

Juggling act places second at Variety Show

'Throw Up' hurls comedy at Aggie audiences

By Dawn Hellums
The Battalion

Don't let the name fool you; "Throw Up," a combination comedy and juggling act performed by A&M students Lewis Pillsworth and Matt Jones, is definitely something you wouldn't spew over. Juggling anything from clubs, torches, machetes, fruit, and bowling balls, the two-man act is sure to provide an entertaining show.

"We're good showmen; we relate well to the audience," Pillsworth said. "People always seem to enjoy us and get into the show, which is fun."

The two perform their show in special events, talent shows, parades, and birthday parties all over the state. They made their fourth appearance at the MSC Variety Show Friday night and placed second. Jones said this is their favorite performance of the year because they enjoy performing in front of large audiences.

"We usually like to be around, and we're not afraid of performing in front of a large crowd," said Jones, who is a senior Speech Communication major. "Being the center of attention doesn't scare us at all; we're both natural goof balls."

Pillsworth and Jones began performing together four years ago after they met at Fish Camp. They both started juggling at the age of twelve, and made performances throughout their high school careers.

Jones' first interest in juggling came after he saw a man perform juggling tricks on television. He then started juggling oranges around the house until he improved enough to juggle clubs and other items.

Pillsworth's story was a little different.

"In the 7th grade I was at

home sick with pneumonia and a friend of mine bought me a juggling kit," Pillsworth said. "I liked it and kept doing it every since."

Jones, 6' 4", and Pillsworth, 5' 3", agree that their size difference is the vehicle of their show. Merely standing next to one another, reading "throw" and "up" across the front of their t-shirts brings the crowd to a roar. In their act, Jones crawls up on Pillsworth's shoulder and juggles torches while eating an apple.

"A lot of our comedy comes from our differences," said Pillsworth, who has a degree in Speech Communications. "Physical size is good humor for us."

Pillsworth and Jones are both self-taught jugglers. They come up with most of their tricks themselves, or learn from watching other jugglers. Pillsworth said most of their acts they put together just before they perform.

"Pressure is a great motivator for our stuff," Pillsworth said. "We take what we can do solidly and make the show around that."

With busy schedules, it's difficult for them to find a time to practice. When they do, it's between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium.

What makes their act unique is the comedy they use along with their tricks. They also write their own comedy lines, which they say isn't easy if they have to sit down and think them up.

"Most of our comedy comes to us right before we go to bed or in a dream," Jones said. "It's a sudden inspiration, you can't force it." They said they also find comedy through improvisations in their shows.

Juggling dangerous equipment such as machetes and torches is a highlight of their



DAWN HELLUMS/The Battalion

Matt Jones (top) and Lewis Pillsworth call themselves "juggling outlaws." They made their fourth and final appearance at Friday's 1992 Variety Show.

show. They pick a member out of the audience to stand in between them when they juggle torches, which they said is more nerve racking for the audience

member than them. "We just throw them up in the air and try not to catch the burning or sharp side," Jones said. "It keeps us on our toes."

Musical, comedy talent take tops at Variety Show

By Timm Doolen
The Battalion

The 1992 Variety Show offered a great diversity of entertainment and an interesting singing group as the winner. The barbershop quartet Night 'n Day, who took the top prize, sang music more than 100 years old.

The voices of Derrick Arelano, Kevin Kennedy, Clay Lipscomb and Tommy Newsom combined to make one beautifully harmonious sound on "Ride the Chariot," an old black Gospel dating back to slave days. The group's other songs were "I Wonder Why" from the '50s and "Hello My Baby," a turn-of-the-century barbershop classic.

"I was confident that we did a good job, especially after the first song," Newsom said. "When we hit that last chord, I thought we had a good shot. It was that intense of a song."

The group itself is about four years old, and all of the members except Newsom have been singing together for the past two years.

Newsom said when he joined at the beginning of this semester, the group set a lot of goals, one of which was participating in Variety Show. Little did they know that a few months later the group would be walking away with the first place trophy.

Although some of the members will be graduating in the next few months, the group plans to stay together and keep singing competitively.

Taking second place in the show was the perennial Variety Show favorite, Throw Up, the comedy juggling act of Matt Jones and Lewis Pillsworth. Head yell leader Ronnie McDonald assisted the duo by

standing in between flaming torches which were being juggled around his body.

This is the fourth and last appearance of Throw Up on the stage of Variety Show because both members are close to graduation.

