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Craven' meaningful music?

Local singer tells Pa. tales on new album

By PHILIP LEO
Collegian Staff Writer

In a world filled with radios blasting formula rock, there are musicians like Tim Craven who still provide music that has meaning.

Craven, who lives, works and performs in the State College area, has not forgotten that music is a sensitive art form and has resisted changing his style just for commercial appeal.

Craven has been playing his music here for the last 10 years. And he has an excellent new album out called, *Last of the Dime Store Boys*.

What makes this album so special is its theme — it is written about the Northeastern United States by someone who lives there.

"I want to write about the Northeast," Craven said. "Everybody's writing about the South and they have probably never even been there. I grew up in western Pennsylvania in McKeesport and I want to stay here."

Last of the Dime Store Boys has some very strong tracks that truly capture what is happening in this area. Side one opens with "I Love My Smoky Western Pennsylvania Mill Town Home," a song whose title says it all.

When Craven sings, "Here's to Crazy Nemchik and O' Big Ray and to little Ois too! He could take your car apart and put it back together before he's through! I remember the days of playin' ball and nights of goin' wild! Well, I guess I know no matter where I go I'll always be a mill town kid," the listener catches a small glimpse of his steel town origins.

The lyrics throughout the whole folk-oriented album are strong. From the thoughtfulness of "Harrisburg Today," which speaks of the impact that Three Mile Island had upon our lives, to the mystical feeling created by "Christmas at Sea," Craven, through his words, earns the right to consider himself a folk singer.

"Lyrics are important to me. There is value in writing what is going on now. Not just politically, but socially."

"When people think of folk singers they think of Woody Guthrie in the dustbowls of Oklahoma, but there are plenty of poor people in Pennsylvania right now," Craven said.

This notion of social concern is evident in "Old Yankee Town," possibly the best song on the album: "In old charcoal Pittsburgh they're closin' some mills/ They got less demand for American Steel/ 'Cause the mills are as old as the family and friends/ Who are just too darned stubborn to adjust to the trends." These words provide an accurate description of the lives of many in the Northeast.

The picture would be a dreary one if Craven weren't obviously in love with the area. Instead we get a description and an image of Northeastern life that is based on a love that is as old and stubborn as the area he sings about.

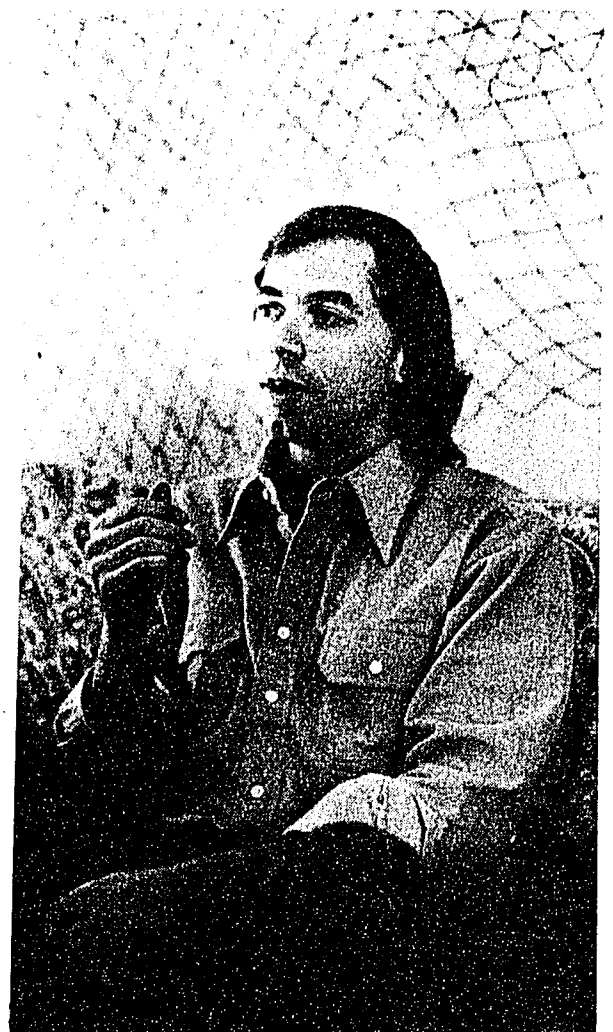
Yet the album does not always play so well. Craven's voice at times seems a little strained and sometimes the lyrics seem a little forced. But those moments are rare.

