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Sign up by 5pm Tuesday, June 24 at the MSC Forsyth Center Galleries (across from the Aggieland Post Office).
For more information please call 845-9251.

Memorial Student Center Visual Arts Committee
<http://www.msc.tamu.edu>
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If you have special needs please call in advance at (409) 845-9251.

Blockbuster CrockFest

Rock concert fails to deliver entertainment goods

JAMES FRANCIS
Opinion Editor
Junior English major

The day is Friday, June 20, 1997 — it is 8:30 p.m. Here is your mission should you decide to accept it: Drive to Blockbuster RockFest at the Texas Motor Speedway in Dallas, surpass a crowd of almost 400,000 people, enjoy alternative rock's most celebrated artists, survive the drive back home to College Station and live to tell about it. This is definitely a "mission impossible."

Special Agent James Francis and his supervisor, Special Agent Helen Clancy, departed Aggieland at exactly 8:30 p.m. The wheels of our '85 metallic-gold Toyota Camry spun in the direction of the concert arena with Agents Erica Roy and Raven Dusek trailing us in their white '95 Mazda MX-6 (we were cloaked in disguise).

We arrived in Dallas a little after midnight and were joined by other field workers (Battalion crew and friends) for a pre-show itinerary meeting (college party).

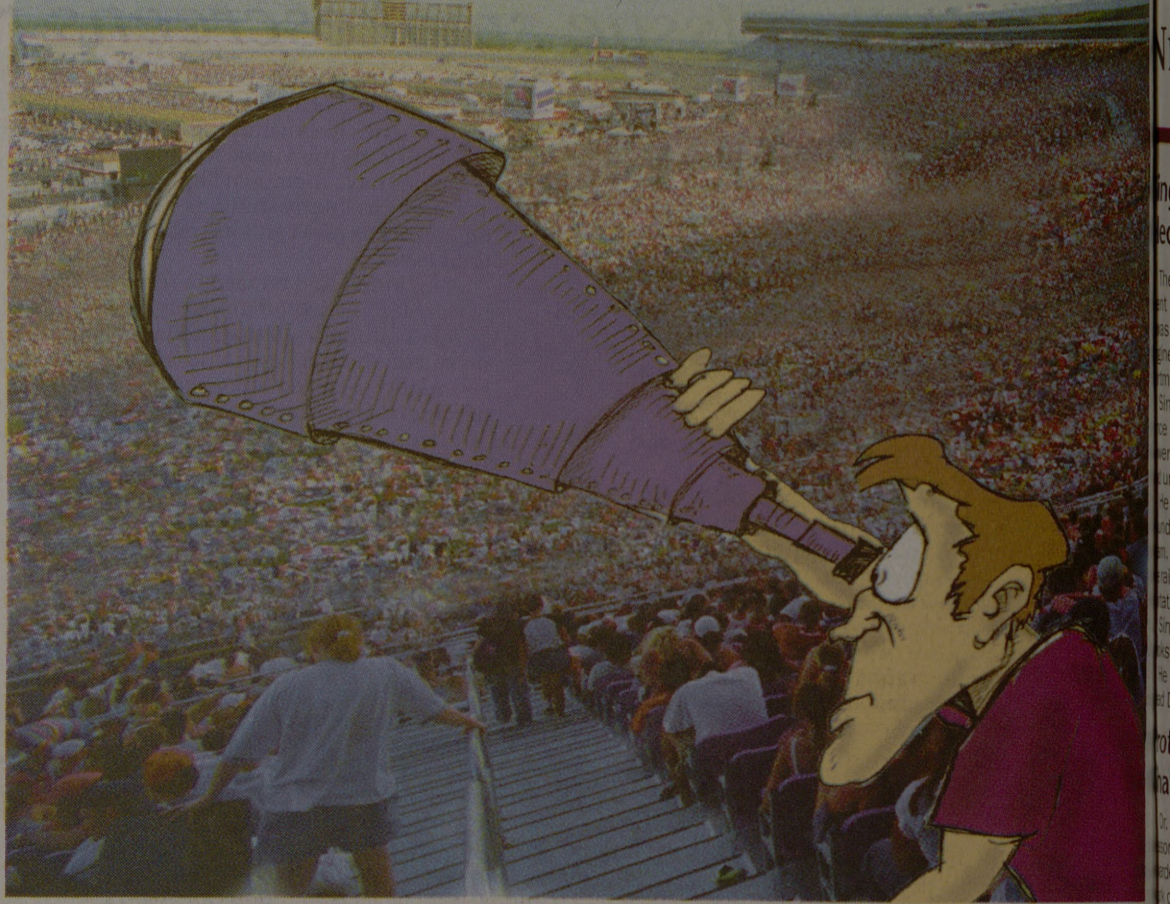


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: Brad Graeber

Sometime past 2:30 a.m., we headed to a secret, underground location (a gracious friend's house) and planned out the next day's strategy (we feasted on snacks and passed out).

The morning sun rose and we had scheduled an 8:30 a.m. wake-up call (set the alarm clock) with one of the on-duty agents. Being the dedicated task-force agents (tired college students) that we are, we departed from our hideout at noon. Arriving at the main office (house where the party was held), we consolidated our field equipment (lots of water, lots of beer and ... I guess that's it) and gathered into an unmarked government transport (a huge econo-van) with Agents Roy and Dusek still following.

We took Interstate 35 to blend in with the rest of the crowd until Agent Shane Freeman (driver of the van) received an encrypted message from one of his cufflinks (a radio disc jockey said I-35 was backed up for miles). We reversed our travel to take a reserved-for-special agents roadway (I-377, because it was a shortcut). Then we encountered a disastrous onslaught of government conspirators (a traffic jam, filled with thousands of RockFest ticket holders). We were trapped. Luckily, Agent Freeman saw an open path for us to take (the shoulder was empty and we were on it in two seconds flat, bypassing everyone who was too afraid to move). Agents Roy and Dusek stayed behind to manage crowd control (they didn't have the gumption to follow us).

