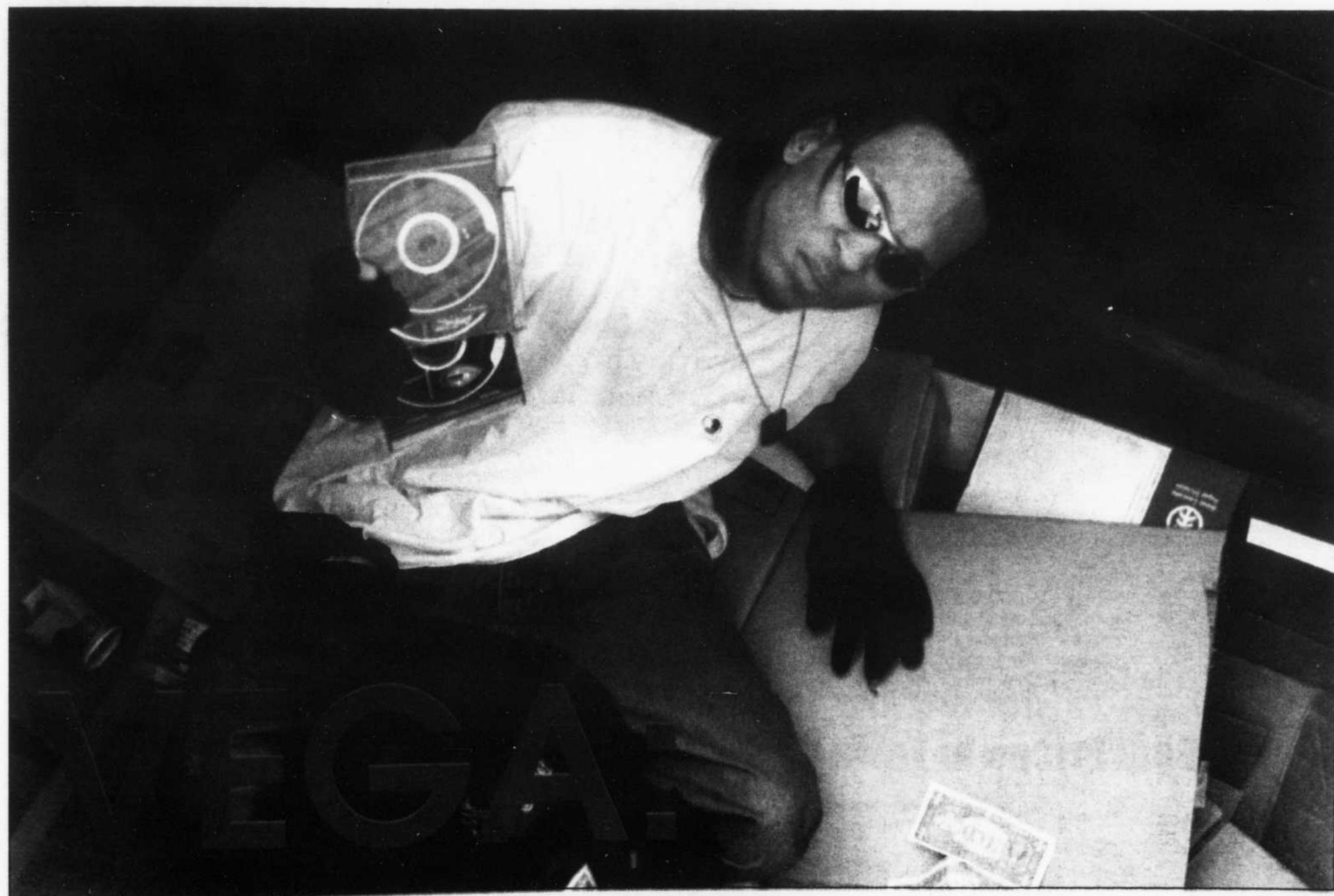




'Identity' is a killer

April 24, 2003

- p. 8



Local rap artist ready to represent the common man, p. 6

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Mourning the 'Boro's lost clubs

I'm very passionate about music. I read somewhere that the man who started *Rolling Stone* magazine wrote much more like a fan than like a music critic. I am much like him in many ways.



Leslie Carol Boehms
flash* staff

But in this passion for music comes a passion for the city that thrives on its musical upbringings. And in a town where the university boasts so many recording industry students, it should be no wonder that there is an abundant saturation of musical acts in this town.

However, what is diminishing at a potentially hazardous rate are the number of venues for these young bands to showcase their creativity.

In the three-plus years I have been in Murfreesboro, there has been an influx of venues, as well as a smattering of departing clubs.

But it saddens me that there have recently been many a fallen soldier in the realm of venues. Though I must admit that Sports Planet was my least favorite local venue, it was, alas, a place to go in a town that often seems deserted for possible outlets. Now it's just another empty property in the Murfreesboro Square.

