

# There's music in the air

## Music studies program offers students tonal varieties

By **STEPHEN WELLS**  
Staff writer

All too often, students at Texas A&M are not aware of the opportunities around them presented by programs and student groups. For some time now, the Texas A&M Music Studies Program Office has given students the opportunity to experience great works and express themselves without the expense of admission fees.

One of the music department's greatest assets is the music resource room on the fourth floor of the Academic Building. Here students can sample from a large selection of musical works, from arias to anthems and from Chopin to Charlie Parker. The service is free to students, but only a small percentage of students know it exists.

Ryan Hubbard, a freshman general studies major, said the music resource room is a good idea but needs promotion.

"If you're a fan of that kind of music, it is a nice thing to have," Hubbard said. "In a way, it's just like the listening station at Hastings or Blockbuster. You don't need to pay for a first listen. I've bought a lot of records on the basis of one song and found out they weren't so good."

In addition to the musical library, the Texas A&M music department maintains practice rooms for students who want to sharpen their chops without playing in front of a crowd in the MSC. Pianos and organs are available for practice sessions. Both the music resource room and the practice rooms are located in room 406 of the Academic Building.

"It's a nice idea to have a place to practice where you don't make your roommates or neighbors upset at you," Hubbard said. "But I think most students would rather just practice at home or out on the balcony."

Besides helping students learn music, Texas A&M maintains good contacts with professional Brazos

County musical groups. One will not find advertisements for performances at the Third Floor Cantina. The music department posts numerous advertisements for orchestral and jazz performances throughout the College Station area.

For students who are interested, the music office contains reams of informational sheets about musical study abroad programs and performance opportunities. Options range from auditions for local performance groups to semesters abroad studying music in historical cities in Europe.

Some students are not interested at all in the music programs. Rich Lowell, a freshman chemistry major, said he does not think much about the music department.

"Why should I walk up four flights of stairs to practice or listen to a CD I won't buy?" Lowell said. "I guess if I really liked classical music I would go, but I can't take the time out of the middle of my day to expand my horizons."

Those who have experienced the music

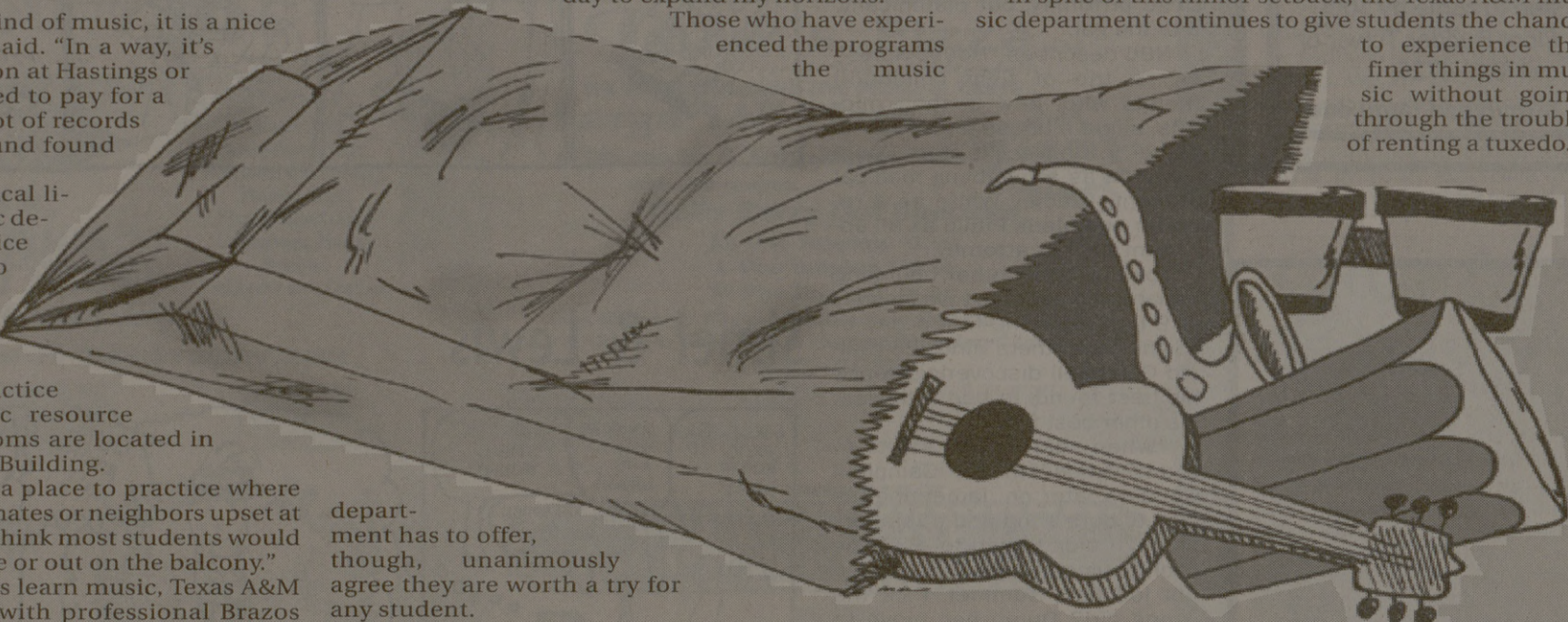
Casey Landrey, a sophomore biomedical science major, said she enjoyed the variety of options the music program offers.

