

AGGIELIFE

Vertigo

W.A.S.S

Northgate's image

Kristina Buffin
THE BATTALION

If you build it, they will come. That was the philosophy of the Oates family, owners of The Cue, when they decided to build the new dance club, Vertigo, on Northgate.

"We have had The Cue now for four years, but A&M is drawing a new type of crowd that doesn't play pool," David Oates said. "These are the Doc Marten, leather wave people who go to Austin and Dallas on the weekends."

"We polled the students and found out what exactly they wanted and we said, 'if you want it, we'll build it.' I feel we hit the right on the spot and we have given them what they want."

What A&M students got was a new dance club, unique from any other in the Bryan-College Station area, that plays the type of music that people want to listen and dance to. It doesn't require a two-hour drive to get to.

"We would go to Dallas just to go to the clubs on the weekends," junior international studies and economics major Karen Lucci said. "The music they play is completely different from the radio. Now, some of the stuff is being

played on the radio because it is just starting to go mainstream. It is a really different experience."

Vertigo is not only for these "Doc Marten, new wave" types. In fact, Vertigo has drawn a cross-section of the A&M population.

"Our philosophy was to create a neutral place for all types of students to come in and to enjoy themselves," Johnny Oates said. "Whether you're a biker, in the Corps, a cowboy or of any persuasion, no matter who you are as long as you're legal and decent (dress code),

"It (A&M) is not just a little conservative school anymore."

*— Brian Blackman
senior English major, deejay at Vertigo*

you're welcome."

Vertigo looks small from the outside. However, it boasts the biggest dance floor in town. The inside totals about 3,000 square feet. The decor of the club will always be changing because the Oates are looking for the student's input.

"We have a demoted fireplace from Beetlejuice, and we named the club Vertigo because everything is crooked," David Oates said.

"We started half-speed because we wanted people's input. We still want to put in 3,000 watts of power, more neon paintings, and last weekend, the crowd wore out the floor and the sides, so we have to repaint. The music will draw the crowd, but the building will keep them."

The Oates, who have owned many businesses in the area, have not had much experience with this type of music and atmosphere, but said the presence of Vertigo will give Northgate a new edge.

"We are starting to draw people to Northgate who have never come before," David Oates said. "I was talking to Don Ganter (owner of the Dixie Chicken) and we anticipate that Northgate will soon be like 6th Street when they fix the parking problem. There is something here for everyone."

Disc jockey Brian Blackman used to throw raves for students who did not want to drive out of town to go dancing, but said he that now they have the opportunity to stay in town and have a

good time listening and dancing to the music they enjoy.

"It is both the music and the atmosphere that is drawing people here," Blackman, a senior English major said. "Some of the music we play is not unheard of. A lot of it is from England, and you hear it in some of the big cities' clubs. We're about 10 years behind in Bryan-College Station. The atmosphere is very much party-oriented."

Although the grand opening of Vertigo is not until tonight, the Oates opened the club last weekend to see what kind of response they would get. The result

was long lines at the door. The club was so crowded, the industrial-strength paint that forms the spirals on the dance floor was rubbed off.

"Every day, a friend comes up to me and tells me how cool it is," Blackman said. "I have overheard people in my classes talking about it. People have always assumed that this type of club would not go over in College Station because it is not mainstream."

"But now A&M is a real college town because A&M is turning the tide; it is not just a little conservative school anymore."



Vertigo, the new dance club on Northgate, officially opens tonight.

Photo illustration by Tim Moog and Amy Browning, THE BATTALION



Amy Browning, THE BATTALION

Image Injustice

Yesterday's heroes' lives, ideas cheapened by cash culture

ALEX WALTERS

COLUMNIST



America, we have sold our soul to the devil.

It takes a practiced observer to find the evidence of our blasphemy, but it's there, lurking in the corners and in the walls of infidelity that are to be enjoyed by the hippest of the hip. These places, these dens of mediocrity, are the sucking wounds that are draining life from American culture.

Merchandising Nostalgia
The Gap tells us James Dean, Jack Kerouac, Ernest Hemingway and Jimmy Stewart all wore khakis. I tell you that I don't give a damn rat's behind for what kind of pants they wore, but I do care about what was going on in their minds.

These people are staples of American culture because of their raw and powerful creative individuality. Kerouac and Hemingway lived their own lives. Kerouac wrote his masterpiece, "On The Road," while he was — on the road. Hemingway wrote "The Old Man and The Sea" after being the story in Cuba.

When people smear posters of Jack Kerouac all over their dormitory walls without at least perusing his tales, they bastardize Kerouac's entire existence with their banal following of a cheap trend.

The Tainted Spirits
The fountain of youth, where creative energy oozes from its source, has run dry.

The problem may be that, in the 63 years since alcohol again became legal, the spirits have lost their wicked and sultry flavor. Becoming intoxicated once called for a reaction far beyond lifting a paper cup and bellowing, "woooooo!"

When Dorothy Parker, saucy bard of the jazz age, indulged, her purpose was to tap the essence of her soul and put it into reality. Parker and her fellow revolutionaries at the Algonquin Round Table had no intentions of using alcohol to make one another appear sexually appealing.