And then there was the loss of Sebastian's and Diana's Brew Pub earlier this year. Sebastian's had always been one of my favorite spots in this town. It was the first club I went to when I came to Murfreesboro. I remember standing outside the club waiting for the doors to open to see then masterful locals Self.

Yet, those Spongebath Records days are gone and so are the days of Sebastian's.

So, what is a town with such musical talent and saturation to do with the loss of these venues? Sure there are other places to play. And of course, there's always the trek up to Nashville. But the point of the matter is that we're losing the diversity, the range of choices that we as listeners, musicians, students have to breed life into a new generation of song.

There are so many ways to help. Support local music. Support local causes like the benefit for the girl's summer camp at Red Rose Saturday. I know it's hard to pay your \$5 (and be upcharged more at some places for those under 21 like me), but when your choices are pizza and a concert, I know how hard it is to choose the latter.

But every now and then make an effort to try out different genres, see all of the local venues. And support, because it's looking like a fighting effort for these places to stay afloat. *

flash*
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More than luck

Do you like chicks with guitars?

When they're good, I sure do. Patty Larkin is a classical guitar player who sings and writes thoughtful lyrics.

At worst, Patty Larkin is a sober Shawn Colvin — only much better. At best, she is a innovative singer/songwriter who is a good musician at the same time. Larkin incorporates several different instruments into her songs like mandolin, trumpet, fiddle, cello, harmonica and accordion.

Many guitar-based bands try to use effects and a diversity of instruments to cover up their lack of talent, but Larkin uses these instruments sparingly and with skill.

Each instrument blends so well with Larkin's melodies and riffs that it is difficult to pick them out on her latest record, *Red=Luck*. Larkin herself moves from classical to electric to acoustic to 12-string to baritone

to steel guitar without upsetting the continuity of her album.

Track 9 on *Red=Luck*, "Different World," is a strong song in all aspects. The lyrics are well thought out and inspirational. The vocal melody would work on the radio, but not in a poppy sort of way.

The vocal melody moves around just enough to make a clear point and ends with a neat 1960s vibe embellished with strings and a trumpet.

The guitar work is fairly simple compared to Larkin's other songs but it is cool, and the rhythm section keeps the song in a strong groove. Track 11, the album's title track, is a pretty little guitar meditation. It is short but sweet, and Larkin comes in with a few oohs for exclamation.

The next song, "Inside Your Painting," is another radio-worthy song with a happy vocal melody and chord progression. Engineer Tim

Craven threw in a little muffled vocal distortion for one of the verses.

But, while most vocal distortion usually annoys me, this was really cool and effective.

One blemish on this song, and on nearly every song on the album, is the extensive use of drum loops.

Ben Wittman, who co-produced the album with Larkin and Bette Warner, also played the percussion. I do not understand why he would not want to play real drums throughout.

At any rate, it is a small flaw, that probably would not bother most people.

As far as Patty Larkin's style goes, she is an atypical singer/songwriter.

Some of her songs are folky, some are kind of Sheryl Crow pop rock.

Other songs are celtic, and a few are true rock.



Patty Larkin's new album, *Red=Luck*, is more skill than luck. This album receives *** out of four stars.

Given her diversity and raw talent, she is the closest to a female Phil Keaggy, but she's not quite that good on the guitar.

This album was excellent and I recommend it to anybody who likes the aforementioned styles. *

review by joe freisinger

Nashville film festival rolls around again

More than 200 entries selected to compete

The Nashville Film Festival will hold its 34th annual festival and competition April 28-May 4 at the Regal Green Hills 16 Cinemas in Nashville.

The festival will showcase some of the best in independent film and video from around the world.

More than 200 top entries from all genres have been selected for the competition and will be shown on four state-of-the-art screens throughout the event.

This year's festival will include premiere screenings of award-winning works, highlighting features, documentaries, short films, animation, films made for children, experi-

mental film/video and works by young filmmakers under the age of 18.

Making their world premieres at NFF are a pair of Tennessee-lensed dramas. *Charlie's War*, directed by David Abbot, is a World War II-era period piece set in the Deep South. *Stuey*, written and directed by local filmmaker A.W. Vidmer, is a gritty biopic of high-stakes poker champion Stu Unger.

Another film celebrating its world premiere at the Nashville Film Festival is the documentary *King of Bluegrass: The Life and Times of Jimmy Martin*, a film that follows Martin and his lifelong quest to

reach his childhood dream of becoming a regular cast member of the Grand Ole Opry.

Other highlights at the this year's festival include:

- *A Decade Under the Influence*, Ted Demme and Richard LaGravenese's documentary about Hollywood in the 1970s, including clips and interviews with Francis Ford Coppola, Peter Bogdanovich, and other directors.

- *The Secret Lives of Dentists*, an Alan Rudolph film that delves into the ordinary lives of husband-and-wife dentists who are ripped out of their complacency by boredom.

