

AGGIELIFE

Nudie by Nature

Live Oak Nudist Ranch offers relaxation and recreation without all the clothes

By Sterling Hayman
THE BATTALION

Last weekend, a group of people at Live Oak Ranch took advantage of the gorgeous weather. The adults played volleyball, sunbathed and swam while the children ran around and frolicked under the cool stream of a squirting water hose. ... and they all were naked.

Live Oak Ranch, located 35 minutes south of College Station on Hwy. 105 between Navasota and Brenham, is a family nudist resort that allows members and guests to relax and recreate on its 25 lush acres without the restraints of clothing.

Although nudism is frowned upon by many people, Kay, who has been a member of Live Oak for more than three years, insists that there's nothing wrong with it.

"It's a growing trend," Kay said. "More and more people are finding out that it is a very wholesome environment for families and couples."

The Fourth of July Weekend kicked off the 20th annual National Nude Week, and dozens of people kicked off their clothes at Live Oak Ranch.

"Many people just have a total lack of understanding. ... people tend to confuse nudity and sex."

Debra Peterson
-Director of public affairs for the American Association for Nude Recreation

Kathy Fredericksen, an A&M civil engineering graduate student, and Pete Cooper, a junior A&M philosophy student, decided to scout out Live Oak Ranch last weekend for the first time.

Both Fredericksen and Cooper had been to other nudist camps before but said Live Oak was different.

"Most of the places we have been have been beach oriented," Cooper said. "This place is more like a recreational park."

In fact, the recreational image of fun and games is one that Live Oak Ranch and other nudist resorts proudly tout.

Debra Peterson, director of public affairs for the American Association for Nude Recreation, said people have many misconceptions about nudist resorts.

"Many people just have a total lack of understanding," she said. "A lot of times people tend to confuse nudity and sex. Once they visit a nude resort or beach, they realize that that's not the case."

Fredericksen said many people are apprehensive about visiting nudist resorts because they are worried about how others will react.

"It's not like they're going to come out and everyone is going to be staring at them," she said. "Once they get here and they see how everyone acts, then their fears are going to be relaxed."

Cooper said people feel more comfortable visiting the resort once they set their mind to it.

"Half the battle is making the decision to come," Cooper said.

More and more people are making that decision to expose it all.

Peterson said the AANR has more than doubled its membership in the past 10 years. The national organization now boasts a membership of 46,000 people.

"People discover that nudism is relaxing," she said. "Some equate dropping their clothes with dropping all of their stress."

The resort offers many forms of fun and frolicking for resort members and visitors. They can sport their skills on two volleyball courts, give basketball a shot on a half-court, make a few waves in the swimming pool, or try their chances at a game of pool or ping pong in the clubhouse.

But the entertainment doesn't stop when the sun goes down. For night owls, Live Oak Ranch also holds dances, cookouts and campfires in a covered pavilion.

One group that is noticeably absent from the population is that of A&M students.

But Kay said that Live Oak Ranch provides the perfect environment for college students.

"It's a great place to just relax in the shade and study," she said. "Several students that we have grown to know that have come out in the sum-

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Maggie Lesnik and Ken Veseleny, both from Houston, frequent Live Oak Nudist Ranch on weekends.

Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

Retro craze won't let music memories die

As if it wasn't bad enough the first time around, the music of the '80s is making a comeback before anyone even had a chance to forget it. This '80s nostalgia trip is known as "retro," and it is taking over radio stations, clubs and even dance halls.

The retro craze was described as "an amiable memory trip" by Brett Vance, operating manager of 103.9 KCRM-FM, the station's sponsors "trash disco" and "retro" nights in and Diamonds.

"People hear these songs and think, 'I remember, I was doing this when I first heard the song,'" he said. "It brings back memories."

Vance said that although the station's analogs of '80s music to find its "retro" cues, they provide the majority of ideas.

"Come on Eileen" by Dexy's Midnight Riot gets requested at least as much as current songs," he said. "It's more popular now than when it first came out."

Music fans have to wonder why a decade ended only five years ago is already being ad nauseam by a generation that should remember the good ol' days.

It could be that the music patrol is determined to keep us from forgetting all the fine music heard when growing up. Or maybe we're just trying to keep the music of our youth around in an attempt to convince ourselves that we are getting older.

The '80s weren't that long ago or that so there must be some other explanation. Fascination with the music. For our trip to the past, we most likely owe the retro-craze to disc jockeys who have managed to cut most of the garbage and stick to songs that spark fond memories - or at least songs that are so cheesy that they're still good for a laugh.

