

Blues band caters to rock 'n' rollers who want to dance

■ The North Mississippi Allstars shake, rattle and roll their way to Taylor's for a burst of bluegrass music

By Rebecca Newell
Oregon Daily Emerald

Recently featured on the Conan O'Brien Show, the North Mississippi Allstars are a combo of gritty country blues, aggressive rock and some great musical genes all mixed together. And they're playing at Taylor's Bar

and Grill Aug 9.

"We contacted them after seeing their performance at the Mountain Air Festival," said Bjorn Estlund, Taylor's booking and promoting agent. "They have a very unique sound, a very powerful, southern blues rock."

Twenty-something brothers

Luther and Cody Dickinson formed the band with friend Chris Chew, and have hit the music world by storm with features in Rolling Stone, Entertainment, Time and Men's Journal.

It's no surprise that the band is meeting with success. The Dickinson brothers are the sons of legendary roots music producer Jim Dickinson, and can call upon an upbringing revolving around music.

In the last few years, the Allstars have been playing more than 150 performances a year, sharing the stage with bands such as Galactic and the Squirrel Nut Zippers. Focusing their sound to the region of Fred McDowell, the Allstars have multiple appeal.

"The energy is just right for our room. It's not so bluesy that it's too bluesy," Estlund said. "There

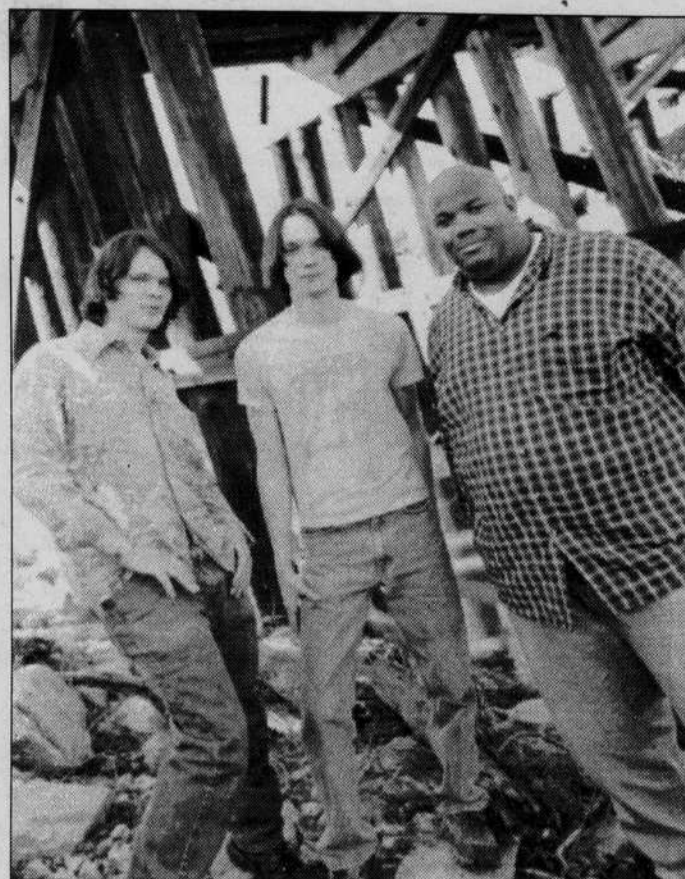
"We've never been out west, but people rave about it. They say it's beautiful country and bands love it. [And] we love college towns. We grew up in a college town."

Luther Dickinson
vocalist/guitarist
North Mississippi
Allstars

are so many influences and it appeals to so many people.

The opportunity to play at Taylor's is just one of many performances the Allstars booked on their tour.

"This is our first coast-to-coast headline tour since our record



North Mississippi Allstars recently appeared on 'Late Night with Conan O'Brien.'

came out," Luther Dickinson said, calling from a pay phone in Victor, Idaho, population 250. Luther Dickinson sings and plays the snaky slide guitar for the trio.

"We've never been out west, but people rave about it. They say it's beautiful country and bands love it. [And] we love college towns. We grew up in a college town."

