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Music activity will ease up somewhat

By TOWNSEND MILLER
Special to The American-Statesman

Whew! It's almost a relief after two weeks of being bombarded by some of the greatest country music in the nation to be able to settle down to a routine schedule of live music in Austin — even though routine in Austin still means more good country pickin' and singin' than any other city in the world.

country music

Cal Smith at the Silver Dollar Friday night headlines this week, seconded strongly by a stellar schedule at Castle Creek, beginning with the homecoming to Austin of Townes Van Zandt Friday and Saturday and followed by Balcones Fault Sunday and Monday and the Rowan Brothers Tuesday through Saturday.

Cal Smith for several years has ranked among the top five in my annual list of personal favorite country music singers. Some 10 years ago when Cal left Ernest Tubb's Texas Troubadours, Ernest predicted, correctly, that Cal would become a super star.

Cal got off to a good start on his own with "Drinking Champagne," which since has become a country classic, then had his first number one hit with "The Lord Knows I'm Drinking," "Between Lust and Watching TV" and "Country Bumpkin" also reached the top position nationally. "Country Bumpkin" was voted Song of the Year by the Country Music Association, and Cal followed with "It's Time To Pay the Fiddler," "Sue Talked a Lot About Texas," and "Jason's Farm."

The Rowans have been established stars for so long among those who like acoustic guitars and tight vocal harmonies that fans who seem them for the first time may be surprised at a how young they are. The oldest brother, Peter, has been a member of Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys and brought the trio its greatest fame by writing "Panama Red." The latest of a number of successful albums is "Sibling Rivalry," just released by Asylum Records last month.

Friday and Saturday nights, in addition to Townes Van Zandt and his wacky Hemmer Ridge Mountain Boys at Castle Creek, Ladd Roberts plays for the reopening of the Feed Lot under new ownership. Greezy Wheels makes its first hometown appearance in almost three months at Armadillo World Headquarters, the Reynolds Sisters and the New Oso Band play a dance at Manor Downs following the rodeo there, and Allen Damron concludes the first of three weeks at Montana Mining Co. North.

Vintage fans will have a hard time Saturday night choosing between long-time Austin favorites when Rigg Marshall and the Deputies play at the Split Rail and Jody Meredith returns to the Skyline.

Country Pickin's

When I commented on Willie Nelson's incredible guitar picking in Thursday's column I forgot to mention one item which has amused me for several years. A young writer when reviewing one of Willie's albums in a major national magazine gave full credit to Willie's talents as a singer but made the mistake of adding a comment to the effect that his guitar work was so inferior he should leave that part to someone else.

In the recording studios. Marcia Ball at Willie's favorite studio, Autumn in Dallas, cut a single, "Circuit Queen" and her own composition, "I'm Not Blind"; Rick Stein recorded his first single, "Another Lonely Night (in Austin)," one of my favorites among his own compositions, and "I'd Do It All Over Again," by Bob McDill at MacAdams Brothers here; and J. C. Walker, veteran singer from Huntsville, spent a week at Wink Tyler's studio here recording an album.

Music photographer Melinda Wickman will be honored Sunday at the Austin Women's Center for her acceptance into the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees union. When she gained admission by nationwide vote she became one of only three women in the country certified to do still photography on movie and television sets.

Jerry Jeff Walker's composition "Mr. Bojangles" has joined a select list of all-time successful songs. Since 1940 when Broadcast Music, Inc., was formed to license songs and to collect royalties on them for composers, only 363 songs have been performed more than one million times. "Mr. Bojangles" is one of those.

country calendar

(Compiled by Townsend Miller from information supplied by musicians, club owners and agents)

Friday only — Cal Smith at Silver Dollar, Jon Emery and the Missouri Valley Boys at Split Rail, Wink Tyler at Lakeway, Golden Country at Broken Spoke, Country Roads at Skyline, Velvets at Dessau.

Friday and Saturday — Townes Van Zandt and Hemmer Ridge Mountain Boys at Castle Creek, Ladd Roberts at Feed Lot, Dark Horse at Brown Bag, Greezy Wheels at Armadillo, Balcones Fault at Rome Inn, South Side Band with Bobbie Graves at Shorthorn, Augie Meyers plus Dogtooth Violet at Alliance Wagon Yard, Reynolds Sisters and the New Oso Band for dance after University of Texas rodeo at Manor Downs, Mark Forbe and Judy Pitre (4-8 p.m.) plus Tommy Hoston (9 p.m.) at Lumber Yard, Allen Damron at Montana Mining Co. North, Buddy Wilson at Rockhorn, Red Oakley at Copperhead Country (Oak Hill), Greenglow Bitchers at Bull Creek Inn.

Saturday only — Roy Ribbins at Silver Dollar, Alvin Crow at Soap Creek, Leon Rausch and the Cowtowners at SPJST Ball room (Elgin), Jon Emery and Missouri Valley Boys at Hoosier V, Wink Tyler at Hilltop Resort, Country Strings at Broken Spoke, Ridge Marshall and the Deputies at Split Rail, Jody Meredith at Skyline, Frontier Talent Search at International Speedway (Georgetown), Bluegrass Breakdown with Terry Lakens on KUT radio (11-p.m.).

Sunday only — Austin Friends of Traditional Music meeting and jam session (2-6 p.m.) plus Hammer Ridge Mountain Boys (9 p.m.) at Split Rail, Reynolds Sisters and the New Oso Band at Broken Spoke, Steve Douglas at Lumber Yard, The Howlers plus Everready at Alliance Wagon Yard.

Sunday and Monday — Balcones Fault at Castle Creek.

Monday only — Abra Harvey live filming of television show at KLRN studios (7:30 p.m.), Mark Forbe and Judy Pitre at Lumber Yard (4-8 p.m.), Texas Swingsters at Split Rail, The Howlers at Alliance Wagon Yard, Bill and Bonnie Hearne at Roma Inn, Caught in the Act at Gemini's.

Tuesday only — Jess Dolmaine at Silver Dollar, Silver City Saddle Tramps at Split Rail, The Howlers at Roma Inn.

Tuesday through Saturday — Rowan Brothers at Castle Creek, Allen Damron at Montana Mining Co. North, Mark Forbe and Judy Pitre (4-8 p.m.) plus Steve Douglas (9 p.m.) at Lumber Yard.

Wednesday only — Silver City Saddle Tramps at Roma Inn, Mounts of Country Music at Silver Dollar, Augie Meyers at Soap Creek, Alvin Crow at Broken Spoke, Kenneth Threadgill at Split Rail, Country Edition at Skyline.

Peruvian art display

About 40 ancient Peruvian paintings, which one New York art critic has described as "stunning," form a new exhibit at the University of Texas Art Museum.

The exhibit, entitled "The Cuzco Circle," will remain on view through Oct. 31.

The paintings from the 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries reflect how the pictorial culture of Europe was absorbed by Peruvian Indian artists and the "mestizo" (those of mixed Indian and white blood) but was expressed in an original style.

The title of the exhibit is drawn from the Peruvian city of Cuzco, which once was the capital of the vast Inca empire.

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