

Love Tractor to roll into UNC with instrumental Southern pop

By JAMES BURRUS
Staff Writer

When Love Tractor plows into Great Hall this afternoon, don't expect them to plow into a set of heavy party-rocking songs. This Athens, Ga., band, with its Southern pop instrumentals, is a Springfest-type band. Just lean back, relax and enjoy.

Love Tractor is appearing with Dash Rip Rock and Guadalcanal Diary in Great Hall this afternoon at 3 p.m. as part of the Southern Fine Arts Festival.

Love Tractor began its career playing instrumentals because the members didn't want to carry a P.A. system around with them. They also thought their songs were good enough without vocals. A lot of people in Athens agreed.

One of the band's instrumentals,

"Pretty," is featured on the album "Athens, Ga., Inside/Out."

"(Instrumentals) may be a little too introverted for people who enjoy partying down," said Armistead Wellford, the band's bassist.

On the band's last LP, "This Ain't No Outerspace Ship" on Big Time Records, the band stepped out a bit. Only two of the album's songs are instrumentals; the rest feature the vocals of Michael Richmond. Rounding out the band's lineup are Andrew Carter on drums and Mark Cline on guitar.

Did Love Tractor lose fans when they started playing more songs with lyrics?

"We did see some people who were really into those old songs," Wellford said. "Once they saw us live they were back in the swing of things."

The band has not quit writing

instrumentals, Wellford said. In fact, the band has written some new ones that were not included on the last album, he said.

For people who like to "party down," Love Tractor occasionally does renditions of disco songs, such as The Gap Band's "Party Train."

"(Disco songs are) just something to play in the party-out situation, which sometimes we're in," Wellford said.

The last time the band played at The Milestone in Charlotte, the band members found themselves in a party situation, Wellford said. What will the band members find themselves in today?

Love Tractor, Guadalcanal Diary, and Dash Rip Rock will perform today at 3 p.m. in Great Hall. Call 962-5505 for ticket information.



The band Love Tractor will perform in Great Hall today as part of the Southern Fine Arts Festival

Gospel concert: Green shows his faith, talent in short but sweet performance

Singer Al Green displayed equal measures of his vocal brilliance and gospel preaching to an enthusiastic audience of about 250 people in Memorial Hall Wednesday night, but his 55-minute concert suffered both from its extreme brevity and its lack of any clear direction.

The Rev. Green brought a full nine-piece band with him to Chapel Hill, but his rich and flexible voice was the central point of the show. Green showed his excellent baritone voice on such gospel standards as "People Get Ready" and "Amazing Grace," and he also gave moving performances of his own songs, such as "Jesus Will Fix It." Green's

David Hester Concert

delivery was sincere and powerful, and his music frequently elicited shouts of approval from the audience. Green performed some marvelous music; however, he did not perform enough of it.

Green, not exactly the hardest-working man in show business, performed fewer than a dozen songs in less than an hour to an audience that seemed to be prepared for a long night of gospel music. Although

audience members paid between \$7 and \$10 to attend the featured concert of this year's Fine Arts Festival, they heard about as much music as they would have heard if they had instead used part of their money to buy one of Green's albums.

Even though Green spent an extremely short length of time on stage, he did not seem to have any clear direction for the show. Green would frequently stop his songs to talk to the audience and witness for the Lord, and many of these interruptions detracted from the effectiveness of the music. Although the ministry is an essential part of

Green's music, his conversations with the audience often seemed to break up the tempo of the performance instead of being integral parts of the show.

Despite these problems, Green gave a very enthusiastic and flashy show. He came onstage wearing a tuxedo, sunglasses and a scarf, and he frequently came into the audience to shake hands and give away long-stemmed roses. The crowd responded with gusto as Green frequently asked them if they believed in Jesus, and many members of the audience waved their hands in the air to show their faith.

The most striking part of the show

was Green's singing, however, and the limited amount of music Green performed still enabled him to show why he was awarded this year's Grammy Award for gospel/soul singer. Green's concert would have been more successful, however, if he had performed more of the music that has made him so critically acclaimed.

The Black Student Movement Gospel Choir opened the concert, and their powerful performance was one of the evening's musical highlights. The 43-member choir has a very full sound, and they exhibited excellent balance. The choir opened

their section of the show with joyous and moving versions of "He's All Right" and "Power," and then moved into their award-winning cappella rendition of "There Is A Fountain."

