most of his lines). Former drummer Steven Adler is lost somewhere in a lawsuit against the band, and former Cult drummer Matt Sorum plays on most of the new tracks - but that's old news by now, anyway

My first impression of the

whole two-disc collection was the best; I'm a little disappoint especially that for 25 bucks, I or got 22 "new" tunes. But then I listen to it (and the louded I to the volume), the more I like whole thing. G'n'R fans will have to have them both. Those of y who aren't sure, get Use Your is sion II first, and it'll convince you

Continued from Page 7

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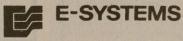
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