

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

Page 3 • Monday, December 1, 2003

The beat of a different drummer

Percussion Studio takes its passion for a beat out of the band and on to the streets

By Jessica Lenchner
THE BATTALION

When Jordan Tayce joined his school's marching band in eighth grade, he never imagined that one day he would be playing on coffee pots, trash cans, office equipment and drainage pipes.

Many students like Tayce, a senior animal science major, come to Texas A&M after being involved with band in high school but without an outlet aside from the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band to express themselves musically on campus.

Percussion Studio, which was formed in the spring of 1999 as Tamudrums, is a student-led ensemble that allows Aggies to keep music in their lives and perform with traditional instruments, such as the drums, as well as unconventional instruments such as kitchen utensils.

"I wanted to continue my musical experiences, but it's hard here because you have to be in the Corps of Cadets to be in the band," Percussion Studio President John Schreiner said.

Schreiner, a senior biomedical sciences major who has been a drummer since sixth grade, heard about Percussion Studio at registration in 1999 from one of the founders of Tamudrums and quickly joined because he wanted to keep playing drums.

What began as a love of playing has evolved into a love of performing for Schreiner.

"I really like performing," Schreiner said. "I used to get nervous, but I really enjoy it now. I've learned a lot about how to put on a show and make it entertainment and not just play something."

Percussion Studio performs about six times each semester at Fish Camp, First Yell, basketball games and the MSC Town Hall Variety Show, where it claimed first place twice and second place two other times.

Percussion Studio will also hold its own semester show, where it plays about 15 different pieces, on Dec. 6 at Rudder Auditorium.

The show will include two pieces inspired by the Blue Man Group, which makes a visual and musical show, with an octave of PVC pipe and a drumbone. A drumbone is a trombone made of pipe that makes different pitches when people beat on it.

"It's fun to get in front of the audience and have a good time on stage," Tayce said.

Percussion Studio has been influenced by everything from Kodo drummers in Japan, to stomp, among many others, Schreiner said.

The routine called "Potheads" is always a fan favorite, Tayce said. "Potheads" features two members of the group dressed in armor made of cooking utensils who play on each other.

Other routines Percussion Studio has performed are "Starbucks Coffee," where members play on objects such as coffee pots and chess sets, and the Chili's "Baby Back Ribs" song.

Tayce said his personal favorite was performing a piece called "Cingular" at the Variety Show last year. "Cingular" includes six trash cans, a drum set, five-gallon water jugs and a drainage pipe used as a jump rope.



JP BEATO III • THE BATTALION

Percussion Studio opened for comic Martin Short and Mark Curry, star of the sitcom "Hangin' With Mr. Cooper," at First Yell in Reed Arena in 2002.

"Being in the group really stretches your creativity," Tayce said. "You play pieces you never thought you'd play, do things you never thought you'd do and play on everything from PVC pipes to jock straps."

Tayce said the student members of Percussion Studio are in charge of everything. They are the ones who choose which pieces to play, direct the shows and perform the routines.

Members practice each ensemble for at least two hours a week and sometimes up to eight hours at Bryan High School, Schreiner said.

"Without Bryan High School, we wouldn't exist," Schreiner said. "We are thankful for the use of their instruments and facilities and for their support. A&M won't let us use their equipment, and we can't afford to buy it ourselves."

Tayce said Percussion Studio holds tryouts each semester in which potential members must read music, demonstrate their music skills and creativity and prepare a piece on whatever they want, whether it be drums or kitchen utensils.

"If you're interested and have a musical background, then definitely give it a try and see what happens at tryouts," Tayce said.

Percussion Studio members use their musical talents, outside the

group as well as when they are performing together.

Schreiner is graduating from A&M in December but plans to continue his musical career with his band Adamo, which has recently finished a CD and is touring Texas.

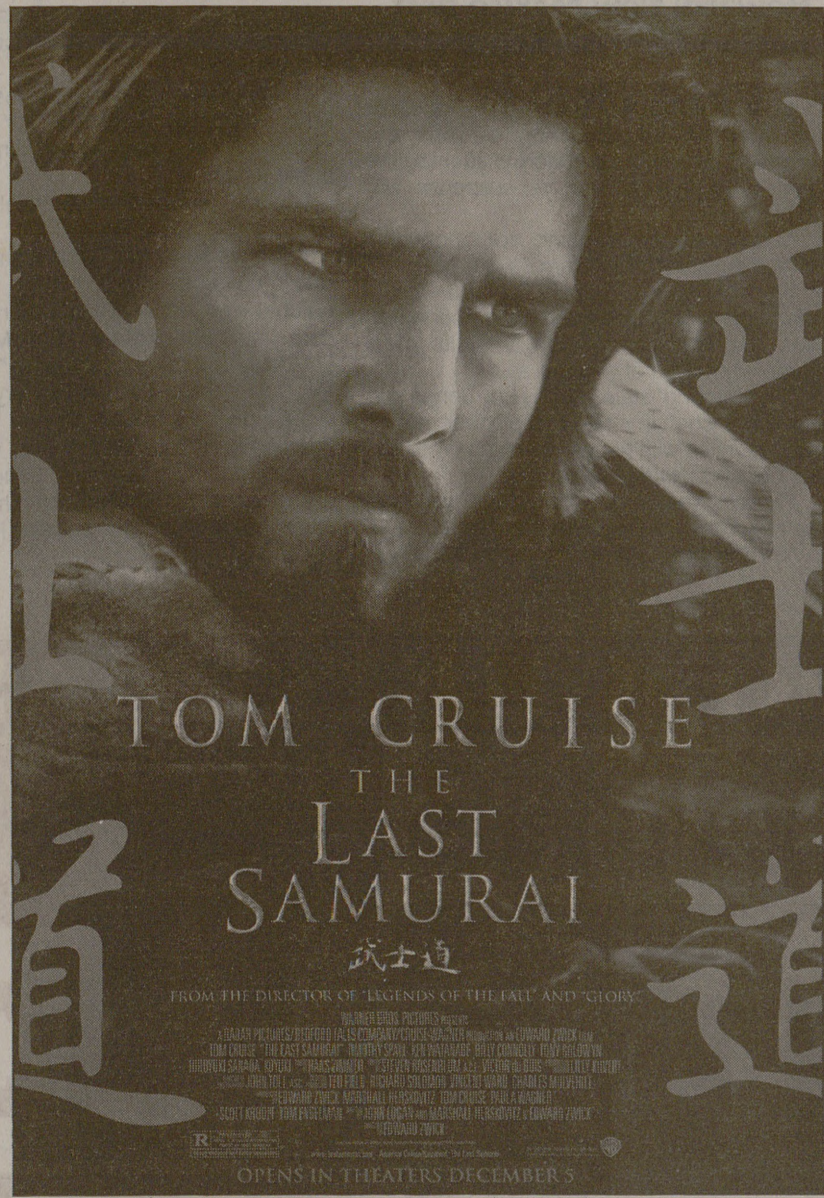
Alicia Stephenson, a junior kinesiology major and historian-elect of Percussion Studio, toured the United States last summer with the Drum Corps, a professional marching band of percussion, brass and a color guard that travels between performances and stays in a different state every night.