- *The Dance*, a documentary about Billy "The Kid" Roth, a former boxer who volunteers as a boxing coach in the prisons of Louisiana, directed by John Darling Haynes.

The festival also includes a selec-



tion of documentaries from and about the Middle East.

New Managing Director Geoff Koch is excited about the diversity of NFF and its continued growth. "We have comedies, documentaries, 'mockumentaries,' children's films, noir films and inspirational films. It runs the full gamut," Koch said. The NFF is expecting close to 15,000 in attendance this year, including well-known celebrities.

The festival's top prize, The Dreammaker Award, entitles the winning 35mm feature film to a week's run in a Los Angeles County Regal Cinema theater, qualifying the

film for an Academy Award consideration. First prize in the short film category automatically qualifies for Academy Award consideration.

Tickets may be purchased at www.ticketweb.com, by calling 1-800-965-4827. Tickets are also available at the Regal Green Hills 16 Cinemas box office beginning Saturday, April 26, to Monday, April 28, are noon to 5 p.m. The NFF Box Office opens at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 29, to Friday, May 2; at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, May 3; and at 11 a.m. Sunday, May 4.

Regular admission for regular programs is \$7 with a student ID, and matinee admission is \$6 or \$5 with your student identification. Workshops, film passes and packages are available. Visit the festival at www.nashvillefilmfestival.org. ♦

story by jesse lee campbell



Photos provided by UPN

Left: The cast of *Platinum*, a new show on UPN that has brains and style.

Bottom, from left: Sticky Fingaz, Lalanya Masters and Daretta Sherwood star as members of the Rhames family.

This television series gets *** out of four stars.

Realism, melodrama collide on 'Platinum'



The employment opportunities for African-American actors on television are usually dim. Black actors can fill the quotas of dominantly lily-white casts (see: *Friends*, *CSI*) or languish in the background of a *Girlfriends* episode.

UPN and the WB are the main sources of employment.

It began with *The Jamie Foxx Show*, *Wayans Bros.*, *Homeboys in Outer Space* — shows that lacked compassion, a sense of storytelling, and overall entertainment value.

UPN, acknowledging the lack of

smart urban programs, decided not only to create an African-American series but bring in the white folks as well.

The result is the desegregated *Platinum*, a rare urban soap opera with the usual lineup of stock characters (preppy black male or streetwise black male) and also a revolving door of disarming storylines to boot.

This is a considerable achievement for UPN, a network henceforth known for stealing *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and reinvigorating the wrestling genre via WWE Smackdown.

This hip-hop morality tale covers three generations of a black New York family who struggle to run an independent record label amidst your Sonys and Time Warners.

Platinum's emotional center contemporizes a Shakespearean archetype: two brothers ruling over their kingdom of Escalades and over-sexed rap divas.

Ah, if only Bill Shakespeare were alive in these times where Missy Elliott can make money by talking to her vagina.

Sweetback Records is the brain-



child of older brother, Jackson (*Barbershop's* Jason George), a ruthless control freak who realizes the viciousness involved within the record industry.

Grady (Sticky Fingaz) is the streetwise younger brother, a man more concerned with getting his freak on as opposed to making a hit record.

The brothers have a Meadow Soprano-esque sister in Jade (Davetta Sherwood), a rebellious New York University student known for gracing violent nightclubs.

Jade's romantic interest is Versls (played by independent rapper Vishiss), the long-ignored love child of Eminem and Vanilla Ice.

To worsen matters, Versls is selling poorly and might have gone all Shyne on a dude.

Other subplots involve an evil conglomerate itching to acquire Sweetback and a rival independent record label that entices Sweetback's talent pool.

Amazingly, *Platinum's* gallant realism complements its paradigm of Knots Landing melodrama.

The jittery camera movements evoke the cruelty of an *Oz* episode and the haziness of a David Lynch film.

Platinum owes much of the success to its producers (*Six Feet Under's* Robert Greenblatt and David Janollari) and writers (novelist John Ridley and *Virgin Suicides* director Sofia Coppola).

Even Sofia's father, Francis Ford Coppola, is signed on as executive producer.

Despite its pedigree, *Platinum* easily tangles characters in conventional characteristics.

By the second episode, Vishiss's



Versls evolves into an imitation of Jamie Kennedy's B-Rad Token White Rapper character.

And despite its penchant for realism, Francis Ford Coppola's history of gangster-fiction seems vaguely updated.

