



The Current

The Trend
Monday, April 16, 1984

Photo by Alan Gray

Joe 'King' struts his stuff

Joe 'King' Carrasco romps at Roxz

Some rock and roll performers have great respect for their fans. Some personally answer fan mail while others allow selected groopies backstage after a show to participate in all the post-concert festivities.

Joe "King" Carrasco does all this, plus one more interesting thing. He places a lot of trust in the crowd at his concerts.

At any given time during one of his shows, Carrasco, the lead singer and guitarist of his group—the Crowns—will part with his instrument and do a flying bellyflop into the middle of the crowd. The audience then has two options: it can keep the nucleus of the Crowns in its possession for some time (usually until one of the roadies persuades the crowd to do otherwise), or it can use reverse momentum and thrust the entertainer immediately back onto the stage to continue the specific number without a missed beat.

"It's what I like to do. I live dangerously on stage. I have fun on stage," King said, after he and the Crowns delivered a lively show to approximately 350 people at the Roxz Friday, April 6.

While the band displayed some traditional concert material, such as the audience dive-bomb act, about 60 percent of the music Friday night was new material.

Carrasco said that the group recently recorded almost 20 new songs in a studio in San Antonio, and is currently waiting for a recording label to market the tracks.

A native Austin resident, Carrasco now resides in San Antonio. He cited two reasons for his move: the number of other modern-music bands in the general vicinity, and the Hispanic influence. The Crowns' music is a unique style of this cultural combination known appropriately as Tex-Mex music.

"I like to take Texas and Mexican music and combine them. We took Tex-Mex and popularized it with a gringo audience. I've taken a lot of Spanish music and turned it into rock and roll," the self-proclaimed "king of nuevo wavo" explained.



Carrasco, a native of Austin, leans out toward the audience as his band accompanies him. Carrasco's

real last name is Teutch—not exactly an instant way to become well-known in the Mexican-American community. He said he decided to change his name to something that would make him more consistent with the south-of-the-border culture.

"Carrasco is easy to say," he said.

"Carrasco was, for about an hour-and-a-half, a monarch dancing around on his throne with a mob of screaming subjects at his feet."

As for his middle name—"King"—he explained, "Even when I was little in San Antonio I used to stick royalty on (area bands') names. I thought of Count Carrasco, but 'King' sounded better."



Carrasco jumps off the stage into the audience's arms. Sometimes, the crowd holds him a while; other times, it pushes him back up immediately.

group, which plays distinctive Tex-Mex music, performed at a local nightclub a week ago.



The "King" sports a crown—an appropriate symbol of his name.

For the people watching and listening to the Crowns Friday night, Carrasco was, for about an hour-and-a-half, a monarch dancing around on his throne with a mob of screaming subjects at his feet. He never let up, as some rock and roll performers do, jumping up and down while playing his guitar and running all over the nightclub.

At one point, he even played the lead to the song, "Inmate for Life???" right in the middle of the crowd, with excited, yet restrained people dancing around him.

Carrasco certainly was dressed right for the kind of performance he gave Friday. Clad in bright red athletic sweats, running shoes, a sleeveless T-shirt and wristbands, he could have passed for a weekend road-tracker just as well as a rock and roll star.

Carrasco is by no means the sole entity of the Crowns. He is backed up by keyboard player Chris Cummings, who portrays in the track, "Person to Person," a girl Carrasco invariably gets into an argument with during several mock phone conversations.

Also backing up Carrasco for the Crowns are bassist Brad Kizer and drummer Dick Ross.

The Crowns' music is just now gaining regional and a hint of national popularity in the United States. But Carrasco said that the band—very much like "The Doors" in the late 1960s—has been accepted much more readily in Europe than in this country.

"We made more money in Europe," he said. "Our music has a lot of Tex-Mex involved. People in Europe want to know what Texas is all about because Texas is a cool place."

Carrasco said he wants to stay away from commercialism and instead, build his popularity on the roots of his music.

"I want to stick with the traditional sense. If you don't go with your heart, you've got nothing," he said.

The TCU community soon might get a chance to experience Carrasco firsthand. The performer said he would like to play on campus sometime in the near future.

