

A Filmmaker is Born

Two Aggies literally go behind the scenes to make their feature film debut

By TRAVIS HOPPER
Staff writer

Young filmmakers have always had it rough. Quentin Tarantino worked as a clerk in a video store to make money while writing *Pulp Fiction* and charged them to their limits while making *Reservoir Dogs*. Spike Lee applied for five credits and charged them to their limits while making *Daze*. Kevin Smith, director of *Clerks* and *Jay and Silent Bob*, registered for a basket-making class at community college to get student prices for film. Adam Montgomery, a senior economics major, and Juan Loya, a sophomore computer science major, made their own unique approach to raising money for their upcoming film.

"What I did was write some alumni and utilize my connections," Montgomery said. "I just asked for some donations and support, and some of them were really anxious to help."

Both students met last year through the MSC Film Society, and although they have an equal passion for film, they came together from very different grounds. Even though Loya said he idolizes documentary filmmakers such as Roger Moore and Errol Morris, he said he always has been in filmmaking for the entertainment aspect.

"In high school it was a fun thing to do with friends," Loya said. "We didn't care about getting paid for making this amazing film that won a bunch of awards. I just liked being a goof. If it's fun, it's good enough for me."

Montgomery, on the other hand, said he sees a job opportunity as his chance to have a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

"It's always something that I've wanted to do," he said. "I've always liked to write, and I've always wanted to be a director."

Montgomery said he decided if he wanted a career in movies, the place to be was Los Angeles. So the past two summers, he has jumped in his car and headed for the bright lights of Tinseltown. The first summer he interned at Paramount, but it wasn't much except getting coffee and lunch for people, Montgomery said. "The next summer I got a chance to work on a film called *The Marshall of Revolution* with Jon Favreau and Vince Vaughn of *Swingers*, and that was a real learning experience."

One big obstacle of being a student filmmaker is money, or rather, a lack of it. In an environment where most students will eat their roommate's left-over pizza crust rather than call out for dinner, it goes

without saying that coming up with an extra \$10,000 or so is no small feat.

"It's hard to raise money because you can't tell the investors that they are going to get their money back," Loya said. "Right now we are working on a 10-minute silent short called *The Paper Boy*, and even that is more expensive than it sounds. It's also hard to do material that might be a little controversial because a lot of donors don't want any part of it. The MSC helps us out as much as it can, but it's an expensive process."

While there is little money to pay for film and rent lights and cameras, there is even less money to pay the actors and crew. Montgomery has found a sure-fire way to circumvent that obstacle: just tell them you are making a movie.

"A lot of people are willing to do it for free," Montgomery said. "It seems like this really glamorous thing, and people are drawn to that. Some of the crew are professionals that we have to pay, but most people work for free. I just have them sign a form that says if we ever do make any money off the film, they will get paid."

Probably the most insurmountable problem facing Texas A&M student filmmakers is that there is no blueprint for success to follow. While it is true that the College of Liberal Arts is working on expanding its fine arts curriculum and the English department offers some exceptional film history classes, for Aggies who want to see their name in lights, it seems as if the road goes on forever.

"We've had a lot of obstacles because we are working from the ground up," Montgomery said. "No one from A&M has really laid a foundation as far as filmmaking is concerned, and we don't really have anyone to hand out equipment or show us how to edit."

The Texas Film Festival, held every February in the MSC and Rudder Complex, is a good chance for Aggies to submit their work and shake hands with many of Hollywood's up-and-coming filmmakers.

"We were hoping to have our film ready for the festival, but it just didn't turn out that way," Loya said. "Regardless, it's good practice. We just want to make an interesting story rather than try to make money."

While Aggieland will certainly never be known as Sin City 2, and "Bryan-College Station" will never be spelled out in big, white letters on a hill overlooking campus (Mt. Aggie was the last hope), there are advantages to making a movie in the Brazos Valley.