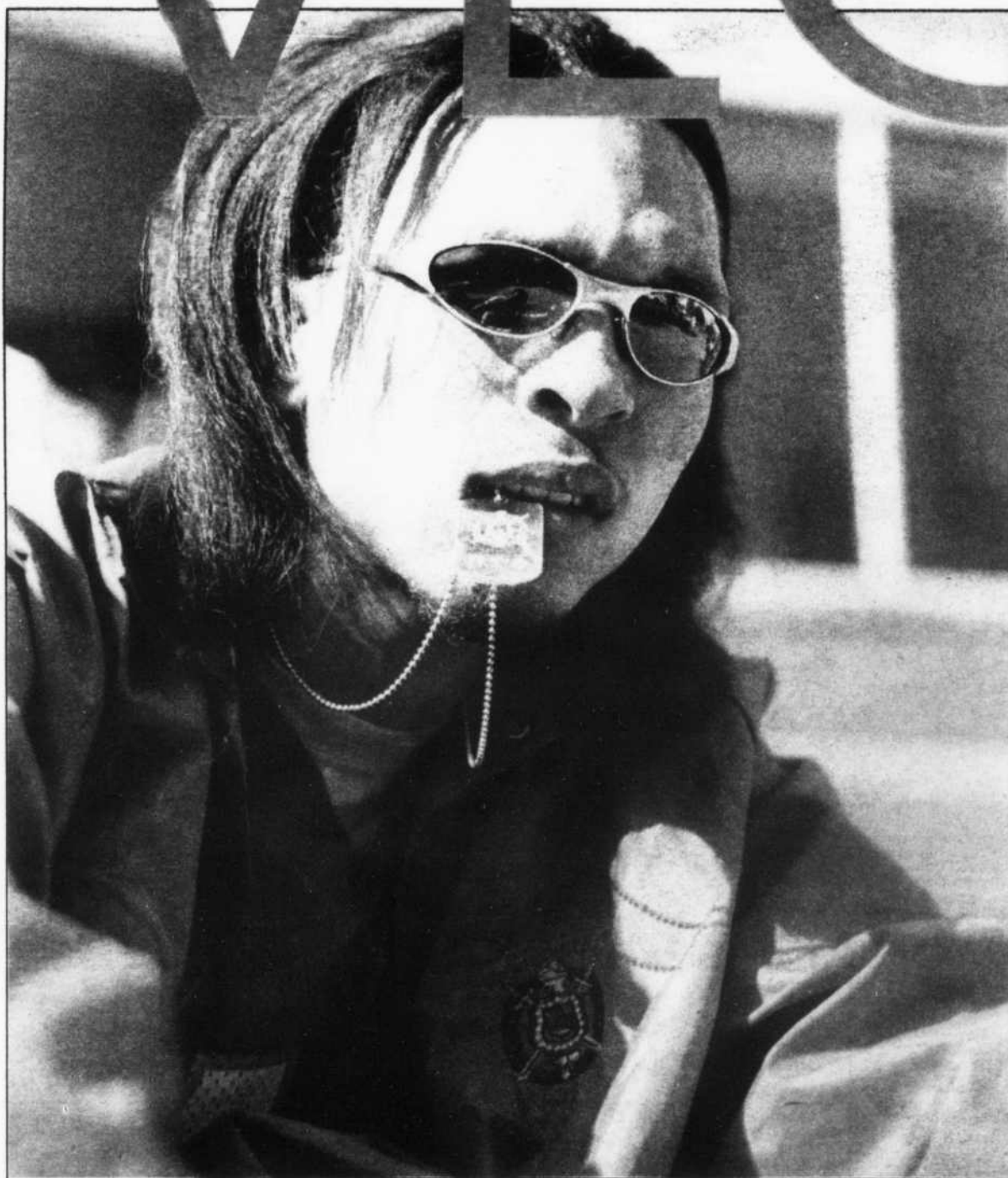
These are only minor hedges for *Platinum* to overcome within the coming weeks.

Besides, *Platinum* still manages to entertain through its blunders.

There aren't many programs that can do that. *

story by joey hood

VEGA



Vega Tigarrius, who came to MTSU in 1999 from Memphis, began rapping at 15 years old while in high school and recently released *Time* this year, his final year of school.

story by leslie carol boehms

Local rap artist
ready to represent
the common man

If you see a guy walking around campus selling CDs out of his backpack, don't look at him with that peculiar squinty-eyed stare you ridiculous kids always seem to gaze.

Rather, hit him up for probably the best music deal you'll hear about in a while – 18 prime tracks for \$3. But wait – if you act now, we'll throw in this premiere edition of *flash** featuring upcoming hip-hop artist Vega Tigarrius.

But CD selling aside, Vega Tigarrius came to MTSU in 1999 after growing up in "the great state of Memphis." It was there that Vega, at the fickle age of 15, decided that rapping, writing and being an artist was the way to go – or at least the way to get out of trouble.

"I was in detention in high school and I started [rapping] to gain attention," Vega said. "And so the more I rapped in high school the more people noticed me, but I was no good [then]; a lot of people laughed at me. It took years of progression and practice."

Vega's outlet for teenage venting turned into a regular habit. When Vega came to MTSU, he released his first album to much local acclaim. However, he knew there would be obstacles. He knew that album wasn't perfectly timed. Nonetheless, Vega has, now, in his final year of college, released an album that is timed much better for a number of reasons. The album, *Time* was recorded over seven hours and is the product of much labor by the album's executive producers Kevin Mabin and Vega.