"We played in rinky-dink high school stadiums as well as places like the RCA Dome in Indianapolis, the Citrus Bowl in Orlando and the Alamodome in San Antonio," Stephenson said.

Stephenson said some of the things she loves about Percussion Studio are going to rehearsal, being around her closest friends and having fun with them.

"A great thing about music is that you don't have to do it as a profession to continue it," Stephenson said. "I always want to have music as a hobby and in my life. I think I'd go crazy without it."

VERIZON WIRELESS PRESENTS A SPECIAL ADVANCE SCREENING!



SPONSORED BY: DATE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2003

TIME: 8:00 PM

LOCATION: RUDDER AUDITORIUM

STUDENTS MAY PICK UP COMPLIMENTARY

PASSES AT THE MSC BOX OFFICE ONE WEEK

PRIOR TO THE SCREENING.

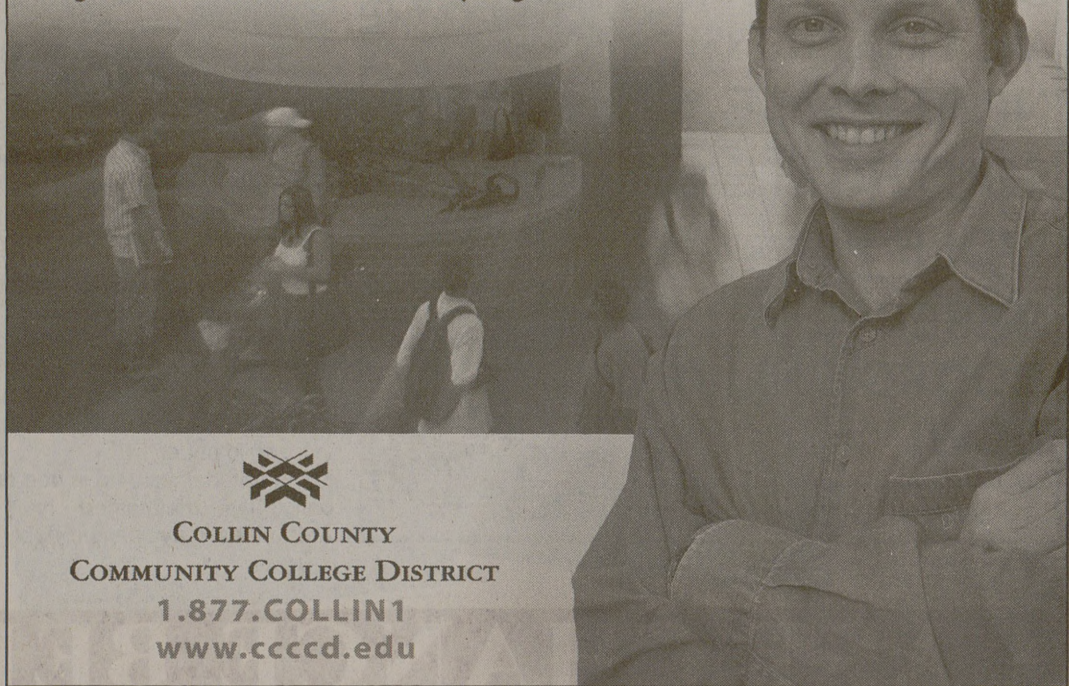
verizonwireless.com

verizonwireless.com

PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY! Seating is available on a first-come, first-serve basis with pass holders admitted first. Theater is not responsible for overbooking. Screenings are for students, faculty, and staff only. No recording devices allowed!

Smart Move.

Pack in extra credits and graduate sooner
Register now for Wintermester & Spring



COLLIN COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
1.877.COLLIN1
www.ccccd.edu



MSC Town Hall presents

A FREE Concert with

BOB SCHNEIDER

Headlining

BATTLE OF THE BANDS
FEATURING

FLY, MORDECAI EDGERTON SKYLAR BLUE

Friday Dec. 5th - Doors open 7:30 p.m.

Get tickets day of show at Rudder Box

Office starting at 3:00 p.m.

(Students Only, must show valid TAMU ID)

For more information visit townhall.tamu.edu

