

arts & lives

Review

By Tom Jeffries
Of The Print

Dave Baumgarten's musical lecture on John Steinbeck and all-too-short concert of traditional sea chanties is an excellent example of the kind of enjoyable and intellectually stimulating entertainment the students can be treated to if they would take the time to listen. With his associate, Anita Rose, Baumgarten was able to give a thoroughly enjoyable show that didn't resort to cheap shots about sex and drugs.

His music was the music that people have been singing for hundreds of year, and, with his help, will continue singing. Anyone who watched him sing could tell that he enjoyed what he was doing. It wasn't a job to him, it was a recreation, and it came through in his music, making it that much more enjoyable for his listeners. He played and sang until asked to stop (a film was scheduled to be shown), and was genuinely disappointed to have to leave. He was more than happy to stay around afterwards and share songs with anyone who wanted to play his "girl."

Even for someone who usually listens to AC/DC and Ted Nugent, Baumgarten's shows were a refreshing, entertaining and exhilarating experience.

Review

THC said bad hit

By Mike Rose
Of The Print

The three ladies looked like the types that regularly attend church functions. They left the show early, shortly after the choir broke into "Loaded at the Time." The Hallelujah Chorus was not quite what they expected.

Bawdy, direct, and simplistic is the Hallelujah Chorus' brand of humor. The Hallelujah Chorus (THC) performed for a large audience Feb. 4 in the Community Center Lounge. "They were raunchy, but good," was a typical comment made by one in the audience.

THC's show consists of songs that are mostly about drugs, sex and bodily functions. THC is the intoxicating chemical in marijuana. As the group's name suggests, drug humor is dominant in the show.

Their absurdity and shock value was responsible for the biggest laughs. An example is "Obscenity Still Pays" which feature funny words like "motherf..." The audience was invited to sing along to the ditty, "I Love to Come."

Getting laughs is what really

counts. The majority of the audience laughed. Unfortunately, I was among those who didn't. I endured the first 13 songs. At intermission I took off and tried to recover. I made it back in time to hear the last two songs. The 16 songs that I missed may have been the paramount of humor. The sun may explode tomorrow, too.

I appreciate crude, tasteless humor. THC was crude and tasteless, but not very humorous. The act had a blatant quality. For quality humor, it takes more than just mentioning drugs, pubic crabs, or even "motherf..."

I have a personal prejudice against drug humor. It's about as funny as plywood. I realize that some people enjoy drug humor (God knows why). However, THC relied too heavily on drug humor and it got a little wearing.

A couple of the songs were not without merit. "Pissing on a Barbed Wire Fence" had some funny lines. "I Love To Come" was a spectacle of absurdity and tastelessness, but entertaining. On the whole, I wouldn't recommend THC to anyone I liked.



THC likes to sing, too.

Staff photo by Duffy Coffman

Baumgarten: an odyssey through Steinbeck

By Tom Jeffries
Of The Print

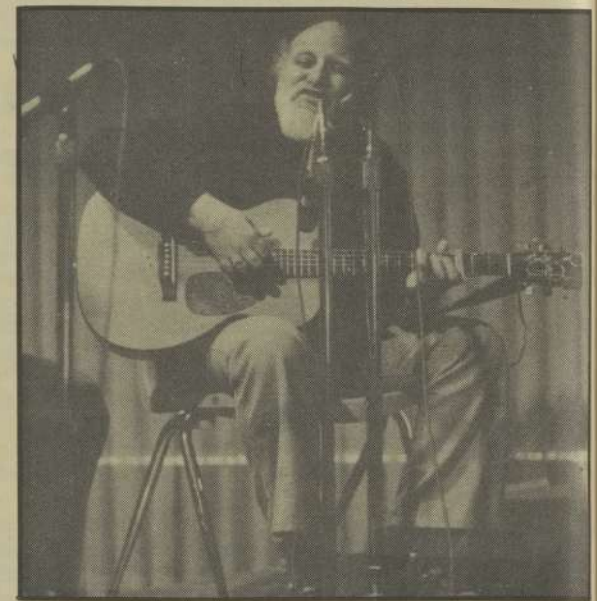
"Jodie thought I was God and 10 feet taller! If he wanted to know something he didn't go to his Pa. No sir! He went for me, Billy Buck!" Dave Baumgarten drawled, slipping easily into a character for a monologue that faded effortlessly into a song. His one-man show on the works of Steinbeck, presented on campus Friday, is a different approach that includes his own interpretation of the man and his writing.