They drank to soak out the misery of their souls. The methods they chose may not have

been admirable or pure, but the end sometimes justifies the means.

The poetry and musings that came from the Algonquins, and groups like theirs, was the kind of creative output that could change the world.

Today, we have groups and gatherings like the ones found at the club Vertigo in College Station. At Vertigo, you would be hard-pressed to find poetry or originality, but you just might get to see a man dance with his jockstrap on the outside of his stretch pants.

Cure for Pain
For some of us it may already be too late. The generation before, the post-war baby boomers, used drugs to dull the ache of the Vietnam war. Up until the age of Aquarius, people lived their lives without creating a fantasy realm where nothing is real and nothing is your fault.

Now, we pay for the sins of the father. Sucked into an endless mire of mindless games of follow-the-leader, today's culture is settling for the easy cure.

Whatever happened to the elixir of the man who perfected the blues, Robert Johnson? Where have you gone, Charlie Parker? Why have you stopped singing, Louis Armstrong?

The howling sounds these musicians coaxed from the well of their souls is the medicine we all need. These people and their creation will serve as a better cure than buying a new T-shirt with Jack Kerouac and a quirky phrase printed on the front.

Not Enough Foggy Days
I remember hearing a rendition of "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square" performed by a street musician on his tenor saxophone in Dallas.

It was well past midnight in the rain at Thanksgiving square. The sax was dented and rusty, but the tones poured out clear and dry. The song came out, raw and honest, from the soul.

Thinking of that song keeps me sane when I am reminded of the demise of the American culture. That song is the sound of the devil dying as we buy back our soul.

Alex Walters is a junior journalism and theater arts major.

Breedlove's sound inspired by blues, but defies categorization

By Libe Goad
THE BATTALION

Down-on-the-bayou, Texas blues-rock comes easy in these parts.

On any given weekend, blues improvisational guitar wafts down from the windows of the 3rd Floor Cantina in Bryan or from the doors of its neighbor, the Dixie Theatre.

This Friday night, Dixie Theatre will make a fresh start with Breedlove, a bluesy, funky, Austin-based band that has a style of its own.

The band's style is born from grass-roots music.

Dan Dyer, lead vocalist and songwriter for Breedlove, said the band looks to the blues for inspiration, but avoids putting it into the blues category.

"Blues are definitely one of our roots," Dyer said, "but we can maintain that foundation without strictly being a blues band."

But roots run deeper than musical influences in this band. Guitarist Tyrone Vaughan-Fullerton, son of Jimmie Vaughan, comes from the famous Vaughan family.

Drummer Jason White also comes from a family of musicians. His brothers are Billy White of the Billy White Trio and Chris White, the bassist for the Ian Moore Band.

Dyer said the Vaughan bloodline has had no influence on the band's style of music. Stevie Wonder, Al Green, Marvin Gaye and Bob Dylan have been the strongest musical influences on the band's style.

"All of our backgrounds are different," he said. "We play whatever comes out of us."

Breedlove's story began a year ago when Dyer, Vaughan-Fullerton, bassist Josh Dawkins and drummer Jason White played to-

gether in their spare time and evolved from there.

At the time, Dyer sang in a band called Rainshine, where he began to perform with Vaughan-Fullerton. White and Dawkins played together in a blues band called Third Power.

After the two sets met and began writing songs together, they realized forming a new band was meant to be. They debuted in Dawkins' living room, where friends and family served as musical guinea pigs.

Then they launched into the Austin music scene, playing at Antonio's and Steamboat, and opening for the Ian Moore Band, Little Sister and Storyville. Three months later, keyboardist Ezra Reynolds joined them.

Now, a year later, things are still going well.

The music in Breedlove's repertoire consists of some blues songs, but the style of music varies as the band members contribute ideas, Dyer said.

The Austin Chronicle described the music as "part Doors, U2 and all things blues."

Dyer scoffed at the comparison to the band headed by Jim Morrison, and launched into a discussion of musicians of the '60s.

"Our songwriting is better than the Doors," he said. "The Doors were based on sex appeal."

Breedlove's music comes from personal experience, and they often stray from the love topic, unlike Lenny Kravitz, Dyer said.

"It's about being real," he said. "All the music is from our heart and souls."



Breedlove

tape for sale at their shows features "Peregrine," a "what-if" song; "Garden," an environmental song; and "Waste Away Boy," a song about heartbreak.

Dyer calls his lyrics "soulful" and "from the heart," but the band's name, Breedlove, has little to do with the songwriter's passions.

The band members, frustrated with arguing over an appropriate name, sat down with a phone book and let fate take its path.

Dyer said the first thing they turned to was an advertisement for Breedlove Realty, so they decided on Breedlove as their band name.

"It's not the name that matters," he said. "The music makes the band despite the name."

The band's music has been making tracks in Texas. A typical week for Breedlove consists of sports, sports, sports, and going on the road Wednesday through Sunday. The band's tour route has expanded out of the Austin city limits to Houston, Dallas and Bryan.

None of the band members have outside jobs, Dyer said, so they are free to pursue their other interests.

"Everyday is potentially a Saturday," he said.