And so we flock to the flashback nightclubs. Places like Denim and Diamonds are coming to expect our nostalgia.

"We weren't sure what the response was to retro night," Vance said, "but people just came."

Revisiting the '80s makes us realize a few years can do to the mind. People thought the '80s were the crappiest decade ever while we were living in them - except for the '70s. It has also come back with a vengeance in the form of trash disco. And when disco came back, it brought the clothes with it. That's one thing the retro craze has yet to embrace, and our luck doesn't run out.

The good news is that time apparently all wounds. Growing pains and the Iran-Iraq affair alike have been thrown to the wayside the name of "the good times" and "retro."

So someday - in about 10 years - we'll be back on the '90s with utter fondness that the bad memories. Thank goodness, because there's a lot of music (the Offspring) we like to forget.

AMY UPTMOR
COLUMNIST



Holography exhibit adds new dimension to traditional art

By Amy Collier
THE BATTALION

Art is not defined by just paintings and sculptures. And it doesn't have to be one-dimensional.

The Office of University Art Collections and Exhibitions is presenting "New Directions in Holography: The Landscape Reinvented" in the J. Wayne Stark University Center Galleries until August 20. The exhibit features 15 works by seven international artists that combine holography, the utilization

of special films that appear to be three-dimensional, with the traditional art subjects of nature and landscapes.

Catherine Hastedt, registrar and curator of the Stark gallery, said the unusual combination is attracting a large, varied audience.

"I knew it would have tremendous popular appeal," Hastedt said. "The traditional audiences are coming simply because they love art. We're trying to get non-traditional audiences in here. We want to show them that visiting an art museum is fun."

Hastedt said the technology of holography has attracted a non-traditional audience to the gallery - men.

"Men think it's cool," she said. "This is more like science. Men who won't come to see bluebonnet paintings will come to see this. Their response is overwhelmingly positive."

Holography was invented in 1949 but was not considered an art form until the late '60s. Holograms are produced with lasers, and unlike photographs, they are three-dimensional. Because holography is not widely practiced by artists, the only place it is permanently displayed is the Museum of Holography in New York City.

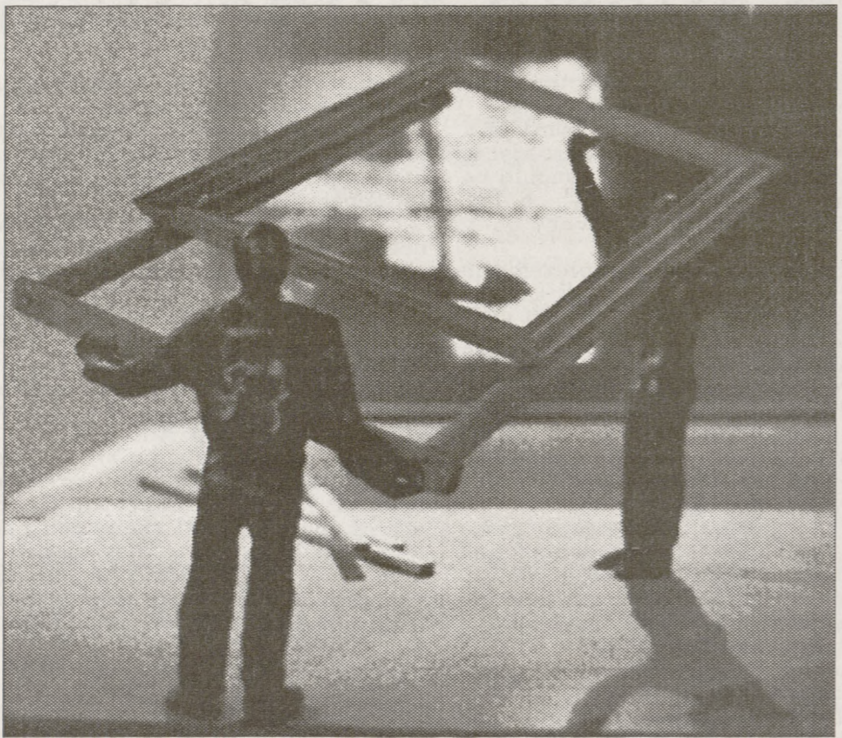
Rene Paul Barilleaux, chief curator of the Mississippi Museum of Art and coordinator of the traveling exhibit, said holography has technically changed art.

"This medium allows artists to record three-dimensional reality on a two-dimensional surface rather than merely create its illusion through pictorial techniques such as perspective," Barilleaux said. "Holograms question the nature of what we see and how we perceive it. They have the ability to simultaneously create movement in space and time."