"The name of the album is *Time* and that represents all the frustrations, accomplishments everything I've gone through to this point," Vega said. "It's my time to really do what I'm here to do which is make music. Not only make music but make good music."

Time is a collaborative effort of Vega and some of Murfreesboro's finest special guests. The ever-lovable Big Fella makes several appearances on the album. Other additions include Te'Arthur and Folk Medicine.

The album, like Vega, is a representation of cross-hatching genres. Vega isn't one to be restricted to a certain category of music. Thus, *Time* is the culmination of Vega's greatest musical loves.

"Basically the theme of the album is not about being flashy or going to the club; it's just about being real," Vega said. "I'm not Puffy, I'm not anybody on campus; I'm Vega I'm the Mississippi River Rat. I'm nothing – I'm dirt."

Vega's favorite track, "Insane Over You," is, in his opinion, an example of the meshing of musical influences.

"The reason ['Insane Over You' is] my favorite track is because of the guitar – it has this heavy metal feel to it," Vega said.

"I'm not Puffy, I'm not anybody on campus, I'm Vega. I'm the Mississippi River Rat. I'm nothing - I'm dirt"

- Vega Tigarrius

"I listen to so much different music that I hate to just get boxed into one thing as far as hip hop only being for blacks," Vega said. "I like to bring different elements into it because I write R&B, I write country, I write gospel I write easy listening. I really feel 'Insane Over You' because lyrically, it's a fabulous song."

Ultimately, what truly makes Vega unique is his choice to be very, very restrictive in his usage of profanity in his music.

"Ninety-eight percent of my material there's no profanity," Vega said. "When I use it there should be emphasis and know that that was my last resort and I really meant it."

There are other differences in Vega compared to the remainder of the hip-hop and rap community - Vega isn't obsessed with brand image.

"I don't believe you have to drive on 20-inch rims and wear Gucci and Prada in order to feel good about yourself," Vega said. "I purposely named myself the Mississippi River Rat because nobody takes an appreciation for having nothing."

"I try to do the exact opposite of what a lot of people do as far as hip hop," Vega said. "I'm not a thug. I'm not a gangster. I have street smarts. I know the art of hustle. I know the art of perseverance." *

You can purchase Vega Tigarrius' new album "Time" for \$3 from Vega himself (between the hours of 2- 4 p.m. at the Keathley University Center), or Music Jamz (located on Memorial Boulevard). Also, see Vega live at the African Street Festival planned for MTSU May 3.



It took Vega seven hours to record *Time*. He sells the album out of his backpack, so if you see him on campus, be sure to buy one.

photos by bill burgess



Photos provided Columbia Pictures

John Cusack and Ray Liotta, above, along with Amanda Peet, below, star in the new thriller, *Identity*.

This film receives ***1/2 out of four stars.

'Identity' is a killer

It seems that after the success of films like *The Sixth Sense*, *Fight Club*, and *A Beautiful Mind*, film makers are gearing toward the psychological side. The only problem with this new movement in the film industry is that the genre will eventually grow old, and knowing Hollywood, it will grow old fast.

It's often hard at times to find a good thriller that plays with your mind. *Identity* is one of those films that stains the mind of the viewer like fresh red paint on white canvas.

The film begins with a series of events that show how everything and everyone become connected. This is a technique that is difficult to do, and nearly possible to do well.

Ten people get stranded at a Hotel in the middle of Nevada. When people start mysteriously dying, Ed (John Cusack), a former Los Angeles cop, and Rhodes (Ray Liotta), a cop with a prisoner to transport, are the only guys there who know what to do.

They spend most of their time

trying to figure out what is going on. None of the characters trust each other, and every character is a suspect.

The film takes twists and turns, which is expected in a thriller. Sometimes it's hard to see the twists and turns up ahead. The film is not just psychological but also horrific, and there is an element of crime and suspense as well.

If I were a person with a weak stomach, I wouldn't watch this film. There is quite a bit of blood, but it

is done artfully. The horror elements of the film are not cheesy and pretty much everything in the film is appropriate for the context of the story.

The camera work in this film is first rate. The shots flow well and work with the script. The dialogue is pretty good. Most of the time, you hear Ed talking in his mind. The actors and actresses do a superb job throughout the film.

This film takes your mind, and plays with it like a cat with a toy.

There are many things typical in this "horror" film, but then again, there are also some hard parts to put together.

This film is not an easy puzzle and the ending will either freak you out or make you laugh.

The quality of the film was great, the character development was wonderful, the acting was spectacular and the story is a keeper.

