

# DIVERSIONS

WEEKLY ENTERTAINMENT SECTION • THE DAILY TAR HEEL • THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1996 • PAGE 5

Movies Page 6

### "Restoration"

Sam Neill is among several Hollywood stars with cameos in Michael Hoffman's new film.



Theater Page 8

### "The Seagull"

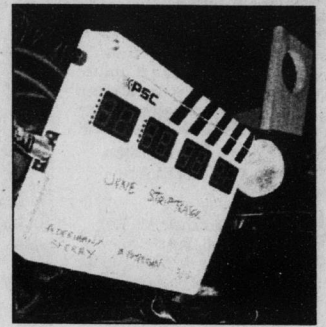
Annalee Jefferies plays another neurotic woman in the latest PlayMakers production.



## Once More, With Feeling



Guitarist/vocalist Tricia Tuttle takes a breather during a series of lighting adjustments.



## Local Band June Learns About the Unglamorous Side of Music Videos

It's 9:30 a.m., and June are breaking for lunch. But give them some slack — they've *already* had a long day shooting their video for "Stripteaser" on location at Graham Cinema; waking up at 1:30 a.m., sitting through makeup and wardrobe starting at 3 a.m., then shooting night scenes very early in the morning.

Following the world's earliest lunch, the band still had more than five hours of filming to go. And it was showing. As the crew adjusted lighting and cameras between takes, bassist Andy Magowan slumped on his amp and occasionally passed around a jug of water to his bandmates, who looked rather odd chugging away while dressed in their vintage black formal attire. Guitarist John Price couldn't seem to get his bowtie straight, and a stylist ran to assist him while a makeup artist dabbed another layer of red lipstick on vocalist Kat Cook. Drummer John Howie yawned unapologetically, beyond the point of covering his mouth. Guitarist/vocalist Tricia Tuttle laid down on the carpeted stage, not worrying about mussing her feather-trimmed gown.

Within a few minutes, they'd be on their feet again, playing (unplugged along with a playback tape) with absolutely no sign of wear, for an audience of about 35 extras.

Listeners infected by the single when it was released as a Friction Media 7-inch in April 1994 won't be surprised that it led to bigger things. June signed to Beggars Banquet last spring and will release their first CD, *I Am Beautiful*, on March 26. The band (except for Howie, who replaced original drummer Matt Gross) formed in late 1992, and created a local stir with their first single, "I Am Beautiful," before "Stripteaser" created a national and international buzz — an article in *Billboard* magazine dubbed them "the next Superchunk," and legendary British DJ John Peel played the single on his show.

The buzz hopefully will grow, as Beggars Banquet plans to send the video out to 150 cable (local and

national) stations, including MTV. Cook wasn't sure of the band's chances of making it to "120 Minutes," but the artistic process was more important to her anyway. "I wouldn't want to do a video for doing a video's sake. I'd want to do it for an artistic sake. It's just a lot more fun that way," she said. "If there's nothing creative going on, you're going to be in a pile of videos with everyone else."

The band decided on an original concept: set in a movie theater, the band performs on stage/on film, while the audience (including band members) looks on. Cook said, "We wanted to have this sort of imaginary place where you weren't sure if the band was self-aware or not. The band was also put into the audience, and the band functioned as a viewer of themselves. So, you ask yourself, is this reality or is this a dream? So we wanted some sort of strange time and place play in the video that was more interesting ... not just a narrative."

The directorial team, from New York's Nocturnal



Shooting on location at Graham Cinema provided more than a vintage ambiance — there were also perks such as free popcorn and drinks.

Films, took this concept and developed it for a budget of \$20,000, using both black and white and color. Co-directors Margee Sperry and Erica S. Federman previously had done videos for Giant Sand, Friends of Dean Martinez and Acetone, as well as fashion projects for Calvin Klein and Donna Karan.

While they had experience with videos, that didn't mean they should override the band's ideas, Federman said. "It's really important to Margee and I to let the band's personality come through. A band writes a song



Even though her microphone is unplugged, June vocalist Kat Cook sings, rather than lip-syncs, to the playback tape.

for a reason ... and they're a band for a reason. To make a video, you need to understand who they are as people. I don't like a lot of music videos because they just seem like pretty images. They don't connect with who the band is."

Cook appreciated Federman and Sperry's openness to the band's ideas: "They knew it was our first video and they wanted us to be completely at ease, so they were really sensitive to making sure that they weren't asking us to do things that we were uncomfortable with."

The New York team recruited Triangle residents as crew, and local filmmaker Norwood Cheek served as assistant cameraman. Cheek has worked on around 40 music videos for Tsunami, Velocity Girl, The Figgs and also "Young Rock," Mammoth's compilation of local rock videos. He said he enjoyed the chance to concentrate on camerawork, watching how cameraman Mark Petersson's techniques differed from his own. "There's always something to learn no matter how

much experience you have," Cheek said.

The band, too, learned a bit more about the music video process, especially the waiting. The worst part, Price said, was sitting around in his tux under hot lights through what seemed like 20 takes: "It got kind of old after a while, 'Once more with feeling ...'"

But that *feeling* comes across in the video; in the dramatic black and white stage scenes, a spotlight wanders as the song builds. As Cook's vocals grow manic and the band starts crashing around her, wandering close-ups are intercut with color scenes of the band scattered among the audience members. The entire retro-meets-modernity feel of the video mirrors the effect of the song.

Cheek said, "Certainly, in some cases, the video can break the band, but that is pretty rare. But I think it's definitely a positive thing to have a good video, it can only help." If you grow impatient waiting to see "Stripteaser" on MTV, the band may show the video after their CD-release party at Cat's Cradle on March 30.

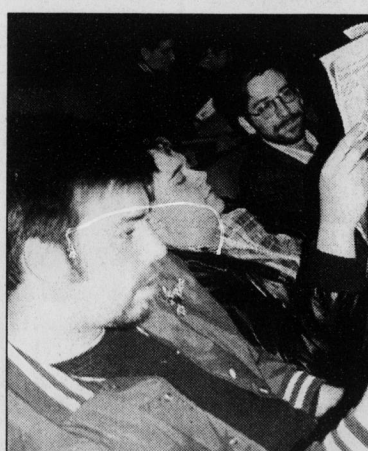
### "Stripteaser" — the Video

**Directors:** Margee Sperry and Eric Federman (Nocturnal Films)  
**Video Budget:** \$20,000  
**Location:** Graham Cinema  
 Main Street, Graham, N.C.  
**Time of Shoot:** 3 a.m. to 4 p.m., Jan. 30  
**Cast:** Five band members, 35+ extras  
**Number of Times "Stripteaser" Was Played:** 30 (according to guitarist John Price)

**June's Next Album:** *I Am Beautiful*  
**Release Date:** March 26  
**Release Party:** Cat's Cradle, March 30.  
 The "Stripteaser" video may be shown after the performance.



Director Margee Sperry and Cameraman Mark Petersson discuss stage changes for the band's performance scenes.



Extras learned to cope with boredom and breaks during more than 10 hours of shooting.



Cameraman Mark Petersson coaches bassist Andy Magowan and guitarist/vocalist Tricia Tuttle.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY WENDY MITCHELL