

# 'Tosca' portrays tormented lovers



By Timm Doolen  
The Battalion

Despite the prominence of the word "opera" in its title, OPAS brings very few operas to A&M, probably because of its perceived inaccessibility to mass audiences and because there's just not that many quality touring opera companies.

Regardless, the attendants at Giacomo Puccini's "Tosca" received a rare treat - a fine musical performance. The supertitles above the stage, which translated the Italian lyrics, helped make the opera accessible and understandable. The fine singing performances by the three lead characters, and the power of the original story by Puccini, made the production by the New York City Opera National Company very enjoyable.

The name of the play is given to the leading lady - Floria Tosca, a soprano, who is immensely jealous of her lover Mario Cavaradosi. Cavaradosi is a painter in a church in Rome around 1800, about 100 years before the opera was written.

At this time, Napoleon Bonaparte is trying to liberate Italy

from the Russians, and Cesare Angelotti is an escaped political prisoner who was trying to help Napoleon.

Angelotti runs into the church and finds his old friend Cavaradosi, who hides him. The police, headed by the evil Baron Scarpia, search the place. Soon after, Tosca enters the scene.

Scarpia plays on Tosca's jealousy by making it appear as if Cavaradosi was with another woman. Scarpia's men follow Tosca to a villa where the two men are hiding; Angelotti escapes, but Cavaradosi is captured.

In the next act, Cavaradosi is tortured while Tosca is made to listen. Under the pressure, she reveals Angelotti's hiding place, betraying Cavaradosi's trust.

Scarpia sentences Cavaradosi to death, but tells Tosca he will relieve him if she gives into his sexual eccentricities. She must decide if her love for Cavaradosi is powerful enough to succumb to Scarpia's humiliation.

This is a tragic, romantic melodrama as was typical of the operas of the turn of the century. While here are a few comic touches, the majority of the opera is deadly serious.



HUY NGUYEN/The Battalion

Quade Winter (in the role of Cavaradosi), left, consoles Sarah Johannsen (Tosca) in the second performance of "Tosca" Saturday night in Rudder Auditorium.

This type of entertainment is definitely not suited to everyone's tastes, especially not at Texas A&M. But this opera was a good first look into the art form as it was - a simple but effective and moving story of love, lost love and political and moral perversion.

The characters were all believable and the three leads on Friday night had excellent voices, especially Pamela Hoffman as Tosca.

Friday's performance in Rudder Auditorium was short of a sellout, and that's a shame, because students should take advantage of these rare cultural opportunities afforded to them. Maybe it was the high ticket price, or the lack of knowledge of the art form by the general public.

Nevertheless, "Tosca" was a wonderful production, and hopefully OPAS will continue to bring us such rare glimpses into fine culture.

# Aggie Players' 'Safe Sex' not a safe bet



By Timm Doolen  
The Battalion

The Aggie Players' "Safe Sex" is two short one-act plays about people who did not practice safe sex.

The first concerns two men, Manny (Rene Trevino) and Jake (Ben Olsen), though they could be just about anyone. They have an interesting dialogue, to say the least.

Manny asks Jake a haunting question, "Can you kiss?" He isn't asking about the quality of Jake's kisses, but rather if Jake can kiss another man without worrying about infecting him with a disease.

Manny is infected with AIDS, but doesn't want to admit it. Jake wants to have sex, and cares little of the consequences.

"Manny and Jake" would have made a better short story than a play because it utilizes none of the visual advantages of the stage. For instance, there was no plot to speak of, just a 20-minute discourse on living with and being afraid of AIDS.

To its advantage, Trevino provided the best performance of the night, by far outshining Olsen, who didn't act as smoothly.

The second play improved on the storyline - it's a drama of how an ex-wife and homosexual man deal with their lover's AIDS death.



HUY NGUYEN/The Battalion

Ben Olsen, left, and Rene Trevino portray two homosexual men in the Aggie Players' production of "Safe Sex" at the Blocker Fallout Theater.

The story was OK in this one, but the performances were still flawed. The two principals, Holly Hill and Mike Whiteside, started out cold and stolid, and although they warmed up considerably toward the end, it never really congealed.

When you go on spring break, please practice safe sex, but skip the play before you go.

"Safe Sex" will be playing through Friday at the Fallout Theater, 144 Blocker. Tickets are \$3. Call 862-2052 for information.

# Review



# 'Lawnmower Man' uses computer graphics to repeat horror movie cliches successfully

By Kevin Robinson  
The Battalion

"The Lawnmower Man" Starring: Jeff Fahey, Pierce Brosnan, Jenny Wright, and Geoffrey Lewis Directed by Brett Leonard Rated R Now playing at Post Oak 3

"The Lawnmower Man" stands as the best Stephen King movie that King had nothing to do with. In a play that has worked before to boost ticket sales to movies such as "Children of the Corn" and "Graveyard Shift," the makers of "The Lawnmower Man" bought the rights to one of King's early short stories and then turned the story into a two hour movie.

"The Lawnmower Man" however, goes one step further. Screenwriters Brett Leonard and Gimel Everett have scrapped King's story entirely and have written their own. Believe it or not, this is definitely for the best. King's original story was a gross little horror piece that appeared in "Night Shift," a collection of King's short stories.

Leonard and Everett's plot combines some of the oldest horror movie concepts with cutting edge computer graphics and technology. King's name isn't needed to sell this picture.

