

Hey, it could happen

Local bands broaden their horizons in search of a music outlet

By Elizabeth Webb
THE BATTALION

Any indie band can tell you that it is rough getting discovered. This is especially true for punk bands in College Station, a city where country and alternative rock reign.

Autopsy Turvy is one of these indie bands, made up of Chad Brinkley, vocals, keyboard and programming drums, Will Brantingham, bass, and John Paul Wooten, guitar and vocals.

The band takes its musical influences from punk bands such as Subhumans and Missions of Burma, but does not describe its sound as completely punk.

Although there are some venues available for fairly unknown bands such as Autopsy Turvy, the band members say it is still frustrating when trying to find a place to play.

"A lot of places won't let you play," Brinkley said. "They won't even talk to you once they hear the kind of music you play. If you're not playing singer-songwriter or country, you're most likely not going to get a gig and therein lies the problem of getting well known."

However, there are a few places around town like the art gallery Soulworks, where a band like Autopsy Turvy will get to spread its musical wings.

Soulworks' owner, Mary Kelley, allows bands to play on a stage that is set up behind the shop. Kelley said any type of band is welcome and considers all types of music an art form.

"Soulworks is a place for artists to showcase their work," Kelley said. "It just gives bands another place they can use to play. It's free and it's in a good area."

McDonalds on Texas Avenue is another new venue that has recently opened up for new bands to play. McDonalds manager Anthony Vunita said that it is available for all different kinds of music for the band's benefit as well as McDonalds.

"From my point of view, we do it to help bands get known and it helps us get business too," Vunita said.

Whether or not this helps McDonalds, this is a wonderful opportunity for bands struggling to get their name into the public. Patrons as well as passers-by can stop and hear the bands playing for free.

Ali Sophani, a recent graduate of A&M Consolidated High School is one person who knows how hard it is to get your music heard. He manages a website, csmusic.8m.com, that provides information on all different kinds of bands that play around College Station. The website is open to any band in an attempt to raise awareness to the public and create unity between bands.

"The scene is more based on country and heavy metal bands," Sophani said. "I want the music scene to be one big community. It's really discouraging when a big band comes to College Station and everyone goes to see them, but when a local band that blows Nickelback out of the water plays, no one cares."

Brinkley also shares the opinion that indie bands need to be given the credit that more well-known bands



JOSHUA HOBSON • THE BATTALION

McDonalds displays a wanted ad in efforts to recruit up and coming bands in the Bryan-College Station area.

enjoy. He is not so much concerned with getting paid to play as he is with exposing people to his music.

"It's not really about my band personally, it's about the whole scene, Brinkley said. "A lot of us aren't even playing for money. We just want to play music, be heard and enjoy ourselves, and it's really hard to enjoy yourself in this town."

Autopsy Turvy, along with several other indie bands will have another chance to be heard on June

21, when they will be playing at Soulworks. For bands that are just getting started, Sophani has some useful advice.

"Just keep trying your best and go to all different kinds of shows and meet all kinds of people," Sophani said. "Just get yourself known, hand out demos, go to open mic nights. Indie bands are getting a shot at Deluxe Diner, and Texadelphia is also pretty open to new bands."

REEL CRITIQUE

Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones
Starring Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman, Samuel L. Jackson & Hayden Christensen
Directed by George Lucas
Lucas Films



ARTWORK COURTESY OF LUCAS FILMS

The Star Wars universe continues to expand in this second installment of the story that began a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away. For this episode, Master Yoda and the Jedi Council work with the Senate to maintain order and unity in the Republic that began to crumble in Episode I. Obi-Wan Kenobi and his apprentice, Anakin Skywalker, are charged with protecting the former Queen of Naboo, Amidala, during politically delicate times in the Senate. While investigating assassination attempts against Amidala, the Jedi uncovers a plot to overthrow peace in the Republic and the Attack of the Clones begins.

