

AGGIE life

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Lewis in Aggieland

By April Towery
THE BATTALION

Lewis, a local band of Texas A&M seniors, is beginning to see what it's like to achieve its goals and make its dreams come true.

Drummer Gabriel Cortinas, a marketing major, said they plan to take their music as far as it will go.

"We all want to get degrees, but eventually we want to make music our career," Cortinas said. "A year from now, we'll reevaluate where we stand and see how much we've accomplished."

Although Cortinas will graduate next May, he plans to remain in College Station and delay other career opportunities if things are going well with the band.

The other members are expected to graduate in December 1997.

Bass player Jeff Truly, a civil engineering major, said future album releases are up in the air.

"We've talked to a guy in Dallas who has a lot of connections," Truly said. "We've sent our demo around and have talked about putting a single out."

Lewis will be featured on a compilation album to be released in August with several other local bands.

Vocalist and guitarist Brett Tohlen, a biochemistry major, said the band has changed a lot since it recorded its compilation album a year ago.

"We completed it in two days," Tohlen said. "We hardly ever play the songs on that tape anymore."

Truly said the band members were still getting to know each other when the compilation album was recorded.

"Back when we recorded the tape, Brett and Matt were doing a lot of acoustic stuff on their own," Truly said. "We were still learning to play together and now it's more of a group thing."

Vocalist and guitarist Matt Beaton, an environmental design major, said the band's live performances are much better than its recordings.

"We have a lot of energy, and try to pull in the crowd," Beaton said. "We haven't been able to succeed in doing that on tape."

Lewis members are known for their on-stage theatrics, such as decorating themselves in tinsel and Christmas lights for a show at Northgate Cafe.

"When we first started playing, we were

just trying to get it right," Cortinas said. "Now we can express ourselves visually and feel a lot more comfortable."

Beaton said Lewis projects a different image from most local bands because its songs are intense and meaningful.

"One of my favorites is 'Life Enveloped,'" Beaton said. "I don't know if it will be a hit single or anything, but I really get into it."

"Life Enveloped" tells the story of a person at the lowest point in life.

Tohlen said if everything is going wrong, the song gets the band back together.

"It's about finding out what God means

to you, when reality really hits you in the face," Tohlen said.

Tohlen said there is more to Lewis's music than just making noise.

"We focus on the arranging of music, an art that's been lost," Tohlen said. "Instead of just verse, chorus, verse, chorus, we try to throw in something different."

"Our goal is to say what we have to say through our music. We're not trying to save the world."

Although several songs reflect the band's thoughts and ideas on God and Jesus Christ, it does not consider itself a Christian band.

"We're all four Christians," Beaton said, "but we don't use our music as evangelism."

Truly said the Christian music scene is too limiting.

"There are good Christian bands out there like Poor Old Lu and Prayer Chain, but no one knows about them because of bad distribution," Truly said.

Truly said for now, they are having fun with the new songs.

"We get really excited about playing new songs, so those are the ones we spend our time practicing," Truly said. "We can't just pull out an old one we

haven't played in months and play it live without screwing it up."

Beaton played in a band called the Yellow Trucks in high school, but did not come to A&M with the intention of being in a band.

He said the way the band members come together shows that the entire experience was meant to be.

"I was getting settled into my dorm in Moore Hall my freshman year and was playing Ned's Atomic Dustbin on my stereo," Beaton said. "Jeff just walked into my room and introduced himself and said, 'Hey, Ned's Atomic Dustbin. I thought everyone here listened to country.'"

"Since then I have never seen Jeff just go up to someone like that."

Truly and Tohlen played together some in high school in Fort Worth. In contrast to Beaton's college plans, they had come to A&M looking to play in a band.

Tohlen said as freshmen, he and Beaton played guitars in their dorms.

"We recorded a tape on the balcony with this awful tape recorder," Tohlen said. "We would stay up until 4 a.m. playing guitar, and then not be able to go to class the next day."

Cortinas had also been looking to join a band and saw fliers that Lewis was looking for a drummer. But the band lost Cortinas's phone number.

"We didn't rediscover Gabe until the end of our freshman year," Truly said. "We lost his phone number and didn't know his last name. We had no way of getting in touch with him, then one day, just out of the blue, I saw him on campus."