By W. Robert Padgett

METROPLEX 'Moscow on the Hudson'

Monday sensitive, but not zany

Grammy and Tony winner **Jennifer Holli-**day comes home to her native Texas for a 10 p.m. performance at Mistral in Dallas. Tickets are \$20. For reservations, call (214) 760-9000.

Tuesday

Pianist **Menahem Pressler** performs with the **Fort Worth Chamber Orchestra** at 8 p.m. in Ed Landreth Auditorium. Guest conductor of the concert will be **Cornelius Eberhardt** of the Corpus Christi Symphony. For tickets, call 926-8831.



Pianist **Menahem Pressler** performs with the Fort Worth Chamber Orchestra Tuesday at TCU.

The **Acting Company**, led by Producing Artist Director **John Houseman**, appears at the Plaza Theater in Dallas through May 13. Today, the national touring company will perform "The Cradle Will Rock." The group will perform "The Merry Wives of Windsor" Wednesday through Sunday. Show time is at 8:15 p.m., with an additional Sunday matinee at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (214) 363-7000.

Friday

Violinist **Galina Stamenova** performs with the **Dallas Symphony Orchestra** at 8:15 p.m. at Dallas' Fair Park Music Hall. The orchestra also will play Saturday at 8:15 p.m. Tickets are \$6 to \$15. For information, call 692-0203.

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Au Courant

Au Courant is a student publication produced by the Texas Christian University journalism department every Monday of the semester year, except for review and finals weeks. Views expressed herein are solely those of the staff and contributors. *Au Courant* is located in Room 291S of the Moudy Communication Building, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, 76129.

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If you're looking for a zany Robin Williams, you won't find him in Columbia Pictures' "Moscow on the Hudson," a funny but sensitive story of a

Russian immigrant in New York City.

"Moscow on the Hudson" stars Williams as Vladimir Ivanoff, a saxophonist in a one-ring Russian circus. Ivanoff lives in a one-bedroom apartment in Moscow with his mother, father, sister and grandfather, stands in line for toilet paper and shoes and seems content to follow the rules and not cause trouble. However, his friend Anatoly the clown is far from satisfied with his own life and plans to defect when the circus goes to New York.

Anatoly, played by Elya Baskin, is foiled in his attempts to defect, though, and the look of failure on his teary face when KGB agents catch him is one of the most touching moments of the movie. He tells Ivanoff defeatedly that he is a "bird without wings" because he has no freedom.

For reasons that are never quite made clear, as Anatoly is led out of Bloomingdale's—the scene of his last defection attempt—Ivanoff decides to take on his friend's quest for freedom.

He is assisted by Lionel Witherspoon (Cleavant Derricks), a Bloomingdale's security guard who takes Ivanoff home with him, and Lucia Lombardo (Maria Conchita Alon-

so), an Italian Bloomingdale's salesgirl who later becomes Ivanoff's girlfriend. Derricks and Alonso add both humor and depth to the movie, although Alonso's intensity is sometimes a bit dramatic.

Paul Mazursky, who produced, directed and co-wrote "Moscow on the Hudson" with Leon Capetanos, has created a movie not just about coming to the United States but also about leaving home and loved ones. Filmed in Munich and New York, the film gains credibility from the fact that it does not portray the United States as the best of all possible worlds but as a "strange and wonderful country."

Ivanoff misses his family and native country, and he sometimes visits the Russian section of New York City to relieve his homesickness. He knows that he can never go back, because the KGB would nab him, so he seeks comfort from his saxophone.

Williams, coached in both Russian and the saxophone several months before filming, does a halfway decent job of faking on the instrument, which is overdubbed by Michael Rod.

"Moscow on the Hudson" is an entertaining movie with a plot and a purpose beyond insulting the Soviet way of life. Mazursky reminds us that America is not just a wonderful country, but also a little bit strange.

By Cara Parker



Robin Williams stars as a Russian who decides to defect while shopping at Bloomingdale's, and who falls in love with salesgirl Maria Conchita Alonso in

"Moscow on the Hudson." The film is being shown in a multiple run.

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