THE BATTALION AGGIELIFE

iano Lessons

idents create music for relaxation, practice in the Memorial Student Center

lexas is a special place for live music. Whether it's a Fort Worth honky tonk, an Austin street corner or a Waco church the hills (or lack thereof) are truly alive the sound of music.

id while College Station is generally not a ca of performance art, there are still a few where one can get an aural treat. ie Flag Room of the Memorial Student

er is Texas A&M's own special multi-purrumpus room. In the morning and afterstudents bustle and buzz about the i, talking and meeting for lunch.

ite in the day, the flag room's metabolism s to a pace of mellow relaxation and stus solitude. And just so often, on the fint-stained black grand piano neatly ed in the corner, the music invites.

hn Misiewiez, a junior biomedical science r, often finds himself immersed in an am-MSC recital.

try to study [in the MSC] — either there or ibrary," Misiewiez said. "For the past five s I've been here there's been someone ing. It keeps the subconscious occupied, s harder to get distracted. I get a lot more when someone is playing.'

isiewiez said he most often hears people ng classical or slow-tempo types of music. t's not like a western bar," Misiewiez said. ecause of the large groups drawn by the Room, playing can often be a test in age. Misiewiez said he admires the people the guts to play for everyone.

play guitar, but I couldn't do it in here," ez said. "I freeze in front of large crowds." hnathan Durham, a sophomore history or, is one of the brave. He said he has played o in the MSC three or four times. Durham ers to play from memory, rather than with t music — anything from classical pieces e theme from "Peanuts."

mostly play the things that I know,"

I have about ten or eleven songs that I've lown and memorized that I like to practice. play a wide variety. I just play whatevthink sounds good or what I think other ple would enjoy to listen to. Sometimes I songs people normally wouldn't hear, ext for a couple like 'The Entertainer' and gs like that.

lag Room piano groupies may be few and between, but Durham enjoys his share of



"I get a lot of compliments when I play," Durham said. "Sometimes I get nervous, though, and I have trouble playing for a large crowd.'

Durham understands why so many people enjoy studying while he plays, but said it doesn't quite work for him.

Some people like to have it in the background—just how people like to listen to the radio when they read," Durham said.

"Personally, I couldn't do that because I'd pay attention to the music than to what I was studying. But every once in a while I like to have something soft in the background. It

helps you relax. Although personal satisfaction is a major motivating factor for playing in the MSC, Durham admitted it also helps him with the opposite sex.

"One of my favorites to play is 'Angel Eyes' by Jim Brickman," Durham said.

'A lot of girls like to listen to that one. That's a real plus. One time I went there with a girl I was dating last semester — it was our onemonth anniversary of dating — I played the piano in there for her. She hadn't heard me play the piano before.'

Cynthia Zuniga, a sophomore international business major, enjoys studying in the MSC Flag Room for the wide variety of sounds that pass through.

"I only stay to study if people are playing," Zuniga said. "I get distracted if people are talking or walking around. The music helps me to block out the noise of people walking by or conversations. I like the atmosphere. If I go to the library I'll fall asleep."

Zuniga enjoys the variety of music played in the Flag Room.

'People mostly play classical music or Broadway songs," Zuniga said. "If I recognize it I'll sit down.

As a music lover, Zuniga admires the skill of those who play for Flag Room patrons.

"I would definitely play if I had the talent," Zuniga said. "It's the perfect place to play on weekends. It's great that it's open for people

Not everyone who plays in the MSC is looking for an audience.

Tony Hung, a junior biomedical science major, enjoys playing in the Flag Room and back area of the MSC, but not for an audience.

"I don't play very often — about once a month," Hung said. "I usually play when there aren't many people around. I get nervous

Hung thinks the music is an asset to the atmosphere of the MSC.

Most people are there relaxing. I think music helps that," Hung said.

While some play for glory, some to show off and some just to pass the time, Hung makes no apology for his reason.

"It's fun," Hung said.

Students should seek to regain lost talent for music appreciation

JAMES

verybody loves to hear a good song, whether on the radio, in the form of a music video or played live at a concert. And while students allow the symphonic reverberations to send chills down their spines and prick up their ears, many times they are enthralled with the music



an instrument. It is when these times come to the forefront of memory — moments when a young boy or girl would play the flute, drums or violin for his or her parents — that people begin to regret they ever stopped practicing. Students get to college and they forget all about the high-school marching band, the middleschool orchestra and the alltoo memorable drill team.

But it is at this moment of realization, when nostalgia kicks in, that students should attempt to regain the musical talent they possessed earlier in life. And there are many outlets for students to gain musical fulfillment.

Texas A&M offers a wide variety of music classes, ranging from music history courses to those which offer hands-on experience in playing the piano and other instruments. Along with the University's curriculum, outside opportunities to attain musical knowledge exist in programs such as courses offered through University Plus. And if one is financially able to do so, there are a variety of tutors who can be

found within the Yellow Pages of the telephone book.

The point is, if an individual has the chance to regain a musical talent or learn an instrument for the first time, he or she should not hesitate to accept the challenge.

Instead of regretting a former music endeavor, people should be able to look back on life and say they never let music get

too far out of reach. Whatever instrument you used to play or always wanted to learn, take the time to acquire the necessary skills that will enable you to become familiar with the instrument of your choice.

Music provides students with a chance to develop intricate trade skills and display personal expression.

So the next time you enter an elevator, turn on your car stereo or even hear a jingle for a television commercial, think of how important music is and how great it would be to find yourself in its path of devoted listeners and players.

James Francis is a junior English and journalism major.



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