Pierce Brosnan plays Dr. Larry Angelo, a brilliant scientist experimenting with uses for virtual reality technology. His work is funded by the Shop, a secret government military op-

eration. As is usual in movies, the military is only interested in Angelo's technology to develop a weapon. Angelo, of course, is interested in advancing the state of humankind. What a humanitarian. When Angelo's experiments go awry and several men are killed, Angelo refuses to continue his military aspects of the experiments and takes a leave of absence.

Job Smith (Jeff Fahey) is a retarded gardener who tends to the lawn of Dr. Angelo. Smith is abused by most of the neighbors and jumps at the chance to play Angelo's "games" when the scientist takes interest in him. Angelo hopes to increase Smith's intelligence through the combination of his virtual reality programs and psychoactive drugs.

The experiment works all too well. Not only does Smith's intelligence improve dramatically, but he begins to manifest telepathy and telekinesis. His abilities advance even more when Angelo returns with Smith to the Shop laboratory. Unfortunately, these changes soon take a dark turn when the Shop switches Smith's benign drugs with the aggression promoting drugs of the former military experiment. His power continues to grow daily.

Despite plot holes the size of craters, "The Lawnmower Man" is a hell of a lot of fun. The story is straight out of the old Universal monster pictures. Obsessive scientist tampers with something man was not meant to know. Scientist creates a super-human. Something goes bad and he suddenly realizes that he's some-

how created a monster. It's a fairly cliched story and the "Lawnmower Man" milks the concept dry. There's even the old "Frankenstein" switch, only in this movie it's not brains, but good and bad drugs. Then there's the Shop laboratory itself, which looks so Gothic that Boris Karloff could walk around the corner and seem right at home. Instead of being tired, however, the old horror movie cliches are as comfortable in this movie as a pair of old jeans.

What makes "The Lawnmower Man" stand out even more from all the other mad scientist flicks is the incredible computer animation of the virtual reality sequences. Computers have come a long way since "Tron" came along in the early '80s. The film makes the most of the new technology with virtual reality sequences that are literally breathtaking. The computerized sex scene is worth the price of admission in itself.

Of course, virtual reality really has nothing to do with increasing intelligence or giving anyone psychic powers, but that's a moot point. Deprivation tanks don't really cause people to turn into cavemen and energy beings, but "Altered States" was a pretty cool movie. There's even a sequence that would have pleased Stephen King (after all the movie has his name on it). When Smith finally takes revenge on the townspeople that abused him, it's done in a style so reminiscent of the old E.C. horror comics that it could have been "Creepshow 3." King would have loved it.

MSC Town Hall Presents

# LYLE LOVETT



## Monday, March 30

Rudder Auditorium 8pm  
Tickets on Sale NOW  
Students \$10 Non-students \$14  
Rudder Box Office 845-1234  
or Foley's at Post Oak Mall  
All Seats Reserved

"I heard they were GOOD!"  
  
**NACHOS TO GO**  
For Deliveries Call 696-9327

1991-92  
**Campus Directory**  
Pick yours up in room 230  
Reed McDonald Building  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday - Friday.

### TEXAS A&M

#### BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

SEE YOU AT THE GAME

Next Games

Baseball	Mar 10	vs.	Lamar	7:00
Softball	Mar 11	vs.	Illinois State	6:00
Softball	Mar 12	vs.	Kansas	5:00
Softball	Mar 13 to 15	vs.	Aggie Tourn.	All Day
Baseball	Mar 13	vs.	Texas Tech	7:00
Baseball	Mar 14	vs.	Texas Tech	2:00 (2)

AGGIE BASEBALL ON KTAM...1240 AM

### BUSINESS STUDENTS

Let A-Plus Software's self test series help you improve your grades.

Accounting I	Management
Finance I	Marketing
Business/Commercial Law	Money & Capital Markets

Just \$9.99 plus \$1.26 (taxes, S&H)  
Send your name & address, course subject, and \$11.00 to:

**A-Plus Software, Inc.**  
11902 Jones Rd.  
Suite L 160  
Houston, TX 77070  
(Allow 2-3 weeks for shipping)

### ATS GROUP

#### PHYSICS 208, 219 TUTORING

\$6.95 PER SESSION

TUE 3/10	WED 3/11
PHYS 208 Sec. 510 - 14 ch 28, 29, 30 5:30 - 8:30	PHYS 208 Sec 510 - 14 ch 31, 32 6 - 8
PHYS 219 Sec. 504 - 11 ch 6 9 - 11	PHYS 219 Sec 504 - 11 ch 7 8:30 - 10:30

**846-2879** CALL MON - THU FROM 2 - 5 FOR DETAILS  
NORTHGATE, BEHIND 7/11, 2 PESOS

### Stop By Messina Hof

For Spring Break Essentials!

Pick up picnic supplies, wine, wine accessories and inflatable wine coolers in Messina Hof's Retail Sales and Tasting Room.

Open M-F 8-4:30, Sat 10-5 & Sun 12-4

Call 778-WINE (9463) for reservations.  
Hwy 21 east of Hwy 6. Right on Wallis Rd.

### Come Ride With Us...

## File For Elections!

\*Student Body President\* Yell Leaders\*  
\*Class Councils\* Student Senate\*  
\*RHA Officers\* OCA Officers\*

When: March 9-12, 9am-5pm  
Where: 139 MSC

Questions? Call Student Gov't at 845-3051