"I've been able to attend concerts I would otherwise have never had the chance to see," Landrey said. "I got to see some very talented groups and enjoyed their shows, but I would never have heard them if I hadn't just taken the time to look at the bulletin board they (the music program) keep up there."

Sadly, one of the most innovative programs set up by the music department has been canceled. The Brown Bag Concert series, which offers students a chance to see performances of classical music in an intimate setting, will be replaced by another program next semester.

"It's too bad that they canceled it," Landrey said. "I went to see a show last year and it was a nice experience. It's a shame more students didn't know about it."

In spite of this minor setback, the Texas A&M music department continues to give students the chance to experience the finer things in music without going through the trouble of renting a tuxedo.



# Van Halen tries new music style

Van Halen III

Van Halen

Warner Bros. Music

Produced by Mike Post

Critique: B+

By **STEPHEN WELLS**  
Staff writer

In the wake of a historic breakup with Sammy Hagar and recent fits with the historical accuracy of David Lee Roth's autobiography, Edward and company attempt to start it all over again, again, with a record-breaking third lead singer. The result is Van Halen III, a mix of classic Van Halen rock and attempted groundbreaking experimentation. The result is either a little bit bad or a little bit good, depending on how one approaches the album.

Shiny new frontman Gary Cherone of Extreme fame is not the showboating party animal David Lee Roth was, neither does he possess the pipes Sammy Hagar was blessed with. He is, instead, kind of a middle ground between the two, a nice safe choice for the aging rockers.

First, the good news. Eddie Van Halen has fingers for weeks, and he sets out to prove in every solo why he is considered the most influential rock guitarist today. The production value is as high as can be expected from a band that has sold a combined 65 million records in their career. And the guys in the band are as tight as ever, pleasing for those of us who are tired of uninspired neo-ska and alternative licks, despite the group's apparent attempt to become more alternative.

Indeed, the album is a kind of safe mix of classic Van Halen rocking and carefully calculated exploration of new ground. While tracks like "One I Want" and "Dirty Water Dog" exemplify the things that made Van Halen famous twenty years ago with memorable riffs and searing solos, the album falls flat when Eddie Van Halen decides to flaunt his artistic license. The opening track is an instrumental with keyboards (not too bad, that's how the legendary 1984 kicked off), but it lacks the conviction or innovation we've come to expect from the group. Add to that a track including Eddie Van Halen as a lead vocalist (now we know why he plays guitar) and a sitar-driven instrumental, and the attempt at hipness just fades away.

The final verdict? Take Eddie's own advice and listen to the album three or four times before you decide to give up on him. If you don't like the experimenting, then skip the track and take solace in the fact that Van Halen still sounds like the Van Halen we love.

## Acclaimed actor robbed of funds in phony art deal

NEW YORK (AP) — An art dealer who defrauded Jack Nicholson and other clients of more than \$2 million was sentenced Tuesday to two years in prison.

U.S. District Judge Michael Mukasey rejected an appeal for leniency, sentencing Todd Michael Volpe to two years in prison for "living high, wide and handsome" while he defrauded 16 people between 1991 and 1995.

Volpe, 48, was also ordered to pay \$1.9 million in restitution. He pleaded guilty to fraud for selling paintings, sculptures and other art on behalf of his clients and pocketing the profit.



Nicholson

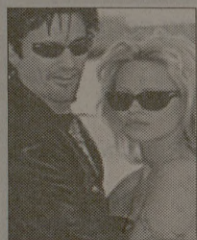
Nicholson gave Volpe money to buy and sell art. Volpe admitted he sold several items without the actor's knowledge and kept \$224,000.

## Rock 'n Roll star angered concerning court order

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Tommy Lee, accused of abusing his wife and baby, is upset over a court order to stay away from his kids.

"I love and miss them very much and want them to know how much this time away from them is killing me," the Motley Crue drummer said Monday in a statement.

Lee, 35, pleaded innocent Friday to abusing his wife, former "Baywatch" star Pamela Anderson Lee, and their infant son,



The Lees

Dylan. She filed for divorce Thursday, the second time in their three-year marriage.

Lee won't contest the divorce, publicist Hayley Sumner said. He was ordered to stay at least 100 yards from his family and Mrs. Lee's parents.

"I am completely devoted to Dylan and Brandon and it is extremely painful and unsettling for me to be cut off from them at this difficult time," Lee said.

## Deliverance actor's wife cancels 17-year marriage

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Ned Beatty's wife of 17 years has filed for divorce, citing irreconcilable differences.

Dorothy Beatty is seeking joint custody of their two children, ages 14 and 16.

She said in court papers filed Monday that she separated from the actor Jan. 1. Beatty appeared in "Deliverance," "Superman II" and "Network," which earned him an

## Oscar nomination for best supporting actor. 'King of Pop' takes flack for amusement park deal

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — A government commission Tuesday came out against Michael Jackson's plans to build a \$500 million amusement park at an old military airport.

The commission said offering the airport to Jackson violates "good management."

Mayor Marcin Swiecicki said he will appeal. City officials say the amusement park would create jobs and attract tourists.

Poland's defense and transportation ministries will review the findings of the commission.

Jackson said he hopes to open the park in mid-1999.



Jackson

Final Week...Don't be the only person to miss

# COMPANY

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