Cusack fans will not be disappointed. There are many new and some old faces in this film. *



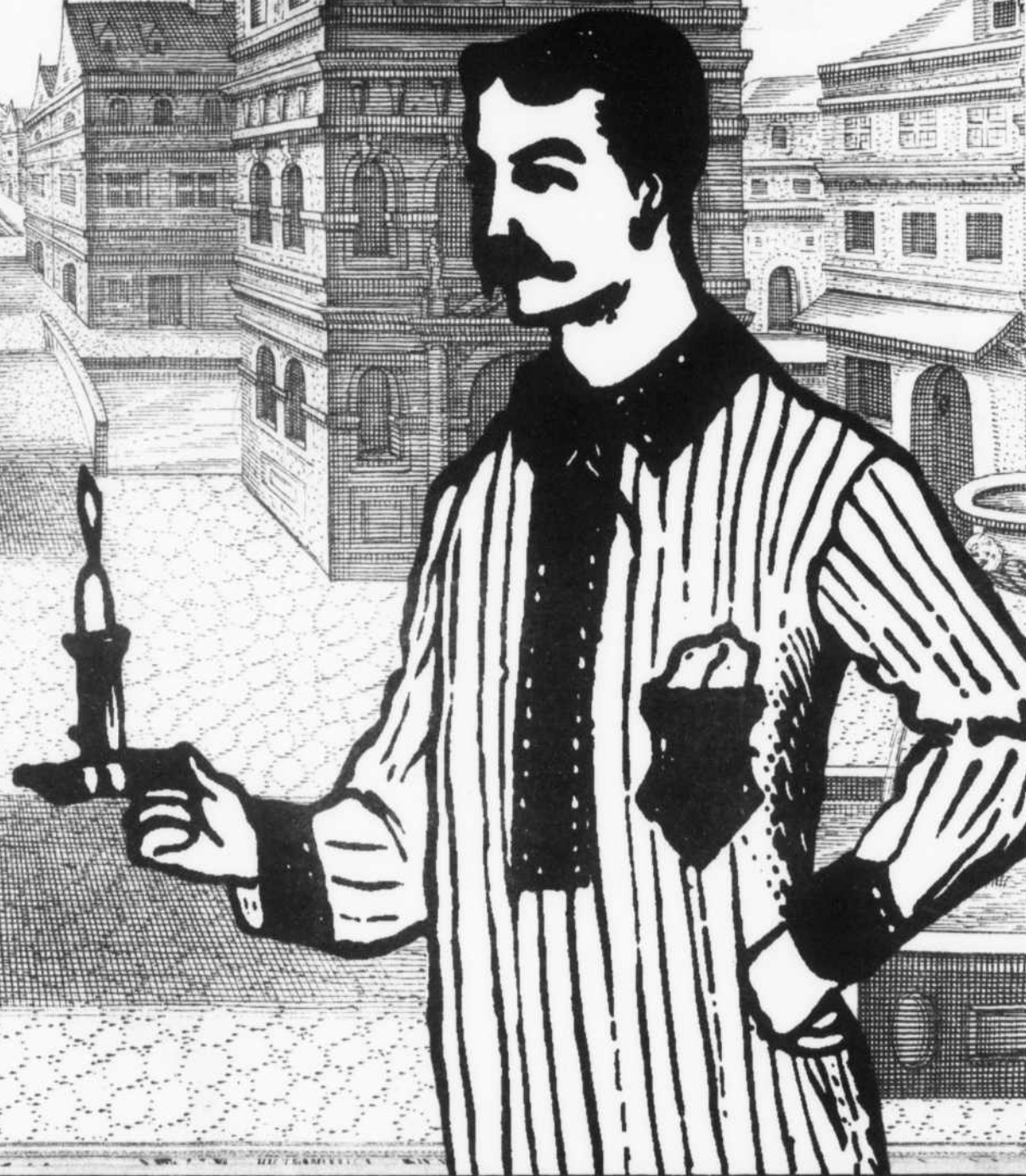
review by andrew emerson

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Supporting rock 'n' roll

Musicians in support of a good cause will rally together at the Red Rose Coffee House and Bistro this Saturday. The cause: a fund-raiser for the Southern Girls Rock 'n' Roll Camp.

MTSU student Kelly Anderson is putting together the camp, sponsored by June Anderson Women's Center, Women for Women and Lambda.

But the main event on Saturday is the music. This is the third benefit show for the camp. The last show, featuring local rock outfits Forget Cassettes, Verde and Character, raised more than \$700.

The money raised will go toward scholarships for girls who cannot afford the \$100 camp fee.

And if the music doesn't suit your fancy, there's also going to be a vinyl record auction. Off 12th Records, Pressure Drop and Great Escape all donated to the auction. There were also several personal record collections contributed to the cause.

This weekend's benefit features

three local bands.

Slack is a local power pop trio that's been rockin' the Boro for years. The band was eager to help friend and fellow musician Kelly Anderson.

"We've been friends with [Kelly] for a couple of years now and it's great that somebody is doing something cool like this [camp]," said Slack bassist Ben Slack.

"We're totally behind her. We hope it's successful this year that [the camp] will turn into a really big

deal."

