

Drag brings show to Dixie

By CHRISTOPHER RIVERA
 THE BATTALION

With alternative becoming the norm, and the angst-filled grunge movement passing into the night, the music universe seems ready to embrace a fresh style. Enter The Drag.

With a driving psychedelic pop sound and flair for biting harmonies, the S.C. band, sounds more like British pop stars Oasis and Blur.

Chance Walls, The Drag's lead singer, said that his home town of Myrtle Beach, S.C. has had little influence on the band's music.

"It's not where you live, it's where you are at," Walls said.

The British-pop-looking and sounding band got its start in 1992 when Walls answered an ad placed by lead guitarist Trey McManus and bassist Billy King. At first, the trio churned out garage-sounding punk originals.

"We stuck out like a sore thumb when we first started," Walls said, "because we were these runty little 17-year-olds, and we were out there playing our own songs to people who were used to these old guys playing covers." Walls said.

But by adding McNeill and Tucker in 1994, their sound took a different turn.

"We started concentrating on sounds instead of lyrics," Walls said.

The songs on *Satellites Beaming Back at You*, The

Drag's Island Records debut, offers a glimpse of a musical turn that gives nods to influences ranging from '60s psychedelia of The Byrds to surf rock of The Beach Boys, and '90s techno gods, The Chemical Brothers.

"Even though there is no super direct influence, it's obvious to us that we're trying to do things . . . in as many directions as possible," Walls said.

The Drag's frontman, Walls, said music is "like giving birth, being creator."

"If we can create a feeling in someone else, then it's a good chain reaction," he said.

Axeman McManus cites the guitar work of U2's the Edge as a major influence and describes his own music as "a blend of 60's pop melodies with some crunch and fuzz added into the mix which sounds familiar but new."

Walls said he feels energized during live performances, and said the key to putting on a good show is being confident.

"To think you can get up in front of people at all takes some attitude," Walls said.

"It's not like we're egotists or anything, but you have to feel like you're the best band in the world. That's always been part of rock 'n' roll. It's not so much arrogance but self-belief. If we don't believe in ourselves then who will?"

The Drag will bring its retro rock show to the Dixie Theatre this Saturday.



Snider steps into the spotlight

By AARON MEIER
 THE BATTALION

The title of Todd Snider's latest album, *Step Right Up*, has some literal meaning behind it. With this album, Snider hopes to take a major step in the direction of his dream of making it big in the music industry.

Snider was born in Portland, Ore., but spent a good portion of his childhood moving around the country. He said his transient family's lifestyle had a major influence on his music. Snider's music career started when he was young, and he said he has enjoyed playing and writing music ever since.

"It all started with a G-Chord," Snider said.

Snider was raised on many types of music. It was his father's eclectic musical taste, which Snider said influenced his style of music and his sense of humor.

"My dad listened to a lot of Creedence Clearwater Revival and Waylon Jennings," he said. "In fact, he reminds me of an 'Al Bundy' kind of dad."

Snider said his nomadic childhood and adolescence added a wide range of musical flavors to his music.

Snider said his residence in Houston did not provide the

most comforting of atmospheres for which a young person could hope.

"Houston just wasn't my thing," he said. "I didn't enjoy that town at all."

When Snider was 15 years old and living in Houston, he ran away from home. After returning to his family, they relocated to Austin, where he made his professional

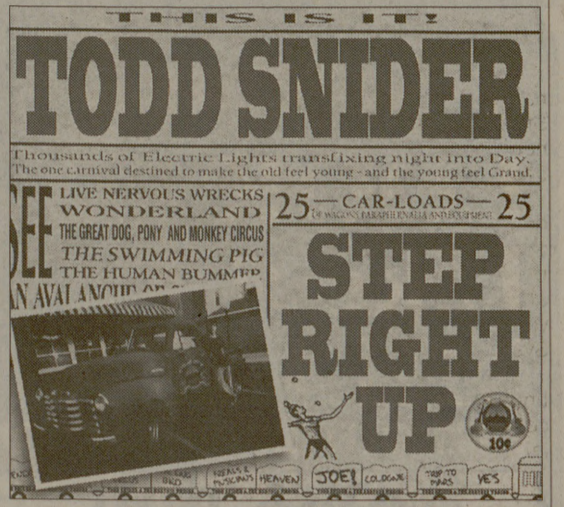
musical debut a few years later. Snider said that the atmosphere in Austin is much more conducive to artists. He said that he particularly enjoyed the local music scene that is extremely supportive of new musical acts.

Snider said his work is difficult to categorize.

"[Snider] is a puzzlement to those who like their music easily categorized," said a press release from MCA Records.

Todd said he is proud of his unusual sound.

"My music has kind of an inbred mountain man on crack-



rock sound," Snider said. The album was originally supposed to be a concept album about two mountain guys named Elmo and Henry a MCA Records press release said. However, Snider said that this is not true.

"I basically sat in front of the executives, drunk, and made up the entire story," Snider said.

Elmo and Henry appear on the album, but as the title of the first song on the album.

On his latest release, Snider roams from style to style. One

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WEEKEND PREVIEW

Thursday, Sept. 5

Todd Snider, a country and western musician, will play with opening band Jasmine Blue at the Dixie Theatre tonight.

The Fire Ants, a local classic rock band, will play at Fitzwilly's tonight.

Electric Gypsies, an eclectic rock band, will play at Chelsea Street Pub & Grill tonight.

Red Eye Gravy, a local acoustic band, will play at Bullwinkle's tonight.

Friday, Sept. 6

Austin rock band, Sister 7 (formerly Little Sister), will play with opening band, Tina & the B-side Movement at Dixie Theatre tonight.

Miss Molly and the Whips, a rhythm & blues band from Houston, will play at 3rd Floor Cantina tonight.

Local blues musician, Ruthie Foster, will play at Fitzwilly's tonight.

Electric Gypsies, a eclectic rock band from Austin, will play at Chelsea Street Pub & Grill tonight.

Local rhythm & blues band, The Wicks, will play at Sweet Eugene's House of Java tonight.



Sister 7

Saturday, Sept. 7

Pushmonkey, a rock band from Austin, will play with opening band The Drag at the Dixie Theatre tonight.

Johnny Dee the Rocket 88's, a classic rock band from Austin, will play at 3rd Floor Cantina tonight.

Texas Twisters, a local classic rock band, will play at Fitzwilly's tonight.

Electric Gypsies, an eclectic rock band, will play at Chelsea Street Pub & Grill tonight.

Diana Gordon, a folk musician, will play at Sweet Eugene's House of Java tonight.



The Killer Bees

The Killer Bees (above), a Reggae band from Austin, will play at the Tap tonight.

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