Musically, the album is very strong. There are two rock songs, three country songs, two ballads and even a dixieland number. This mix of styles blend together to provide Craven's lyrics with the proper vehicle for expression.

Unfortunately, the record industry seems to be intent on giving us safe, mindless formula rock and roll. Music that blasts you with chords and lyrics that mainly concern themselves with sex and leather.

Yet, Craven's music is still successful because it asks something of its audience. It asks them to listen, to think and to take a look at life around them.

Craven is currently forming the "Dime Store Band" which will debut on April 23 at the Kern Coffeehouse. He will also be performing on WTAE-TV's (an ABC affiliate) morning talk show on April 12.



Tim Craven



'Everybody's writing about the South and they have probably never even been there. I grew up in western Pennsylvania in McKeesport and I want to stay here.'

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Film Follies screen Graphic Arts talent

By SHAWN ISRAEL
Collegian Staff Writer

It's spring at Penn State — warm weather, romance, baseball, hay fever and the Film Follies.

The Film Follies, for all the freshmen, transfer students and others who don't know, is an annual public showing of the Graphic Arts department's senior class slideshow and film projects.

This year's Follies, screening at 2 and 8 p.m. tomorrow in the Walnut Building, presents variations on three basic themes:

- metamorphosis, a change in form, shown via slideshow and music;
- passage of time expressed in slideshows with optional soundtracks;
- political or socio-economic statements detailed on 16 mm. films.

Also included are 16 mm. film leaders that were drawn or painted upon.

Brian Gamberman of the Graphics department's technical crew, said the afternoon showing of "crash show," as he put it, has a twofold purpose.

Primarily, the purpose is to accommodate the expected overflow of crowds at the evening show. The large number of people on this year's "guest list" (faculty members, important figures in the art world) prompted another showing for students who might otherwise have been turned away, Gamberman said.

Past guest list members have included various deans of art colleges throughout the country and representatives of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, he said.

"I want to write about the Northeast," Craven said. "Everybody's writing about the South and they have probably never even been there. I grew up in western Pennsylvania in McKeesport and I want to stay here."

The second purpose of the afternoon show is for the technical crew to hammer out any flaws in the presentation.

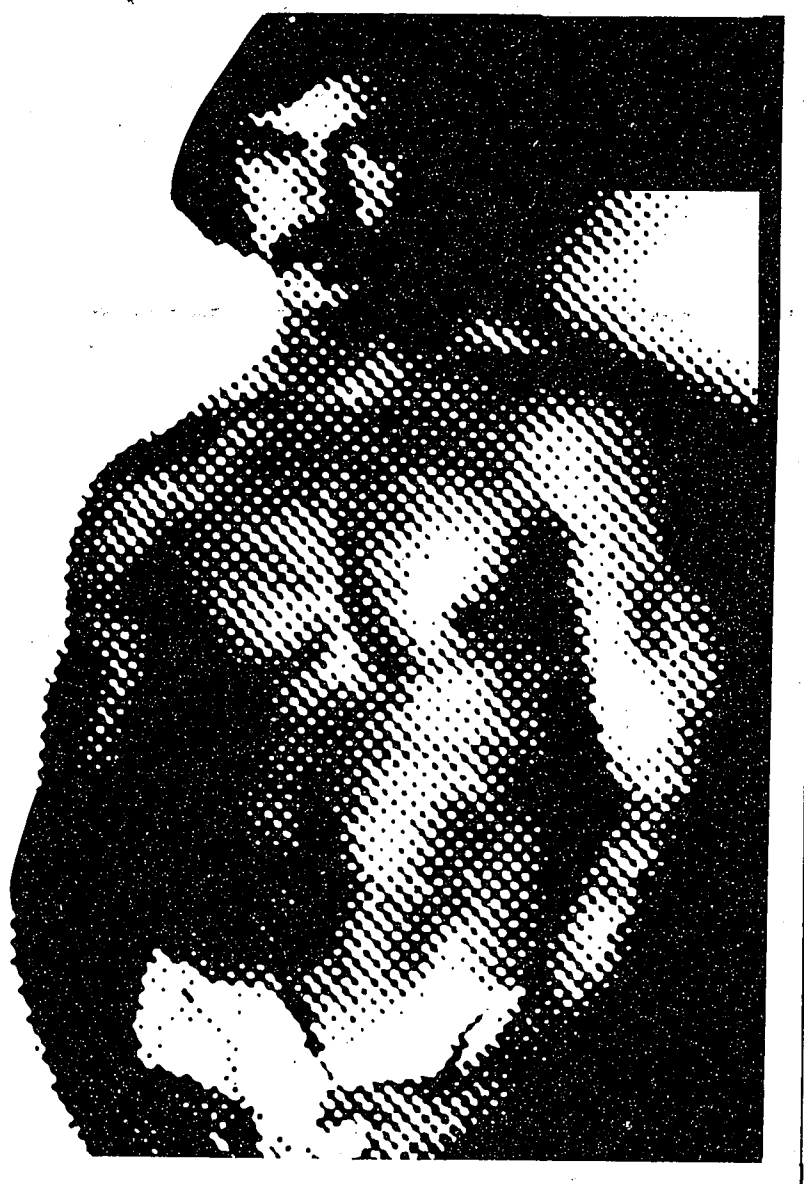
Bill McClary, who is doing public relations work for the Follies, said the annual event is also an effective means of getting people to take notice of the comparatively young department in the college of Arts and Architecture.