The Reverbians are a '60s garage rock outfit that is also scheduled to perform. The Bubblegum Complex will play a set of their quirky pop tunes and Anna Fitzgerald will start of the show with an acoustic set.

Note: The Southern Girls Rock 'n' Roll camp benefit show is Saturday and will begin at 9 p.m. at the Red Rose Coffee House and Bistro. Cover charge for the event is \$5 and all proceeds benefit the camp. *

story by leslie carol boehms

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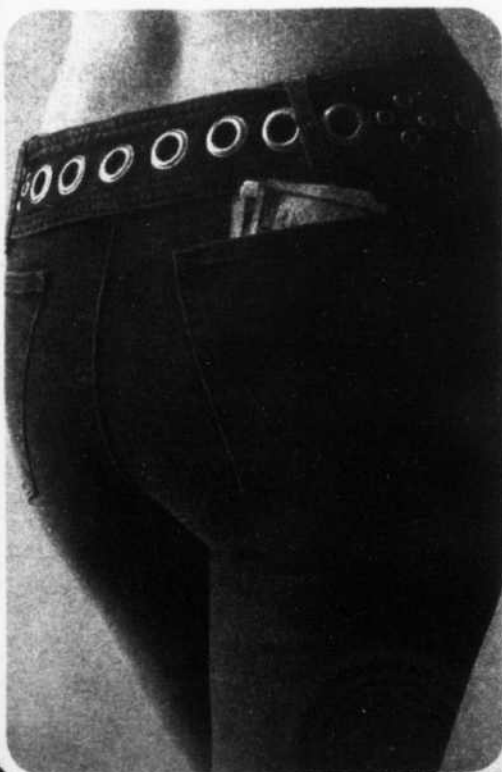
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CLUB LISTINGS

flash favorites denoted by a *

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

Blue Sky Court: Taking Back Sunday, From Autumn to Ashes, Recover, Count the Stars, 7 p.m., \$12.

Boro Bar and Grill: Haduken & The Orange Juice Kids, Soon, 9:30 p.m., \$5-7.

The Church: Evan Levine, Axiom, Salt the Earth, 9 p.m., \$5 - 10.

The End: The Mercury Program, The Paper Lions, The Cry Room, 9 p.m., \$6.

Guido's NY Pizzeria: Bluegrass Night with the Cumberland Five, 7:30 p.m.

Slow Bar: Lost Sounds, Four Hundred, 9:30 p.m., \$5.

The Sutler: Holler 'n' Swaller Night with Daniel McClendon.

3rd and Lindsley Bar and Grill: Eye 40, Travis Abercrombie, 9:30 p.m.

12th and Porter: Horse, Big Jim Slade, 9 p.m.

Wall Street: Money Penny, Brandon Vickers, 10 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

All American Sports Grill: Krosstown Traffic, 10 p.m., \$4.

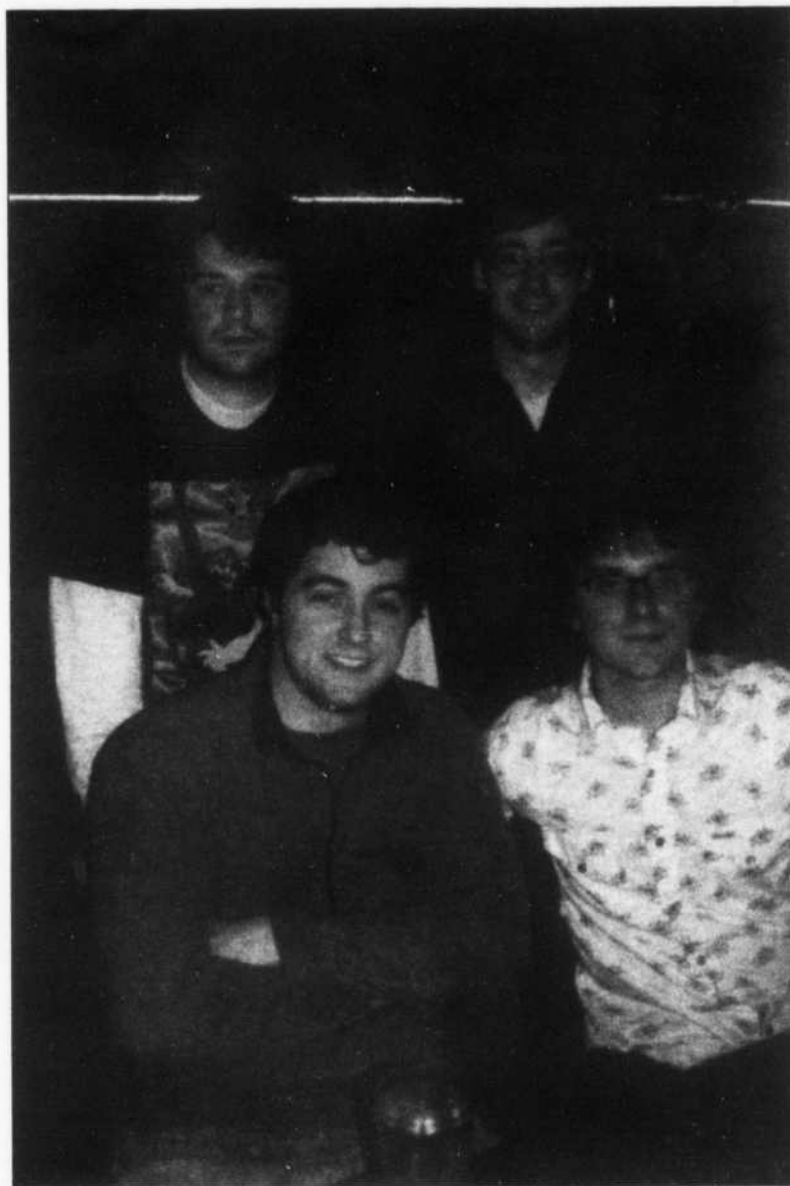
Boro Bar and Grill: Mass Transit, 9:30 p.m., \$5-7.