The choir featured soloists on three of its selections, and all three had excellent range and technique. The entire choir sounded marvelous, and it exhibited a musical excellence that is rarely found among non-professional groups. The choir's rousing performance was extremely well received by the audience, and the choir richly deserved the standing ovation it got at the conclusion of its performance.

Controversial 'Hail Mary' modernizes birth of Christ with secular setting

Almost two years after its initial release, the Jean-Luc Godard film "Hail Mary" has come to Chapel Hill. Controversy has surrounded the project since its conception. Morally outraged demonstrators have followed the lead of Pope John Paul II, who denounced the film, sight unseen, saying that it "deeply wounds the religious sentiments of viewers." The bonfires of indignation were lit over Europe, New York and Boston as protesters cried "Shame!" Ironically, the subsequent publicity brought extra attention to "Hail Mary" and Godard.

Not surprisingly, however, there were no banners wielded at the local premiere; there were merely some moviegoers who were curious to see the cause of all the ballyhoo sur-

Marty Michaels Cinema

rounding the film. After the final credits, there was still a sense of curiosity and yes, even bewilderment. "Hail Mary" had failed to deliver the goods as the blasphemous parody which the defenders of the faith has alleged it to be. The problem was that most of the protesters have admittedly never seen the film.

A few sensational items upon which the media has capitalized are indeed true. "Hail Mary" does contain a certain amount of explicit language and nudity, yet neither of

these elements is presented gratuitously or blasphemously. The Virgin Mary (Myriem Roussel) is depicted as an attendant at a gas station where the equivalent of the angel Gabriel, a sinister-looking thug, informs her that she is pregnant. Joseph (Thierry Lacoste), a taxi driver, is rather skeptical about the circumstances since he has never slept with Mary.

Mary is understandably ambivalent about the unexpected Annunciation. Joseph finally agrees to marry her, and she begins to accept her mysterious fate of becoming the instrument of divine power. Mary asks her doctor, "Does the soul have a body?" He replies, "You mean, does the body have a soul?" Yet she clearly meant the first question; for Godard, the body and soul are

interchangeable images of the same incarnation.

Mary, originally a beautiful but ordinary girl, is transformed as she struggles to attain soulfulness. She reaches a fusion of the holy and the sensual as she writhes on her bed in unfolding comprehension and self-denial. This marriage of the sacred and the sensual is foremost in Godard's concept of the film. The values of the body and soul, both apart and together, are approached as Godard contemplates the image of the ideal woman.

Joseph never really seems to understand the immensity of the situation. The birth is not actually shown, but the cries of the child are heard over disjointed images of flying planes and snow. He is an

ordinary-appearing child who one day proclaims "I am He who is" and goes off to perform his Father's works.

In the film's concluding scenes, Mary gets into her car, lights a cigarette, and applies scarlet lipstick. Has she returned to the mundane world of sensuality, forsaking her mission of spirituality? Godard does not answer this and many other questions in "Hail Mary," preferring to rely on vague ambiguity.

Those who call the movie sacrilegious are ignoring its more spiritual aspects for those which are blatantly banal. Admittedly, the circumstances surrounding the virgin birth are excruciatingly mundane; there are no heralding trumpets or romantic visitors from afar. Yet the wonder

of the original birth was that it happened in an unremarkable place to real people who were both frightened and awed by the glory which was to befall them. The divine touched man, whether in a Paris suburb or in Bethlehem. Godard retains this holy sense of religion — the divine speaking to the ordinary and the terrible mystery which the divine imparts to uncomprehending man.

Godard shows that life is present in all things through exquisite images of nature — animals, fields of flowers, and the powerful elements in storms. He combines these images with bursts of music by Bach, Dvorak and Coltrane to push closer to the wonder at the heart of beauty.

Other art forms, such as painting, sculpture and music, approach this unrelenting mystery more frequently than cinema. It is incredibly difficult to sustain such an elusive celebration of sanctity for the length of a feature film. Yet, in the second half of "Hail Mary," Godard comes close to approaching the basic primal force of art. He is a post-Modernist filmmaker of the avant-garde school drawing near to the mysteries of religion, the image of woman, and therapeutic nature.

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