"We're a very small department, but we're pretty important," she said. The students involved in putting together this year's show were dedicated and worked on the project with Herculean intensity.

"The show is going to be so good. Everybody has worked so hard," technical crew member Kevin Brewer said. "You just don't realize the time, effort and emotion put into it."

Mark Stoner, who opens the presentations on Saturday, said he and the department anticipate a successful, well-received show.

It should be a wonderful family for the whole show," he said.



Area musicians vie for festival honors

By LAURIE JONES
Collegian Staff Writer

Young musicians from all over the state of Pennsylvania will get a taste of college competition when the Penn State Solo and Ensemble Music Festival gets underway at noon tomorrow at the Music Building.

Any junior or senior high school musician can enter the School of Music's fourth annual festival as long as applications are signed and submitted by a music director or private music teacher. There is a \$5 fee to enter the competition.

music preview

Debbie Noyes, who is handling admissions for the festival, said this year's entrants will play piano, guitar, brass, strings, woodwind and percussion. She also said that some will also compete as vocalists.

Entrants can perform alone or as a group. Each ensemble can have only one person to a part without a formal conductor, though a vocal ensemble can have two people per part.

The musicians must adhere to a six-minute time limit, during which they tune their instruments and play their selection. Following the performance, the judges are allowed four minutes to offer comments.

"They receive a written evaluation — a rating from poor to superior — and comments decided on by all the judges," Noyes said. The comments provide constructive criticism to the aspiring musicians, and are "intended to encourage further musical pursuit," according to the festival application.

Among those competing are violinist Rachel Lindsey of Lock Haven Junior High School who is returning for her third festival and clarinetist Colleen Baylor and French Horn player Brian Lawrence, both seniors at Southern Area High School in Catawissa, who recently competed in the Susquehanna Valley Youth Concerts competition.

Noyes noted that the festival introduces the musicians to the University's music faculty. "Some of them plan to attend Penn State after high school," she said.

In addition to becoming acquainted with the various faculty members, the festival should prove to be invaluable performing experience for those talented musicians within the state.

enough for the whole block to enjoy. I thought to myself, here's a band that could go somewhere. Well, here they are. Riggs, four guys who play instruments and sing, put together this fine album, truly a credit to the genre. Sure, the songs have typical lyrics and typical titles, like "Girls On The Loose," "Take It Off," and "Over and Over." But what's in those grooves is tight, sparring, gear-driven rock. No frills, no fancy studio gimmickery, just power chords, guitar leads, wailing vocals etc. . . . The real thing. Plain and simple, with enough edge to annoy one's roommates at sufficient volume levels. As long as they stay relatively non-commercial, OK. As long as we can keep them off "Solid Gold" — Andy Gibb's voice might rise another octave when these guys get cranked up.