The film lends itself to character development and filling in the back story eluded to in other episodes. Yes, most of this movie is details, lots and lots of details. At times it seems to drag on, and some of it seems redundant and needless. Take for instance, the romance between Anakin and Amidala. Whoever did not know that pair was going to become a hot item should try staying awake during Episode I, but their story is drilled in regardless.

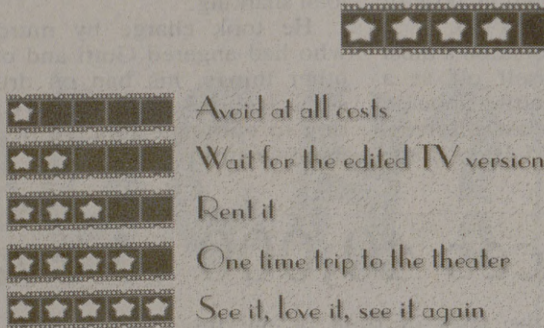
Director, screenwriter, and executive producer George Lucas spent more time weaving the plot and characters into the massive story that Star Wars is, than he did in showing how fascinating his computers and animations are, like he did in Episode I. Much of the depth of this film comes from understanding the ironies and symbolism projected throughout the series. Not to worry though, there are still mass quantities of digital drama.

There are many exciting action sequences also. Speeder chases, battle scenes, and lightsaber duels make it satisfying to be a Star Wars fan again.

Overall, the movie has some great parts and

great twists in the story, but it still gets overtaken in overplayed scenes and excess information.

—Thomas Phillips



Avoid at all costs
Wait for the edited TV version
Rent it
One time trip to the theater
See it, love it, see it again

About a Boy
Starring Hugh Grant, Toni Colette
Directed by Chris and Paul Weitz
Universal Pictures



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL PICTURES

In the words of Jon Bon Jovi, "No man is an island." Will Freeman (Grant) has set his life to prove this saying wrong. An underachiever from London who lives off the royalties of a Christmas jingle his father wrote, Will spends his days watching television, playing pool, chasing women and surfing the internet; in general, doing "nothing." At 38, with no relationship because he fears commitment and with no accomplishments to show for in his life, Will is quite content on being his own island.

After being set up with a single mother, Will discovers that these emotionally unstable and commitment wary women are the ideal women to date, and he poses as a single parent at a single parent's support group with the intention of scoring a date. However, through complications arising from his charade, Will acquires more than just a date. He is drawn into the lives of geeky, 12 year-old Marcus, an oversensitive outcast at school, played by Nicholas Hoult, and his hippie mother, Fiona (Colette), who suffers from depression and has no clue about her son's troubled life.

After his mother's attempted suicide, Marcus invites himself to Will's place each day, and Will, feeling sympathetic for him, reluctantly allows him in. These afternoon visits soon become more than just an hour of watching television. Thus, the story transpires as a relationship forms between Will and Marcus, showing how they change each other.

Classified under romantic comedy, this movie deserves more than its genre gives it credit for. It is not the generic boy meets girl and falls in love storyline with some slapstick comedy squeezed in. Instead, the witty, sarcastic dialogue is interlaced

with dramatic moments, which are accompanied with comedic relief, that incorporate a bit of real life into the movie. As in most romantic comedies, the ending is predictable; however, the turns and twists within the storyline keep the movie fresh and engaging for the audience.

Based on a best selling novel by Nick Hornby, About a Boy is the story about growing up at any age. Filled with the sentimental lessons of genuine friendship and true love, the budding friendship between Will and Marcus captivate the audience as they teach each other that "no man is an island." Along the way, it promises laughs, not the kind that directors Chris and Paul Weitz injected in their hit American Pie, but nonetheless, actors Hugh Grant and Nicholas Hoult provide humor to this lighthearted comedy through sporadic lines and events.

For those who feel that the force may not be with them in Star Wars or any of the other summer action packed blockbusters or suspense thrillers for that matter, the warm, quirky story of the British comedy About a Boy, offers a breath of fresh air to such audience.

—Lyndsey Sage



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