



*La Bohème* is a story of impoverished young lovers in 19th century Paris.

*A tale of*  
**Frenchfriends**

**La Bohème** relates timeless struggles of youth

By MELISSA PRICE  
THE BATTALION

After breaking up with his girlfriend of two years, the only thing a devastated Joe Aggie wants to do is grab a beer with some friends — until he realizes he spent his last dime on rent.

Although this situation may sound familiar to many college students, this sob story is not exclusively a modern-day occurrence. *La Bohème*, an operaset in 19th-century Paris, details the lives and loves of four friends struggling to make ends meet.

MSC Opera and Performing Arts (OPAS) will present the New York City Opera National Company's production of Giacomo Puccini's *La Bohème* Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. The performance, the first opera OPAS has featured this season, will be held in Rudder Auditorium.

The story centers on two young couples who, despite

hardship, manage to laugh about their misfortunes while keeping the romance alive. In sharp contrast to the brief-yet-passionate love affair between the poet Rodolfo, and Mimi the seamstress, is the on-again, off-again affair between the painter Marcello and the seductive Musetta.

Jeffrey Cranor, OPAS director of audience education and development and a senior journalism major, said students will enjoy *La Bohème* because the characters deal with issues students can relate to.

"It focuses on the daily struggles college students have to face, such as, 'How are you going to pay rent,' and, 'Where are you going to eat?'" Cranor said. "This show is not alien to anyone. They are portraying the lives of every A&M student, every t-sip, every college student, up there on that stage."

Suzannah Taylor, OPAS chair and a senior speech communications major, said the National Company gives awe-inspiring

performances that can be enjoyed by a diverse audience. She said supertitles, which are similar to subtitles used in foreign movies, allow the audience to easily follow the plot while still experiencing the dramatic overall effect of the Italian opera.

Taylor said quality performances, spectacular sets and supertitles make the National Company's presentation of *La Bohème* unique.

"They have really maintained opera as a classical art form, but made it accessible to a new generation," Taylor said. "If you have ever seen opera before, this is as good as it gets. If you have never seen opera before, this is a great opportunity to do so."

Sheri Scoggins, OPAS director of children's programming and a junior history major, encourages students to take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity. Although many people view opera as an elitist art, Scoggins said *La Bohème* is easily understood by everyone.

"The opera itself is very elegant, but the story is written for the common people," Scoggins said.

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**Student's devotion to stars proves idolatry alive and well**

By AARON MEIER  
THE BATTALION

Kathy Bates won an Oscar for portraying one in *Misery*. Robert Deniro flopped at the box office last summer playing one and Rosie O'Donnell is Tom Cruise's biggest one.

They are all fans, known for extreme devotion. In past decades, such stars as Elvis, Marilyn Monroe and Babe Ruth had scores of devoted fans. Today's fans also find themselves devoted to a wide variety of performers and athletes.

Jamie Schneider, a sophomore biomedical science major, has devoted herself to Kurt Cobain, the late lead singer of the band Nirvana. Schneider said she followed Cobain's and Nirvana's career from its beginnings.

"I remember when Nirvana was an underground band," Schneider said. "The reason I liked them so much was because of Kurt's lyrics. He was

a real individual and didn't mind saying what was on his mind."

Schneider said she found Cobain's lyrics mysterious, and they did not always make sense to her. It was that sense of the unknown that she said also attracted her to the enigmatic rocker.

When Nirvana's *Nevermind* started climbing the charts after the release of the single "Smells Like Teen Spirit," Schneider said she felt like she was on the cutting edge of music.

"At first I thought it was really cool that the band I liked so much was hitting it big," Schneider said. "After a while, though, it sucked because everyone just liked him [Cobain] because he was popular."

Schneider said her reverence to Cobain and Nirvana solidified right before the band's *In Utero* hit record stores. She has five posters of Cobain in her room. She also has little pictures from magazines.

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