

Back in blue

Blue October returns to College Station after national success

By Nishat Fatima
THE BATTALION

Justin Furstenfeld was on his way to Houston when he suddenly heard something on the radio that made him pull over on the freeway; the station he was tuned to had just played the song "Calling You," recorded by Blue October, the band that Furstenfeld fronts.

"It was the first time I heard it on commercial radio," Furstenfeld said. "I just smiled really big."

Since its recent performance in College Station last fall, Blue October has made big strides in its career. With a hit radio single, "Calling You," a song featured on the "American Wedding" soundtrack and numerous performances with high-profile artists such as Jane's Addiction, the quintet from Houston has had a busy last few months.

The band's performance at The Tap on Wednesday will feature special guests Ingram Hill and Lesermor.

Junior electrical engineering major John Schulke has been a fan of Blue October since he first saw the band perform his freshman year. Schulke said he instantly became a fan despite having seen the band live for the first time.

"They play with a lot of emotion and passion," Schulke said. "They put on an intense show."

Furstenfeld said when songwriters are crafting a song, that they tend to follow certain formulas to get different results.

"There is a certain route artists have to take if they want to be on the radio," he said. "Sometimes, when I finish a song, I think, 'This could work on the radio.' Every now and then, management will suggest that we try to make a song a certain way (to make it radio-friendly. But) I'm not going to change my style for the sake of radio."

As far as the radio success of its single "Calling You," Furstenfeld said the popularity was accidental, because the tune was originally written as a birthday song.

"(The song) is the best of both worlds," he said. "It was truthful when I wrote it, truthful when we recorded it."

If he ever tunes in to the radio himself, Furstenfeld said he has

developed a liking for a variety of artists.

"Lately, I have been listening to 50 cent, Eminem and Baby Bash," he said. "As for the rock scene, I really like Social Burn, who we toured with, and A Perfect Circle is amazing too. I also like Sarah McLachlan and Dido."

Furstenfeld said his first priority is the group of followers that has been loyal to Blue October since the band's beginning.

"I think about our supporters first. They expect something from me," he said.

Unlike many other bands, for whom a growing pool of fans means impersonality with their fans, Schulke said Blue October has not lost its bond with the crowds.

"As far as I have seen, I don't think they have lost a connection with their fans. They try really hard to maintain contact with their fans," he said.

Schulke said one of the main attractions of the band is Furstenfeld's lyrics.

"He really is a great poet. Behind all their intense riffs and licks, they have words that are really beautiful," he said.

Commercial popularity and fame haven't taken over for the band, Furstenfeld said.

"It hasn't hit me yet, because I'm waiting for it to be taken away from me," he said.

"In the music business, you never know when your time in the spotlight is over. There's a million 21-year-old guys that want my spot, but I'm not giving it up anytime soon."

Joining Blue October in its quest for fans will be

See Blue October on page 6A

GIGS

who:

Blue October Feat. Ingram Hill

where:

The Tap

how much:

\$10

doors open:

Wednesday night at 8 p.m.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BLUE OCTOBER

College Station veterans, Blue October (above), will return to perform at the Tap Wednesday night. Their special guests will be alternative rock band Ingram Hill (right) and Temple-based rock band Lesermor. Blue October's performance will include material from their latest album, "History For Sale," which features their hit single "Calling You."



PHOTO COURTESY OF INGRAM HILL

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