"Even though College Station reminds me of Hong Kong in that it's a small town with a high concentration



JUAN LOYA AND ADAM MONTGOMERY STAND OUTSIDE RUDDER COMPLEX. THE TWO STUDENTS ARE CURRENTLY WORKING ON A 10-MINUTE SHORT FILM TITLED, *THE PAPER BOY*.

of people, and even though it's hard to find a deserted place to shoot, there are definitely some advantages," Montgomery said. "Making a movie is a big deal here. It's not like L.A. where they see it all the time and people are like, 'Get out of my face.' People here are really anxious to help and be a part of something like this."

Just as they had different means of arriving where they are right now, Loya and Montgomery also have different goals when it comes to careers after they graduate.

"I don't think I would ever want to get paid for making movies," Loya said. "If it was a job, it just wouldn't be as fun. You know, I wouldn't turn down an opportunity to do a film if one was presented, but my dream is just to be able to make movies on the weekend with my friends and family. They wouldn't even have to be edited and finished. I would just enjoy the whole atmosphere of doing what I love and having fun doing it."

For Montgomery, once graduation has come and

gone, he said he plans to pack his bags and head off for the Sunset Strip.

"Probably what I'll end up doing at first is working at a studio sorting scripts and trying to get mine noticed," he said. "I just thought it would be smart to get a practical degree first, and then if the film thing doesn't work out, at least I will have something to fall back on. My life goal in movie making is that I want to set a trend and leave my little stamp on pop culture. You know, I would love to do a cool movie where the guys do something like wear fedoras. That way, if it caught on and everyone started doing it, I would know that it was because of something that I did."

Dazed and Confused reintroduced "Check ya' later" into the popular vernacular of America's youth. *Swingers* helped fuel the revival of the Rat Pack, "beautiful babies," and martinis. Who knows? Some day soon you might be wearing a felt fedora, and now you'll understand why.

Student poll reveals bad music plagues radio waves

By STEPHEN WELLS
Staff writer

All Aggies, regardless of station or affiliation, share a common bond. It is not just about Silver Taps, Muster, and Bonfire. This runs much deeper. Somewhere, sometime, we have all been exposed to a terrible song against our will.

One such experience still scars my mind. I was on a two-hour car trip with one of my friends, someone for whom I actually transported a borrowed street sign once, and all he would listen to was the Meatloaf single "Anything for Love." Over and over the song played despite my desperate pleas for a reprieve. To this day I can not speak to him face to face, mainly because he lives in Colorado.

This painful recollection came up one day during a Hanson video (who else?), so I thought I would share my misery with the rest of the Texas A&M student body. The result was this anonymous bad music poll. Be warned; many of the songs by groups in this

bad song survey will get stuck in your head. Just imagine suffering through Math 151 and "Oh, Mickey you're so fine," at the same time.

Far and away, the annoying song leaders are those sickening British proto-divas, the Spice Girls. Comments about their musical ability ranged from the simple ("everything the Spice Girls do will suck"), to the satiric ("the Spice Girls are Britain's joke on the rest of the world"), to the sensuous ("take away the miracle bras and they're nothing"), to the Satanic ("a never-ending Spice Girls concert is my personal idea of Hell"). It makes you wonder how both of their records are still on the Billboard Top Ten. They must be big in Austin, or something.