"ALBUM ORIENTED ROCK 'N' ROLL," TRIUMPH, RCA #D1L2-2417. Don't be fooled, this is actually *Allied Forces* (RCA, #AFL1-3902) disguised as a promotional copy with interviews of Gil Moore, Mike Levine and Rick Emmett, who make up Triumph. By now, if you're at all interested in heavy metal, you've heard "Lay It On The Line," "Live For The Weekend" and "Say Goodbye" on the radio. Not bad, eh? Consider the amount of sound, the fullness these three guys who play instruments and sing put into their music. They're comparable to The Police in that respect, although Sting would

shudder at the thought of his band lumped into any comparison with this style. But like The Police, they must be totally self-reliant onstage, to make

that music work with just three. Kind of cutey, sometimes 'too sweet' and smooth. Use it to break beginners in.

"RENEGADE," THIN LIZZY, Warner Brothers, #BSK 3622. Speaking of steadfast, Thin Lizzy has been doing the same thing for as long as anyone can recall. Not a band to change horses until their hooves are cracked and they're completely deaf, Thin Lizzy has the right to sit back and say, "look at all this new noise. Why, we've been doing it for years." No Lizzy-come-lately, their style has had plenty of chance to polish itself. And it is good, just like their other albums, and just for that reason. Besides, they save you money — buy one, you own them all. So at least buy one.

"WHARIT," WHARIT, MCA-5288. Bob and Doug McKenzie go to a concert. Actually it's not that bad, but this Canadian band of six (count 'em!). Los Angeles renegades are certainly not beyond having a good day, eh? That's about all they do; I'm sure they have a great time of it, long hair, flashy guitars, shirts open to the waist — I've heard it all before. For the size of the band, they sure don't do a hell of a lot else. All the excitement of a six pack of flat O.K. beer. But they'll make a buck, just about everybody else in this genre is. And they might as well be anybody else. Don't bother.



Jerry Riggs

So what if it's the music that everybody's doing now?

Hey gang, here's a quick quiz for you. What has three chords, as many different definitions as listeners, and has survived the Rise and Fall of the Disco Empire and the New Wave Empire. Strikes Back to become the latest craze in the music industry? That's right, none other than our old friend, heavy metal.

Yes, now it seems that everybody and his mom are doing heavy metal, and everybody else is calling it something different. When you hear Van Morrison's "Brown Eyed Girl" with punchy electric guitar chords and chunky rhythm, you know something's happening.

I'll avoid using it.

The latter have aimed themselves at those tender, bored middle-class teens who choose to remain tender and bored. And speaking of tender and bored, R.E.O. Speedwagon is not heavy metal, nor is Journey, nor is Cheap Trick. I prefer Rolling Stone's term, power pop, or more affectionately, schlock 'n' roll.

And let me tell you, there's more of that floating around than Saudi light crude (and it's about as interesting to listen to).

AC/DC has gone stale; Aerosmith is gone. Ozzy Osborne misses Black Sabbath; many of the purported metal bands are spin-offs from here. Blue Oyster Cult has steadfastly stuck to its guns; last year's *Fire of Unknown Origin* was one of 1981's best lps. The rest are struggling for style or just jumping on the latest bandwagon as they do every time money turns up.

Next Blondie, having exhausted its New Wave, disco and reggae incomes, will be turning everything up louder and singing songs of hormones.

So what's heavy metal all about, and why am I subjecting you to my biases? Take heart, I'm a steadfast metal fan, just disappointed at the latest round of cardboard bands claiming to rock. Here we have a sample of new releases, starting with the interesting music and going down from there:

lasses, chugging around in my Plymouth as it spewed loud blue smoke out its dual exhausts, with "Heartbeat" from the "Heavy Metal" soundtrack throbbing from my Sparkomatics loud

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Jeremy Graf



Steve Austin

I know nobody asked me, but here's how I classify heavy metal. Van Halen and Van Halen II are heavy metal, as are large percentages of Queens and Queen II. Van Halen's latest stuff, and Queen's latest stuff, are not. The former has degenerated into a senseless, random assortment of distorted guitar and silly lyrics about arousal in drunk pre-teens, or something. "Kid stuff" has become such a hackneyed phrase;

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