

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Susanna Sharpe and Samba Police will bring global melodies to downtown Bryan on Saturday night

By TRICIA MARTINEZ

Staff Writer of THE BATTALION

Susanna Sharpe and Samba Police will answer a call in Bryan Saturday night as they bring Third World music to the Stafford Opera House.

Susanna Sharpe and Samba Police last appeared at Stafford Opera House this past May. "I really enjoy our appearances in Bryan-College Station," Sharpe said. "I didn't have any idea that there would be so many receptive people to our music, and I was really pleasantly surprised," she said. "We've always received a really warm welcome in BCS."

Sharpe said most of the band's music will be sung in Portuguese. Samba Police's five members are Sergio Santos, percussion; Russell Scanlon, guitar; Steve Swelling, drums; Jeff Haley, bass; and George Oldziej, keyboards.

Scanlon writes all the band's original music. "He's very versed in jazz as well as Brazilian music," Sharpe said. "He also really loves African music, so some of his music will have that influence. He is pretty eclectic."

The manager of Stafford Opera House, Randy Elmore, said he is excited that the band will be back to play.

"Last time they really drew in a great crowd," Elmore said. "A lot of the international students and people who are into international music came out and it was a real good time."

A good time is definitely what Susanna Sharpe and Samba Police try to give their audiences with their wide variety of Brazilian rhythms, which range from samba reggae to rocking guitar sounds.

"Brazilian music has such a great beat and it's really danceable," Sharpe said. "Not every song sounds the same so there is usually something for everyone in the music. The language also has such an appealing sound, even if you don't know what the words mean. It's not that hard to start to like it because the music is real catchy."

Sharpe said not very many people do the type of music that she and Samba Police perform.

"I think we've been doing it the longest and the most consistently," Sharpe said. "There are certainly people who have been in-



Susanna Sharpe and Samba Police will appear at the Stafford Opera House Saturday night at 9 p.m. Tickets are currently on sale at Marooned Records.

involved with Brazilian music in a serious way in Austin, but I really don't know of very many Brazilian bands in Texas."

Sharpe and her Samba Police have played at events like Austin's Carnaval Brasileiro and Pecan Festival, Galveston's Mardi Gras and several festivals in San Antonio.

Sharpe said she enjoys performing, which she began doing in 1983.

"The more I performed the more I wanted to keep doing it," Sharpe said. "It's only been in the last few years that I have actually said OK, this is it, this is my business and my profession."

Susanna Sharpe and Samba Police are three-time winners of the Austin Chronicle's "Best Latin Band" award.

Sharpe said the band is currently working

on recording. "We have one recording out now," Sharpe said.

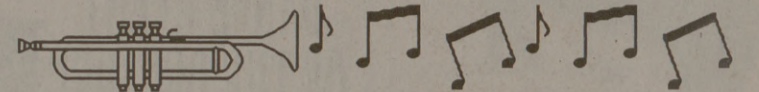
"We are just very anxious to get something new out, so we're working and we're going to try to see if we can get a record label interested."

Sharpe said the crowd can expect a great show Saturday with all types of music being played.

"We'll do three sets of an hour long that includes great dance music. Mostly upbeat stuff, I mean now and then we will do a slow, romantic one," she said. "Some of the music we do is all drums and that is so much fun. We just really have a good time."

Saturday night's performance will begin at 9 p.m. at Stafford Opera House.

Chamber Music harmonizes Texas A&M



By ANAS BEN-MUSA

Staff Writer of THE BATTALION

A small theater is filled with an audience in rapt attention. On the stage, a small ensemble of musicians play. One of the musicians subtly flicks the strings of a violin and produces sweet notes that rise in the air and holds the audience in a shroud of tranquility.

The ensemble is not an orchestra or a major symphony that plays complex pieces of music by famous conductors and composers. Small ensembles or chamber music present a different aspect of music.

"Chamber music ... is a more personal type of music," said Margaret McGarther, senior lecturer in the music program of the Department of Philosophy and Humanities. "It is usually held in a much smaller auditorium."

The audience is not an observer, but a part of the music, McGarther said. The audience sits so close to the ensemble that it almost feels like a part of the group.

Started in 1986, The University Chamber Series, presented by the College of Liberal Arts and the Department of Philosophy and Humanities, gives Texas A&M students the ability to experience the novel characteristics of chamber music.

Yet, this year the University Chamber Series has suffered financial difficulties.

"The University Chamber Series has been funded by the College of Liberal Arts and by private donations," said Werner Rose, coordinator of music in the Department of Philosophy and Humanities. "With the stringency that has come about with budgets this year, that is one of the things that was eliminated."

This year the Chamber Series' budget is funded by private donations and ticket sales, Rose said.

In addition to the Chamber Series, the Department of Philosophy and Humanities' music program sponsors the Brown Bag Concert Series.

"It's a weekly, noontime series that's been going on for four years," Rose said. "The University Chamber Series features professional musicians usually in smaller or solo ensembles dealing primarily with repertoire played in the evening."

In addition, Rose said the Chamber Series has a responsibility to present music that mirrors current thinking and music from around the world.

An Yao, a renowned Chinese musician, will perform this spring, playing the long zither, a traditional instrument of East Asia.

"We need to make our university audiences and students aware that there is a long tradition of beautiful music in cultures other than Western," Rose said.

On the other hand, the Brown Bag Concert Series offer much shorter and smaller concerts that are very informal. The Brown Bag Series is free and runs on Wednesday afternoons.

"We tend to have a much greater variety of music in this program," Rose said, "everything—solo piano, guitar, folk singers, or jazz."

The response to the series has been very impressive, Rose said.

"They have caught on like wildfire," Rose said, "and in no time at all the music room was overflowing and for several concerts we had to turn people away."

Rose solved the problem by broadcasting the Brown Bag Concerts live on Texas A&M's radio station, KAMU.

The future of the two series is a hopeful one due to the Bryan-College Station community's enthusiastic response to the series, Rose said.

KTSR 92.1

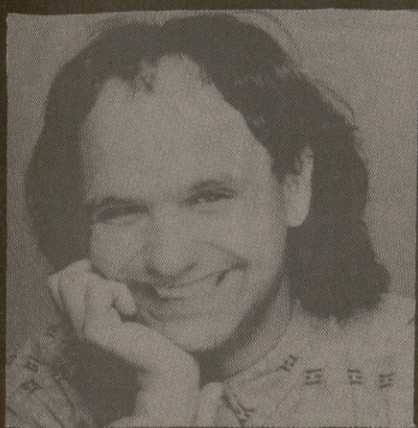
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