Before we knew it, we had overtaken the rivals (we continuously yelled "Media pass!" from the van windows and pushed our way to the front line of cars, trucks, motorcycles and people on foot). It was nearing 1:30 p.m., the venue was almost in our sights and we were cool as ice cubes (Matchbox 20 was playing and the tribe was becoming restless). Since there was so much time remaining before any of the better-known acts were preparing to go on (the Wallflowers were gearing up to go and some of us were kicking ourselves), Special

Agent Tim Moog, Director of Field Assignments (Battalion Photo Editor), separated from the group several times to scout the landscape (he took pictures of the traffic and got a nice shot of a guy dressed as Boba Fett).

Needless to say, we arrived at a plain-looking building for an agent debriefing (we stopped at the Port-o-Potties, picked up media passes and parked only a few rows back from Gate 4 — it was time for the fun to begin).

Agents Roy and Dusek were scheduled to meet us at 4 p.m. near the headquarters' cooling tanks (we planned to find a nice patch of grass to plant ourselves, then look for our friends near the ice-blocks which people were cooling and impaling themselves onto, but what we got was a corner of cement intermixed with grass blades covered in fruit juice from a smashed watermelon).

All the agents camped on the ground to oversee various operations (we collapsed to our respective blankets and lawn chairs to take in some sun and hear the bands play, because there was no way in hell we were ever going to make it to the stage seating). Within a time span of 10 minutes, three momentous events were documented in our notebooks:
4:34 p.m. — A drunk music fanatic hocked a lugie in front of Agents Roy, Dusek and Clancy;
4:36 p.m. — Agents Roy and Dusek were squirted by another alternative-rock nut with a water gun.; and 4:44 p.m. — A guy in a g-string bikini (we suppose it belonged to the girl he was with) flashed a nipple to Agent Roy in a crass manner.

But our mission was not over yet. After prolonged exposure to heat rays, humidity and people, all agents retired to a shaded area for surveillance operations (we ran to the bleachers before they became too full in order to watch Counting Crows, No Doubt and Bush).

The atmosphere was clear, conspirators had been captured and it seemed our mission was almost a success. Suddenly, an unseen sniper began hurling unidentifiable objects at

a range of agents and before long, a small-scale brawl ensued (people were throwing toilet paper and half-filled water bottles into the air). Agent Clancy was injured by one of the torpedoes (a bottle of Evian) and was quoted, "That sh— hurts."