Recently Lewis has proved they are serious about their music by playing out of town shows. Tohlen said, so far Lewis has had a good response in Dallas.

"There's not a lot of people there that don't know us already," Tohlen said. "But the people who have never seen us play before have responded really well."

103.9 announcer Mark McKenzie has given Lewis radio coverage on his Sunday night program, Exposure.

Beaton said Lewis is slowly gaining popularity as a band.

"We've done pretty well for being unknown," Beaton said. "We started out playing a lot of free shows just to get our name out, but now we're making, like, 25 cents a day, collectively."



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

Lewis, a band comprised of Texas A&M seniors, will be featured on a compilation album this August along with several other bands. The four members plan to stay in College Station past graduation if all goes well with the band.

Aggies Fool(s) for Love at Fallout Theater

By Shannon Halbrook
THE BATTALION

When four Texas A&M students learned the Fallout Theater was going to be empty, they decided to put it to good use.

Starting tonight, the students, all upperclass theater arts majors, will present their rendition of Sam Shepard's Fool For Love.

The Fallout Theater is a "black-box" theater in 144 Blocker used mainly for dramatic experimentation. The show will run tonight, Friday and Saturday of this week, and then next week on the same days. All shows will begin at 8 p.m.

"The seating has been switched several times," senior Todd Reynolds, director and actor in the show, said. "It's a place where you feel comfortable to do the out-of-the-ordinary."

Acquiring the theater was an easy step.

Senior Haven Powers, who has taught an acting class for the past two summers, said she knew the Fallout would be unoccupied.

Fool for Love is set in a seedy motel room in the Mojave desert, and focuses on the loving and often violent relationship between Eddie and May, half-siblings who are also lovers.

As the play opens, Eddie has just located May after she left him. The couple is forced to confront their past when Martin, a friend of May's, comes over to take her to the movies. The only other character in the play is the Old Man, a ghostly figure of Eddie and May's father. He drifts in and out of the action, but the characters constantly feel his presence because of the damage he wreaked on the family.

The students play dual roles on and offstage.

Reynolds said the students have complete control, receiv-

ing no production help from the drama department.

"Everything's volunteer," Reynolds said. "Everything is 100 percent our efforts."

The planning began when Powers, who plays May and is the sound editor, was looking for a monologue she liked.

"I'd never found a monologue that I felt comfortable doing," Powers said. "Then Todd showed up on my doorstep with this play and said, 'Take a look at this.'"

Reynolds said he had his eye on the play for some time.

"My inspiration for doing Fool For Love was about nine years ago in an acting class," he said. "This girl ... did a monologue from the play and it really affected me. It stuck with me for nine years."

To complete the cast and crew, Reynolds approached two of his friends in the drama department.

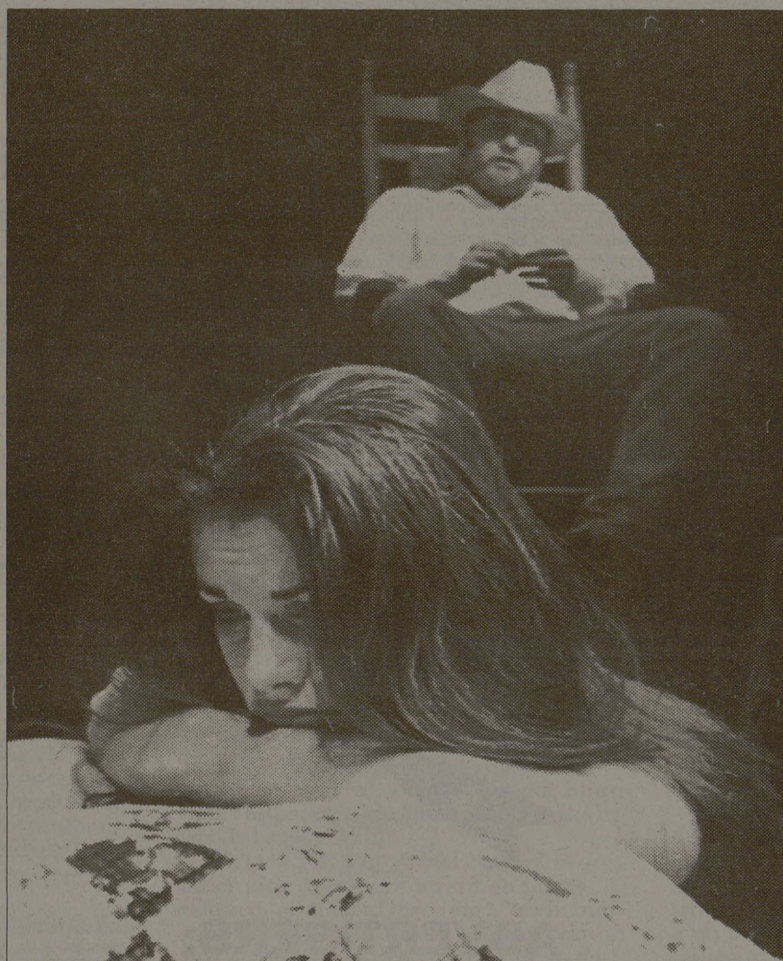
Dan Grimm, a junior who plays Eddie and also serves as set designer, said he jumped at the chance to appear on-stage, which he hadn't done since high school.