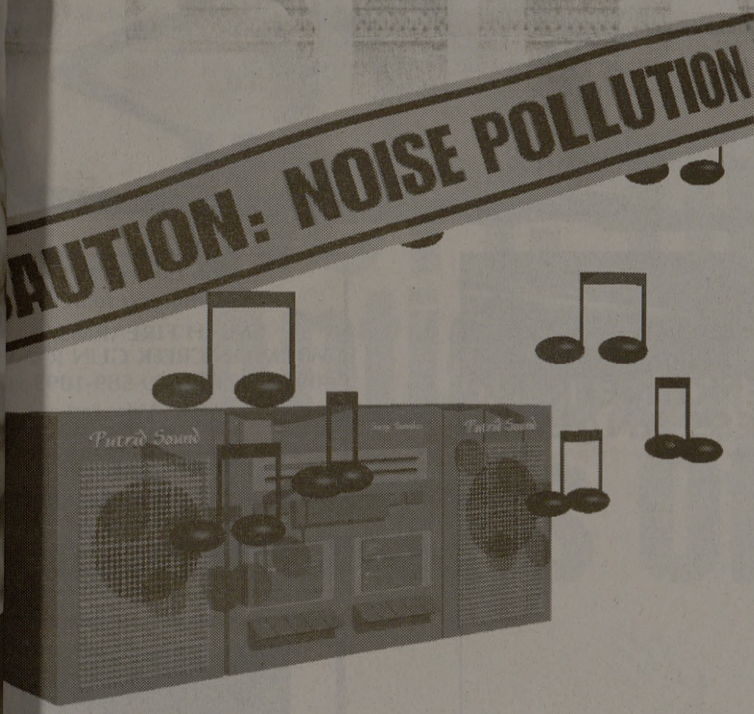
Speaking of pop acts, Hanson was on the leader board as the number-two most despised group in Aggieland. One survey respondent wrote of the lovable young trio, "I kind of hope they get caught with drugs or older women or anything that will cut their career short. Then we can all be spared." Another was a little kinder: "Maybe they'll real-

ize how much pain they are causing and quit music forever." We can only hope.

The rest of the Top-10 were represented with equal hatred. For Marilyn Manson, the typical Aggie response was a suggestion to go back to Hades without ever making another record. One respondent was more eloquent in a hackle-raising way: "If it came down to listening to fingernails on a chalkboard or a Marilyn Manson record, I would have to pick the fingernails because they have musical value."

So far, the offending artists have been selected for the few songs they have released in their (hopefully) short careers. However, all it takes is one song to ruin an artist. Case in point: Billy Ray Cyrus and "Achy Breaky Heart." It is widely accepted, years after the song has been removed from the airwaves, that the lyricist should have been publicly executed without trial. "Billy Ray should be punished for this song by being forced to watch people two-step to the club remix," one dejected pollee wrote.

PLEASE SEE **Music** ON PAGE 5.

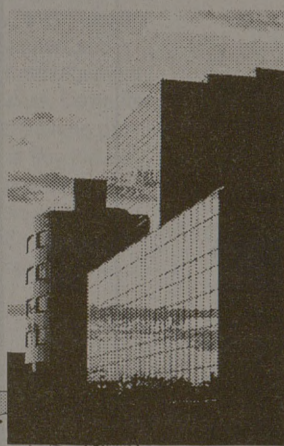


MES VINEYARD/THE BATTALION

KOCH INDUSTRIES, INC.

A Discovery Company

Koch Industries, Inc., based in Wichita, Kansas, is one of the largest privately held corporations in the United States, with over 14,000 employees worldwide. The Company is involved in virtually all phases of the oil and gas industry, as well as in chemicals, chemical technology products, agriculture, hard minerals, real estate, financial services, and trading.



Explore...

...a rewarding career
...your own potential
...our expanding world
...our way of doing business

Koch will be interviewing on campus on the following dates:

- March 5 - Accounting Interns
- March 6 - Marketing
- March 12 - Finance



Wichita is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

How Would You Score?

LSAT GMAT
MCAT CPA TOEFL

Take a Free Test Drive and find out!

Sunday, February 22nd
Texas A&M University

Call today to reserve your seat!

KAPLAN

1-800-KAP-TEST
www.kaplan.com

*Course names are registered trademarks of their respective owners.

Most people in our business want you to get life insurance.

(We want you to get a life.)

Come and learn how a career with us can be more than just a job.

Information Session
February 25, 1998
7:00 p.m.
MSC Room 292A

On-Campus Interviews
February 26, 1998
at the Career Center

Call Sheryl Lyssy, Ag '86 at 281/583-4336

Northwestern Mutual Life
The Quiet Company®

www.NorthwesternMutual.com/sales

©1998 The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co., Milwaukee, WI 8075-36



Phone your classified ad in Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. and charge it. What could be simpler?

THE BATTALION
845-0569