No Doubt continued to perform as Agent Clancy and I took cover away from the battle (we sat under a pillar outside the bleachers after a group of bikers threatened to kill a man they suspected of throwing a bottle at them). Everyone returned to the bleachers and listened to Bush perform, but the rest is a blur of time notations.

12:30 a.m. — All agents gathered into our transportation and headed toward the nighttime horizon.

3:30 a.m. — We finally escaped the crowded parking lot.

4:30 a.m. — Agents arrive at the secret meeting location (we picked our car up from our friend's house and headed back to the house where we slept the night before).

6:00 a.m. — All is quiet as everyone sleeps away the night, but the wake-up call for the drive home is 10 a.m.

Noon — Agent Clancy and I head back to College Station (although there was a 10 o'clock alarm, we puttered around the house, played Nintendo 64, ate cookies, drank coffee and complained about how none of us wanted to go to work).

6:00 p.m. — Arrive at The Battalion newsroom and began typing this column.

10:20 p.m. — Final touches added, my eyelids ready to close. This weekend was a true adventure — one I'm sure to never forget.

But Rockfest '97 wasn't what I, or anyone else, expected. To title the event appropriately, let's give this concert a real name: "The Summer '97 Blockbuster-Moron-Wifested-Trashbin-Collecting-No-Toilet-Paper-In-The-Port-O-Potties-I-Can't-See-The-Band-Fort-Ten-Miles Fest."

Mission complete — this column will self-destruct in five seconds.

DEGREE

Continued from Page 1

Parrish said the music degree curriculum must be approved by many departments in the University, including the music and liberal arts faculty, the University Curriculum Committee, the Board of Regents, Faculty Senate and Administration. The Texas Higher Education Continuing Board must also approve the curriculum before a music degree can be offered.

"We're at the beginning of the process," Parrish said.

The dean of the College of Liberal Arts, Woodrow Jones, Jr., named

Parrish the college's arts development coordinator in the spring. One of Parrish's duties is to assist in the raising of funds for a music degree.

He said the program will get some funding from the University, but is trying to get as much "external funding" as possible from corporations, foundations, individuals and former students.

Parrish said acquiring these funds is possible, because of the interest in the program.

Parrish's other duties include facilitating discussions to bring the music and theater arts programs into one department.

Presently, music is part of the philosophy and humanities department and theater arts is a

part of the speech communications department.

Werner Rose, coordinator of the music program and a professor in the Department of Philosophy and Humanities, said music and theater arts together it will bring focus to the arts on campus.

He said many people think A&M does not have arts programs because they are spread out into different departments.

"It makes sense within the College of Liberal Arts to bring music and theater arts together," Rose said.

When Rose became the coordinator of music in 1988, the University had only three courses in music.

A&M now has 18 music courses listed in its catalog, and several more classes are available under the course listing "Topics in Music." Students can now choose to minor in music also.

Rose said even though A&M does not have a music major, the music program is still very active.

"The number and diversity of music courses Texas A&M offers for non-music majors is much broader than for any other school in the state," Rose said.

Rose said the degree will be different than what most people think of when they think of a music degree.

Rose said there are two types of music degrees. One is a professional degree geared toward per-

formance or music education, the other is a liberal arts degree.

Rose said A&M's degree will be much more of a true liberal arts music degree and will require more work in the history and literature of music and how music relates to other fields.

"This degree will give students an understanding of how music is an important part of everyday life," Rose said.

Some students believe adding a music major will help A&M.

Arran Spoede, a senior speech communications major, said he wanted to major in music when he first came to the University but had to settle for a minor.

He said even though the opportunity to major in music came too late for him, he is happy that others have the opportunity and thinks that creating a music degree is an important step for the University.

"If A&M wants to be a world class University, their liberal arts (program) will have to be as good as their engineering (program)," Spoede said.

Nicole Zirkelback, a graduate student in mechanical engineering, said she also thinks a music degree at A&M can only make the school better.

"It's been pointed out that school with a liberal arts program is incomplete without a degree in music," Zirkelback said.

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