"Our music is constantly changing and we're playing new material all the time," Cody Dickinson said, labeled a "monstrous-

ly talented drummer" by Time magazine.

"We're a blues band, but we're really a rock 'n' roll band. It all boils down to people wanting to dance," Luther Dickinson said.

The performance begins at 10 p.m. Wednesday night at Taylor's Bar and Grill, located at 894 East 13th Ave.

The charge is \$6.00 at the door and there are no advanced tickets available.

Visit the Allstars site at <http://www.nmallstars.com/>

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'Madness' takes over at Leebrick

■ '99 Minutes of Midnight Madness' examines the multiplicities of live acting in 17 distinctive skits

By Tonya Alanez
Oregon Daily Emerald

Madness is in the midnight air and spectators can experience a 99-minute dose on Friday and Saturday nights for only \$5 a pop.

"99 Minutes of Midnight Madness @ 11:11 p.m.," a series of short theatrical pieces, each averaging 10 minutes in length, debuted Friday at the Lord Leebrick Theatre Company.

The simplistic and intimate atmosphere, with minimal props and distractions, puts the pressure on the actors to engage and hold the audience's attention. But the LLTC pulls it off with a combination of compelling performances, precise direction and skits ranging from light-hearted to intense.

"Outscool" opens the show and reinforces the mood throughout the evening with original, live, jazzy music by Richard Leebrick on tenor sax, harmonica and vocals, Eric Colbin on bass guitar and Javier Gonzalez on percussion.

The opening piece, "Tango at the Santiago Hotel" by Lia Denae and directed by Carol Horne features Nancy West as a solitary performer portraying several kooky characters in a San Francisco boarding house. The quick, and sometimes indistinct, shifts from character to character made this number confusing and hard to follow. Luckily, it was no indication of what was to follow.

"Robot" by Daniel Durrant and

directed by Dale Brabb finds Gary Lamoin as a disgruntled businessman building a robot to replace himself. As he engages in a late night conversation with a hobo, effectively portrayed by James Flagg, I was left wondering who had a better grip on reality.

In the next performance, "Vacations," a youngster sitting at a bus stop finds herself positively influenced by the eccentricities of a woman living on the mental edge. This is a whimsical offering by Robert Wilson, directed by Tim Guetterman, featuring Sparky Roberts, Autumn Leebrick and Valerie McMahon.

Horne directs "Maggie" by Gretchen McMartin, with West ominously cast as Maggie, a woman haunted by her neighbor's menacing voice — or is it the voice within her own head? In the end, this number left me unsettled by Maggie's depression, questioning her sanity and stability.

A comedic number then makes an appearance, with Steven Mandell's "The Cassowary Bird in the Afternoon." Roberts directs here and the vignette features David Beck and McMahon in a dynamic performance as a mismatched couple brought together by a personal ad.

Larry Dobberstein's "Coyote," directed by Brabb, couples Lamoin and Brandon Burkeen as a pair of traveling musicians on the road to a footloose and fancy-free exist-

**99 Minutes of
Midnight Madness
@11:11 pm**

What: Seven short theater pieces

When: 11:11 p.m. Friday and Saturday

Where: Lord Leebrick Theatre, 540 Charnelton St.

Tickets: \$5

Contact: Call 484-7670 for info and to order advance tickets.

tence. Or so it appears, until Roberts makes a brief and telling appearance.

Under the direction of Michael Fisher, William Mastro Simone's "Jujitsu" provides a chilling finish to the evening — it's a piece you carry with you. This excerpt, from a work entitled "Blinding Light," features McMahon in a gripping performance as a woman embittered by an endless succession of one-night stands, detailing her fool-proof strategies for foiling the ploys of the alpha males of the world.

All in all, the LLTC has crafted an engaging theater experience well worth the time and the money. The series, running through Sept. 2, consists of 17 individual skits divided into three separate sets. Each set will play for two weekends of the total six-week run. Tickets are available in advance or at the door. LLTC is located at 540 Charnelton St. Call 484-7670 for more information.