Rather than copy the standard format of the one-man show, Baumgarten does not attempt to imitate John Steinbeck. Instead, he has built a show that uses his own monologues and songs, taken from Steinbeck's works.

A graduate of the University of Redlands with a bachelor's degree in Theater Arts, Literature and Humanities, Baumgarten was inspired by Steinbeck. He produced and directed 25 professional productions, and served as a teacher, artist-in-residence and guest lecturer for various skills until turning to his present occupation of concert folksinger.

"He turned me on at an early age," Baumgarten said, explaining his 20-year identification with Steinbeck. "I came to his writing through 'Cannery Row.'" It opened a lot of doors for me. I didn't start out to write a show. I just wrote songs and monologues and injected them into my regular concerts. Pretty soon I realized I had an entire evening show, just on Steinbeck," he said.

Baumgarten performs most often at colleges. "I always get a good reception, and I have very few problems with his relative anonymity. Most people don't know what to expect, so they take the time to listen," he said. "It catches their attention because it's not imitative, and it's not dry, like a straight reading would be. Of course, I have gotten some criticism because many people are so in love with Steinbeck that they want complete faithfulness to his writing. Instead I give them my personal odyssey through his works."



Dave Baumgarten and friend

Staff photo by Duffy Coffman

His show on Steinbeck is not the only musical lecture he offers. He has put together other shows on such topics as the sea, the dust bowl years, songs

of social protest, ballads and many others. He has also recorded albums on Steinbeck and sea chanties that have been distributed nationally.

"I got into folk singing because it's the music that I love the most. I don't mean modern folk music that has been composed to be folk music, but real, traditional music that has been handed down through the generations. Of course, some modern music is well on its way to becoming real folk music. 'Countdown Roads' is a good example.

"When will I stop? When becomes a job, rather than an activity that I enjoy."

Festival to feature CCC performers

The first Clackamas Community College Festival of the Performing Arts has been set for three performances later this month. Under the coordination of Debbie Baker and David Buckley of Student Activities, the approximately hour and a half program will involve four of the humanities departments on campus: video, dance, music and theater.

The motivation behind the multi-media concept is to bring more of the College's performers out of the wings and into focus for other students, the community and high school students.

The Music Department, under the direction of Jean Elliot, will present the Swing Choir doing selections from "A Chorus Line," and a 16-voice madrigal ensemble, which will sing selections from Baroque composers, including Thomas Morely and Henry Purcell.

There will also be instrumental selections from the same period.

The Theater Department is planning a Reader's Theater production entitled, "Freewill." The theme of the production reportedly revolves around a rather profound question of philosophy.

The Dance and Video Departments have planned both separate and joint productions. Jane Rickenbaugh of dance has three dances on the agenda, one entitled, "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jerico," a modern dance originally choreographed by Helen Tamaris in the 1930s. A modern/jazz production called, "I Believe in Love," accompanied by the Kenny Loggins version of the song, is also on tap.

Dance's collaboration with the Video Department will come on a piece entitled, "In

the Beginning: Erstwhile Relationships." Rickenbaugh describes this as having "primitive, ritualistic feel" which will be accompanied by slides, rear-screen visualizations and video tape delay. The dance was choreographed by Rickenbaugh and by members of her Modern Dance Repertory group.

Besides the work with the Dance Department, Video has planned some abstract video presentations involving tape delay and video feedback. About 20 video students are involved in the project. It is also reported that Mr. Science will present some of his physics improprieties.

The festival's first performance will take place at noon on Feb. 18 in the Community Center, Mall, and will be repeated on Feb. 20 at 8 p.m. and again at noon on Feb. 21.

Clackamas Community College