"I'm sad that I can't do Variety Show again, but I'm glad I did it over the past few years," Jones said. "It's the biggest and best crowd."

Coming in third was Kyle Hutton, who performed two country songs, "You Don't Count the Cost" by Billy Dean and his own "Center Stage Someday." In the latter, he extolled his dreams of someday hitting the big time in country music.

Rounding out the performances were a "variety" of acts covering a broad spectrum of artistic disciplines.

Christy Welch, Craig Smith and the groups Bayou, Flashback '40s and the Polkadets, offered a diversity of musical entertainment.

Welch and Bayou provided mainstream pop and rock music with "It Always Comes Back to You" and "Heart of the Matter," respectively.

Craig Smith featured a medley of Jerry Lee Lewis songs and even lit a half-circle of the stage on fire during "Great Balls of Fire."

Flashback '40s featured World War II-era featured harmonies from Joanna Spiars, Margey Moore and Kim Turner.

The Polkadets displayed the humor of 11 members of the Aggie Band under the guise of a German oompah band.

Drum Major and Student Body President Steve Beller provided most of the narration, while freshmen Joel Lang and See Variety Show/Page 6

Aggie Players finish off strong season with 'P.S. Your Cat is Dead'

By Timm Doolen
The Battalion

The Aggie Players finish up a strong year with a delightful production of "P.S. Your Cat is Dead."

This Fallout Theater production features a bizarre, modern story by James Kirkwood about two unlikely companions who slowly start to grow on each other.

Clay Loveless plays Jimmy Zoole, an actor who's down on his luck after losing his Broadway and soap opera jobs on the same day - New Year's Eve. On top of this, he has been robbed twice in the past three months, his girlfriend leaves him during the play and, (you guessed it) his cat dies.

But things start to turn his way. He finds a burglar in his house and knocks him unconscious. So that he will have company and a little fun on New Year's Eve, he ties the burglar up and holds him hostage.

It turns out that not only is this

the same guy who robbed Jimmy twice before, he is also bisexual and makes some suggestions to both Jimmy and his former girlfriend, Kate (Amy Jimenez).

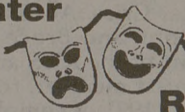
As the night progresses, the two quit bickering and settle down into some serious conversations about their pasts, their losses and their lives. Jimmy plays life too safe, and Vito, the burglar, has had to deal with a lot of problems Jimmy probably never could have imagined before the encounter.

By the end of the play they've formed an awkward, if tenuous, friendship, and their two worlds come to some sort of mutual meeting ground.

This is a refreshing original play - there's no grand, spectacular messages to be drawn from it, just a few humble and unique ideas. And it works very effectively, especially in a small theater such as the Fallout.

The wonderful performance by Loveless makes the show, and it is nearly

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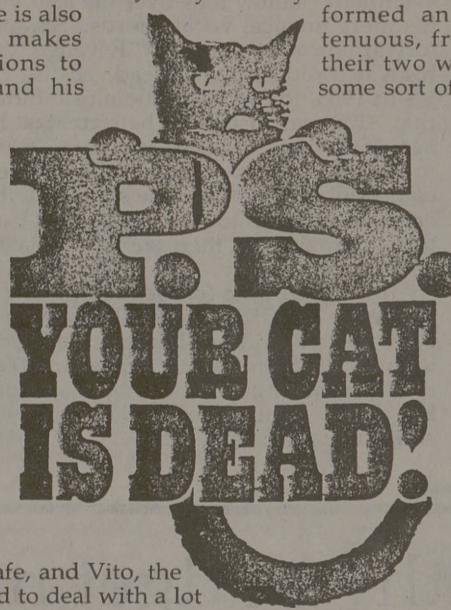
Review

matched by that of Sam LeVassar as Vito. The two have a definite rhythm and feel well for each other. This is one of the few non-professional plays where I really believed in the plausibility of the characters throughout the entire production.

There were some minor flaws, such as some comedy that fell short and a few lines that sounded a little hackneyed. But these were minor distractions of the script in an otherwise solid show.

This play rounds out the Aggie Players' season and Loveless' performances at Texas A&M. Loveless, who is by far one of the most talented actors at A&M, is leaving to study drama at New York University. Loveless will be missed.

"P.S. Your Cat is Dead" runs tonight through Saturday at 8 p.m. in the Fallout Theater, 144 Blocker, with a Saturday matinee. Tickets, which are \$4, can be purchased at 152 Blocker (862-2052).



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