"(Todd) said, 'Dan, I've got this project I want to do and I think you and Haven would be great as the leads,'" Grimm said. "And you can also be technical director and whatever else you want to do." He was approaching me to act, which I haven't done since I've been here, except in a few classes."

Reynolds cast junior Billy De Leon as Martin. Though De Leon said he is "a playwright by nature," he also has experience as an actor, sound designer, assistant stage manager, and even a weapons expert for such plays as Othello and Of Mice and Men.

The students rely on method acting, which involves using their own experiences and feelings to shape their characters.

"I chose my actors very well," Reynolds said. "Pieces of



Gwendolyn Struve, THE BATTALION

Haven Powers, a senior theater major, and director Todd Reynolds, act out a scene in the play "Fool for Love" at the Fallout Theater.

the script remind them of things in their own personal lives. They get into it, and sometimes you have to spend 10 minutes holding them and helping them recover."

Grimm and Powers agreed that the acting is often grueling. De Leon said he drew upon his first college date to accurately portray Martin's nervousness.

None of the players have seen a professional production of Fool For Love, which was

first performed in 1983. But they feel their lack of experience with the play helps them forge a fresh interpretation.

"I was in a production in high school of Death of a Maiden, and we did all our blocking before we saw the movie," Grimm said. "If we had seen the movie (before), we would've been corrupted by its ideal. You don't want to do something the way it's been done before."

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Alcohol poisoning can lead to sickness, death

By James Francis
THE BATTALION

College life at Texas A&M and other universities across the nation may differ in various ways, but are united in some.

Elements linking students together include clubbing, throwing or attending parties and hanging out with a group of friends.

It is no secret that these social gatherings are connected among themselves by a common bond — alcohol.

The rate of alcohol consumption and alcohol poisoning in college seemingly never decreases.

Students go out, have a few drinks and become intoxicated, and sometimes these actions have fatal results.

Charley Benbow, operating manager at the Brazos County Alcohol Education Center, said alcohol poisoning stems from introducing more alcohol into the system than the body can handle.

"Your body processes roughly one drink an hour, any faster and you become intoxicated," Benbow said.

Benbow said vomiting is the body's way of signaling to an individual that there is too much alcohol in the system.

The stomach attempts to purge the body of the alcohol, which usually has already moved into the bloodstream.

Benbow said, alcohol remains

in the body's system overnight and a hangover can result, which is similar to going through symptoms of withdrawal.

"If you drink enough where you have a hangover the next day," he said, "you drank too much and abused the alcohol."

Benbow said the relationship between age and alcohol-imbibing behavior is prompting many to focus.

"The most dangerous age in your lifetime is 19 years old," Benbow said.

"You see businessmen and professionals go out and get a DWI but you don't see them having chug-a-lug contests and taking shots as is common with college students."

Benbow said at 19 years of age, students die mostly because of alcohol consumption and inexperienced driving. He said to prevent death and other mishaps with alcohol, measures should be taken.

"[Students should] slow down in their consumption per hour and cut down on the strength of the drink," Benbow said.

One factor is the popularity of new beer products with higher than normal percentages of alcohol.

"There's a lot of difference between a six-pack of Icehouse and Miller Lite," Benbow said.

In addition to watching alcohol levels, Benbow said students should always know exactly what they are drinking.

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