



PHOTOGRAPH: Stew Milne

Tripping Daisy members Mitch Marine, Wes Berggren, Phil Karnats, Tim DeLaughter and Mark Pirro perform at Marooned Records in Northgate.

Tripping Along

Vocalist discusses new album, importance of honesty in music

BY APRIL TOWERY
THE BATTALION

Those life-altering teen-age experiences — being rejected by a friend, losing lunch money on the bus, being the last one picked for the softball game — can often turn out to be blessings in disguise. And Tripping Daisy vocalist Tim DeLaughter is living proof.

DeLaughter began his musical career as a drummer. At three years old, he was beating on black and white ice cream buckets. As he got older, he began playing seriously. One day, he walked up to the garage where his band practiced and heard the members rehearsing with another drummer. DeLaughter was kicked out of the band, but his friends suggested he try singing.

"It crushed me," he said. "I became a singer on my defunct drum playing, and I fell in love with it."

Since that day, many others have fallen in love with DeLaughter's voice. Chris Myers, a student at Stephen F. Austin University, attended his 10th Tripping Daisy show Friday night at Bryan's Dixie Theatre. Myers said the last time he saw the band perform at Bullwinkle's in Nacogdoches, the atmosphere of the club changed.

"Nothing else mattered — it was just total happiness," he said. "Even the frat boys chilled out. The shows are real relaxed and goofy, but there's also a serious side. It's high energy."

The road to a record label was not easy, but DeLaughter said he learned important lessons along the way.

"We embraced the opportunity to play whenever we could," he said. "Perseverance and honesty gets you anywhere."

DeLaughter, who has been known to wear a wig and a bathrobe onstage, said the band places

emphasis on the live performance. "It's always a lot more interesting to visually pick things up," he said. "To cross-reference the two — audio and visual — helps people to get stimulated."

Junior microbiology major Josh Munson has seen Tripping Daisy perform four times and said DeLaughter makes each show an experience to remember.

"I like the way he involves the audience and gets everyone enthused," Munson said.

Although band members enjoy involving the audience in the show, the moshing has gotten out of hand, DeLaughter said.

"I did it when I saw Red Hot Chili Peppers at the Bronco Bowl a long time ago," he said. "My friend and I snuck down there and got onstage and jumped off. But it was different back then. Now we'll be playing a show, and look out and there's bloody heads and girls falling down."

The band has made some changes with the release of *Time Capsule*, a five-song extended play album, this month. The most drastic change was picking up guitarist Phil Karnats, whom DeLaughter said has proved to be a worthwhile addition to the band.

"It's awesome — I love writing with him," DeLaughter said. "It allows Wes (Berggren, another band member) to be able to play piano, and he's a lot more fluid on piano than on guitar."

Time Capsule is a collection of unreleased tracks with the sound Tripping Daisy originally exuded.

"It's for the people who have been with us since day one," DeLaughter said. "Not the people who picked us up after 'I Got a Girl' came out."

DeLaughter said the name Tripping Daisy has

no literal meaning. "It never meant anything until now," he said. He compared naming a band to naming a baby. "At the beginning, it's just a name. It has to grow into its name and become worthy of it. Other people could tell you more than I could what it means to them."

The band, which originated in Dallas, toured last summer with Def Leppard, a band that DeLaughter had been a fan of for years. Although the tour was one of his greatest experiences, DeLaughter said, he doesn't have a band he dreams of performing with.

"It's almost better to be a fan and watch," he said. "It takes away the innocence to see how one of your favorite bands acts onstage."

Shelton Kelsey, a fan from Lufkin, said he saw Tripping Daisy perform with Def Leppard. He said he sees DeLaughter as a real person, not someone who has let his fame go to his head.

"He's not just up there putting on a show," Kelsey said. "He's always been friendly."

DeLaughter said music can be "kinda political," but his band is trying to steer clear of that image.

"I'd like for fans to realize the honesty and the genuineness of this band and not take it for granted," he said. "It's about inner feelings and being sparked by emotion."

Performing in Bryan-College Station is special to the members of Tripping Daisy, DeLaughter said.

"Fans we've made here have come back here to see us after they've moved away," he said. "There's something kinda spiritual about it, and definitely the people have made it that way."

DeLaughter said he had a few words of advice to fans and friends in Aggeland.

"Take care of each other, and whenever you feel like being a jerk, don't," he said.

Hot, new music blazes to B-CS

By KEITH MCPHAIL
THE BATTALION

Music is hot this summer with blazing new albums and blistering tours.

Recently-released albums from Wu-Tang Clan, George Strait and Bon Jovi, and much-awaited releases from Blues Traveler, Radiohead, Primus, 311, Prodigy, Motley Crue, Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, Wyclef Jean featuring Refugee Camp All Stars, Coolio, Busta Rhymes, Salt-N-Pepa, Dwight Yoakam and Mariah Carey could keep Aggeland groovin' all summer.

Teresa Mason, an employee of Marooned Records and a junior psychology major, said she expects to see an explosion in the popularity of ska music this summer as the Mighty Mighty Bosstones have laid the groundwork for many other talented artists.

"Ska would be good for everyone because it is so upbeat and happy," Mason said. "Every time we play (Reel Big Fish), somebody buys it."

Mason is also expecting big things from punk band Blink 182, which is on the H.O.R.D.E. tour this summer.

Henry Martinez, a music associate at Hastings and senior industrial distribution major, said big sellers to date include The Batman Soundtrack, Spice Girls, Wu-Tang Clan and Puff Daddy with Faith Evans.

"Ska would be good for everyone because it is so upbeat and happy."

Teresa Mason
Junior psychology major

"We can't keep Puff Daddy in the store," Martinez said.

He further said Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon*, has surged in popularity after someone discovered the parallels between the album and the movie *The Wizard*

of *Oz*, which people are watching while listening to the album. He also expects renewed interest in country music, as many artists are going for a retro sound, a stark contrast to the popular sounds of the late '80s and early '90s.

Other summer releases of interest to music fans include En Vogue, Sarah McLachlan, The Pharcyde, Comrads (with Mack



GRAPHIC: Chad Mallam

10, Ice Cube and Westside Connection), Teenage Fanclub, The Geraldine Fibbers, The Mr. T Experience, GBH, Lords of Acid, Sister Machine Gun, Morrissey, Bjork, UB40 and Ziggy Marley.

Although no one is threatening to host any major festivals in College Station this summer, a number of great shows are a short road trip away. Notable festivals are coming through the Lone Star State this summer. Lollapalooza, featuring Tool, Snoop Dogg and Prodigy will be Aug. 2 in Dallas Aug. 2 and in Corpus Christi Aug. 3; Smokin' Grooves, hip-hop's answer to Lollapalooza, featuring George Clinton, Cypress Hill and Erykah Badu July 18 in The Woodlands and July 18 in Dallas; and Lillith Fair, the all-female tour including Sarah McLachlan, Jewel, Indigo Girls, the Cardigans and Tracy Chapman Aug. 3 in The Woodlands and Aug. 4 in Dallas.

Other tours of interest include Phish July 25 in Dallas and July 26 in Austin, Helmet and the Melvins in late July and Suicidal Tendencies, who are doing the mosh across Texas until June 28 supporting their recently released greatest hits album, *Prime Cuts*.

The summer of '97 promises to be memorable for music fans. With a number of fresh CDs and nearby concerts, students should be busy enjoying the sounds of summer.

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