The Church: Tartar - A Tribute to Phish, Verben Court Strut Band, 9:30 p.m., \$7-12.

The End: Elevator Music Collective, DJ's Spoon, Danahja, Chek, Mindub, Emerald, Jolby, 9 p.m., \$5.

Gentleman Jim's Bar and Grill: A. Holland, The Mystery Mandolin Band, 10 p.m., \$4.

* **MTSU Earth Day Festival:** featuring Drums and Tuba, Spooky Johnson's Original Rock 'n' Roll Band, Juan Profit Organization,



File photo

Don't Trust the Radio will perform at 12th and Porter tomorrow at 10 p.m. Joining them will be Fairfax.

Broken Word, Stephen Gaskin, noon - 9 p.m., KUC Knoll.

The Muse: Transmission, Julius Seizure, Random Hero, 7 p.m., \$5.

Red Rose Coffee House and Bistro: MTSU - A Night of Stand-up.

The Sutler: The Heaters, 9 p.m.

3rd and Lindsley Bar and Grill: Dean Hall, Max Johns, 10 p.m., \$12.

12th and Porter: Fairfax, Don't Trust the Radio, 10 p.m.

Wall Street: August Christopher, Hemingway, 10 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26

Boro Bar and Grill: Derailed, 9:30 p.m.

* **The End:** Alt-Country Hoe Down, 9 p.m., \$5.

The Church: Old Union, Don't Trust the Radio, \$5-10.

Red Rose Coffee House and Bistro: Rock 'n' Roll Camp for Girls Benefit Show featuring Slack, The Reverbians, The Bubblegum Complex, 9 p.m., \$5.

Slow Bar: Sugarman Three, Lee Fields, 9:30 p.m., \$10.

The Sutler: Pat Buchanan, 9 p.m.

3rd and Lindsley Bar and Grill: Dave Barnes, Jonell Mosser & Enough Rope, 9:30 p.m.

12th and Porter: Holly Williams, 10 p.m.

Wall Street: Hemingway, Miguel, 10 p.m.

Windows on the Cumberland: Mink, Del Giovanni Clique, 10 p.m., \$5.

SUNDAY, APRIL 27

Boro Bar and Grill: Laura's Open Mic 4 p.m.-8 p.m., Live Bluegrass 9 p.m.

The End: Embodiment, The Sky Between, 7 p.m., \$6.

Guido's NY Pizzeria: Witch Hunt, Deadly Skies, The Contract, Snakeskin Machinegun, 7 p.m., \$4.

The Muse: Black Label Empire Showcase, 7 p.m., \$5.

* **Red Rose Coffee House and Bistro:** The Features, Imaginary Baseball League, 9 p.m., \$5.

Slow Bar: Slow Bar's Outsider Cinema, 9 p.m.

3rd and Lindsley Bar and Grill: Common Ground CD Release show, 9 p.m.

WHO DO YOU CALL?

3rd & Lindsley Bar & Grill: 259-9891

12th & Porter: 254-7236

All American Sports Grill: 896-9661

Blue Sky Court: 242-6033

The Boro Bar & Grill: 895-4800

The End: 321-4457

Exit/In: 321-3340

Faces Restaurant & Lounge: 867-7555

Gaylord Entertainment Center: 770-2000

Gentleman Jim's (E. Main St.): 896-9716
(Greenland Dr.) 893-9933

Guido's New York Pizzeria: 329-4428

The Muse: 778-9760

Red Rose Coffee House & Bistro: 893-1405

Slow Bar: 262-4701

The Sutler: 778-9760

Wall Street: 867-9090

Windows on the Cumberland: 251-0097

submit your band's performance dates
to sflash@mtsu.edu

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8:30am-7:00pm

Friday, May 2

8:30am-6:00pm

Saturday, May 3

10:00am-5:00pm

Monday, May 5-Tuesday, May 6

8:30am-7:00pm

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