Hastedt said people find a different kind of entertainment in looking at three-dimensional images.

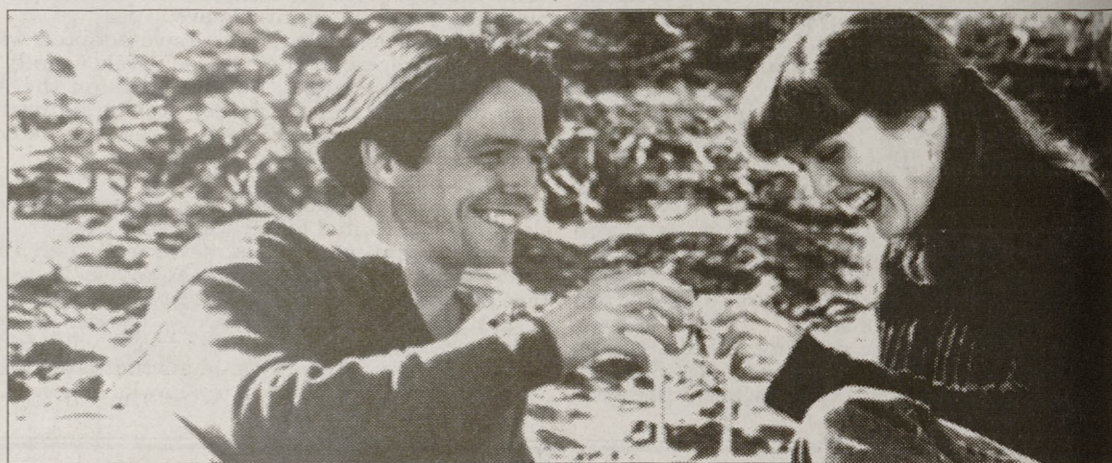
"It's like going to Disneyland and riding on the haunted house ride when the ghosts sit next to you," she said. "People want to reach out and grab the pictures. Everybody's just fascinated because it's still a very new thing."

People of varying heights see different pictures in the same



A holographic work by Dan Schitzer titled "Window Installation" is part of an exhibit at the Stark gallery in the MSC.

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Predictable comedy nothing worth toasting Nine Months fails to deliver

By Libe Goad
THE BATTALION

MOVIE REVIEW

Nine Months
Starring Hugh Grant and Julianne Moore
Directed by Chris Columbus
Rated PG-13
Playing at Hollywood 16
★ ★ 1/2 (out of five)

With Robin Williams' comic genius and Hugh Grant's good looks, *Nine Months* had half a chance of being entertaining.

But unfortunately, director Chris Columbus turns a potentially charming love story into a predictable slapstick comedy.

Samuel Faulkner (Grant) and Rebecca Taylor (Julianne Moore) live a perfectly happy five-year relationship complete with blooming careers and the freedom to jet off on romantic weekends without leaving too much behind.

Chaos disrupts their perfect world with Rebecca's unexpected pregnancy and desire to start a family.

Suddenly, Samuel faces his worst fear - commitment.

The film launches into a forced romantic comedy where Samuel, a successful psychiatrist, deals with his fear, and the couple meets a few surprises along the way.

However, the surprises often fail to be humorous and the obvious attempts at humor found in Columbus' silly *Home Alone* films surface at the most predictable moments.

The film carries a few redeeming scenes, especially when Samuel and his friend Marty (Tom Arnold) beat up a foul-mouthed man in a dinosaur suit named Arnie.

But the comedy steps backward with Samuel's dreams that Rebecca is a praying mantis, ready

to devour him after sex. Another weak moment comes with a ridiculously frantic trip to the delivery room.

However, out of one of the weakest scenes comes a solid performance. Robin Williams' seasoned improvisational comedy is one of the few highlights. He plays a nervous obstetrician with faulty English and no experience delivering man babies, just other animals. Fortunately, Columbus, Williams is able to run with this and break the pattern of forced comedy found in the rest of the film.

Grant is also fascinating to watch with his British charm. However, this role seems to be more than he can handle. He stammers his way through the film and tries too hard to be funny.

Moore outshines Grant's mediocre performance and provides a strong dramatic role amidst the slapstick humor.

Samuel and Rebecca are joined by an over-friendly couple, Marty (Arnold) and Gail (Columbus). They compliment each other well, but they both struggle through the slapstick humor.

Without any depth in the humor category, most of the film's intrigue comes from watching Grant's character cope with commitment in a calm and realistic relationship.

With recent developments in Grant's life, the theme ironically hits close to home. Samuel faces temptations with another woman.

Now, that's comedy.

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