

Texas Music Festival swings into Aggieland

The eighth annual event showcases orchestral and chamber music

BY RHONDA REINHART
THE BATTALION



There is more to summer entertainment than basketball tournaments and box office blockbusters.

The Texas Music Festival, a month of orchestral and chamber music performances, will be held throughout the month of June. The College Station chamber concerts will be performed at 7:30 p.m. at Rudder Theater on the first four Mondays. An orchestra will perform on Saturday June 7.

Werner Rose, Texas A&M music coordinator and pianist for The Western Arts Trio, said the Festival enhances summer life on campus.

"When I came here in 1988, there was nothing going on musically during the summertime," Rose said. "That's when we got involved with the Lyric Art Festival, which was organized by the director of the University of Houston School of Music. This program evolved into the Texas Music Festival in 1990, and this is our eighth annual Festival."

He said the music scheduled to be performed includes classic masterpieces and interesting 20th century pieces. Festival participants are advanced students and young professionals.

"These are not high school students," Rose said. "They must be graduate students or studying for

their doctorates."

Alan Austin, general manager of the Festival, said the competition for Festival applicants is stiff.

"We get applications from all over the world," he said. "There are about 100 accepted, and those numbers are staying about the same each year, but the Festival grows every year in its high level of incredible performers. It takes time to establish a name, and more and more people are starting to know who we are."

He said a pre-formed trio from Germany is the Festival's most recent success story.

"The St. Petersburg Quartet was a guest at the trio's performance at last year's Festival," Austin said. "They were so impressed by the group's performance that they called their manager. This trio came to the Festival as students and left with a manager."

The Festival staff includes guest artists and conductors, including members of the Houston Symphony and the University of Houston School of Music faculty. The chamber concerts are performed by the faculty,

professional musicians who are members of quartets, trios and other small groups, Rose said.

He said people want to see excellence, and they will.

"The arts always speak for themselves," Rose said. "These concerts will leave a high-quality impression because of high-quality music and high-quality performers."

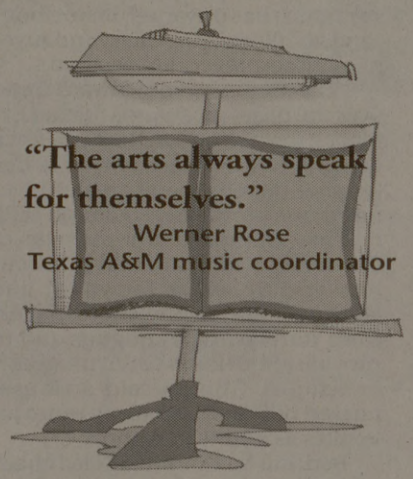
Kass Prince, executive director for the arts council of the Brazos Valley and one of the Festival's donors, said Festival organizers had to go through a competitive grant process to receive funding.

"Not all applicants get funds," she said. "A peer panel review system made up of citizens of the community decides which programs receive funding, and it is based on the project's merit."

After each concert, audiences are invited to meet the artists at receptions in Rudder Exhibit Hall.

"I invite everyone to come," Rose said. "We've worked hard,

and it does our hearts good to know that people are enjoying the music."



"The arts always speak for themselves."
Werner Rose
Texas A&M music coordinator

Living with new 'roommates' requires a few minor adjustments

About a month ago, I moved off campus into a house with two of my friends. I have my own room, I don't pay rent, and occasionally my roommates cook my dinner and do my laundry.

It sounds like the perfect living arrangement, but for some reason, people cringe when I tell them I live with my parents.

It just seemed unnecessary to pay for campus housing when my parents lived six stoplights away from campus since I was seven years old.

Don't get me wrong; I'm not always convinced I made the right choice. There are advantages of living at home.

There's family time. Throughout the years I lived in a dorm, no room- ever made me stay home on a Saturday to watch *Gone With The Wind*. And parents always think it is enticing to say they're eating popcorn.

Typical scenario:

Me: "Mom, I'm being crowned Miss America this evening, then I'm going out to dinner with Leonardo DiCaprio."

Mom: "But, honey, I made popcorn."

And the stuff they call popcorn just isn't. It is butter-free, salt-free, fat-free, taste-free packing foam in a bowl.

Then there's the phone. Not that I ever get any interesting phone calls, but if I did, it might be a little embarrassing to have my father answer the phone. I have this recurring nightmare that he's going to tell my friends not to call after my bedtime. And I wouldn't put it past him. He's a little unusual. A little background on my dad: he drives a yellow jeep he calls "the chick magnet."

I'm also a little afraid of being grounded. Every memory I have of high school includes having my phone and radio taken away because of my algebra grades.

When I was in high school, I had to clean the

house with Mom every Saturday. When I moved back home, she reminded me of this tradition. And there's nothing I'd rather do than wake up at 6 a.m. to the smell of Soft Scrub.

So far, my parents have been relaxed about my comings and goings. I tell them where I'm going, they get the names, numbers, addresses, shoe sizes and blood types of every person I will come into contact with, and everyone's happy. If I tell them I'm going to a party, my mother likes to call in advance and make sure the parents will be home.

Another problem arises when friends come over to my house. Every picture taken since my birth hangs somewhere in the house for all to see. Also, my parents enjoy talking with my friends. A little too much, perhaps.

Recently, my former roommate and her husband stopped by on their way out for the evening. My mother decided she needed to take them in the backyard, show them the garden and make them sit down and eat some strawber-

ries. She invited them to stay and watch a movie, but they declined. Even the popcorn wasn't convincing enough.

My parents are usually easy to talk to and are, for the most part, enjoyable individuals. But there's a time when they're not — when the Astros are playing. My parents become zombies when their favorite baseball team is on TV. This is the only time our television is not permanently set on Country Music Television. They wear matching T-shirts and stay glued to the TV like two-year-olds. I could tell them that I was nine months pregnant and had been smoking crack in the bathroom, and I can promise they wouldn't bat an eye if a game was on.

But there are plenty of advantages of living with my parents. I can't complain about home-cooked meals, free room and board, help with changing a flat tire, occasional gas money and the chance to spend time with the people who know me best.

And let's not forget about the popcorn.

Lifestyles Editor



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