

# Arts & Entertainment

## French Leave departs from recent trend

By Stephanie Zink

**French Leave, noun.** An informal, unannounced, or abrupt departure.

American Heritage Dictionary

Not only does French Leave's name define the group's history, but it also describes its music, which is a departure from the current music scene.

This Lincoln troupe's music is a unique blend, reflecting their musical tastes, individual attitudes, and musical influences, ranging from The Police to Gang of Four.

"We get new ideas listening to anything. Newer ideas are coming out of new wave," said Pat Yarusso, the group's bass player.

"All three of us can't settle on one style. We try to work them together towards our own tastes and styles," said drummer Jeff Dell.

"We have to work to get a good song," Yarusso said. In addition, Mark Hendricks, the group's guitarist added, "Every song has to be danceable."

"It's great to have people come out and dance. It's 10 times better than if people just stand around," Dell said.

Although they do play a few cover songs to get the audience started, most of their energies go into writing their own material.

"It takes three to four days per week to get these songs down," Yarusso said. Hendricks added, "We can learn the songs pretty quick with only three people."

### Each interpretation different

Yarusso said their songs are written about their personal experiences. "Our songs have a good outlook on life," Hendricks said, "although our expe-



John Kudlacek/French Leave

French Leave members (clockwise from left) Mark Hendricks, Pat Yarusso and Jeff Dell rehearse high above a local Dairy Queen.

riences have been bad. They are like genre paintings — one song has 50 different meanings. We leave it to people to interpret our songs."

French Leave is truly a band that lives its music. Apart from coming to practice several days a week from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m., Yarusso said he is almost always working on a song — even during his classes at UNL.

"Songs usually develop outside of practice. We don't have hours to spend writing songs," he said.

When the band releases, Hendricks said, they channel all of their energies into their music.

"It's uplifting to come in here," Yarusso said, referring to their unique practice area in the attic of a local Dairy Queen. "When we're up here it's for business and pleasure."

The band agreed their rehearsal loft was something of a sanctuary. "I'd rather practice than go on a date," Dell said.

French Leave started playing to-

gether about two years ago, and have been down to serious business for the last six months, Yarusso said. Hendricks added that when they first started out, they were a hard-core band and later evolved into their current, more progressive format.

### Name change helps

Their first band name was Red Club 13. ("Then everything sprung up club-Culture Club, Model Citizens Club..." Hendricks said.) Hendricks said they have more positive responses with French Leave.

The band currently has a track, "The Things You Have To Do," on the new Capital Punishment tape. They eventually hope to release their own tape, and towards that end, are working with Tim Keckley, a fellow Lincoln musician. Dell said Keckley helps French Leave with the business end and gives them good ideas.

In the meantime, French Leave will continue releasing.

"If we keep working hard enough and change a little every time we play, we might get picked out (by a national recording company)," Dell said.

"We've got to learn to glide over our mistakes (during performance)," he said. However, Yarusso said there have been several occasions when mistakes have actually made a song better.

The band hopes its unique sound will lead to more dates around town.

"Our biggest worry is to try not to make anyone bored," Dell said. "We can't please everybody, but we try."

"We're so different that it's going to help us," Yarusso added.

French Leave will open for the Model Citizens Club tonight at the Drumstick 547 N. 48th St.

## Italian film shows brothers' quest

Review by Eric Peterson

The bringing of severed parts together is considered and lovingly portrayed in *Three Brothers*, a fine Italian film by Francesco Rosi. *Three Brothers* showed Sunday and Monday in the Sheldon Film Theatre as part of UPC's Foreign Film Series.

The three brothers of the title — Raffaele, Rocco, and Nicola — return to the country where they grew up to bury their mother and console their father, and to get back in touch with each other. This has been made difficult by politics and the very different quality of their respective lives.

Raffaele is a judge, trying to maintain a calm and conservative view in spite of the constant danger of terrorist attack. Rocco works in a boys' correction center, and is pictured as someone with a priestly vocation. He has never married, but devotes himself to helping his charges — he is shown playing the organ under a cross, or coming down a hallway with the arched window behind him offering the only light. These images are designed to underline Rocco's ascetic and devotional nature. Nicola, the youngest brother, is also the least formed. He is too macho to admit his love for his estranged wife after she sleeps with somebody else.

The narrative flow of *Three Brothers* is particularly nice, often set in motion through dreams or reveries. At the start of the film, Rocco dreams of rats and smoking trash — and near the end his dream is a very funny and cheerful fantasy in which wholesome kids sweep all the guns and hypodermic needles which litter the streets into a big pile which he sets on fire. His compassion and his obsession with purity move him deeply.

One of the father's reveries is shown in a beautiful sequence in which he starts down the dirt road to town from his white house and courtyard on the hill. In the dusty heat, he suddenly hears his name called and sees his deceased wife, who smiles and tells him to catch a rabbit — she waves as if she is all of the lost hope there is, and vanishes; waves from another place, and vanishes. He finally reaches town and mails the telegrams informing his sons of their mother's death.

Rocco's reverie takes him to his childhood. He stands in front of his mother's body with candles lighted and mourners present. He hears guns booming while he is still pictured in the death room, then we see him with his family on the day his town was freed by Americans in World War II,

a day of joy strongly connected in his mind with his young and lovely mother.

Raffaele's vision is his own graphic and realistic assassination. The soundtrack is silent as he looks at photographs of other street murders, such as a dead judge falling out of a car with a bullet hole in his head. We then see a bus attack, which at first seems unconnected and awkward, but comes sharply into sync when we realize the victim is Raffaele — a realization which sends him shouting out of his nightmare.

There is considerable discussion of terrorism and the disintegration of Italian society which it threatens within the film. The TV announcers dwell on it, as do the villagers.

The three brothers give views which go along with what we know of them: Nicola, the radical in limited sympathy, Raffaele, in dispassionate but uncomprehending frustration, and Rocco, calling for compassion on everybody's part.

This disintegration they feel is imminent in Italian society is connected with the disintegration they feel threatening their own lives. Raffaele both hates the danger and depends on it, which inevitably cuts himself off from his family. Rocco is helpless in circumstances, but adamant in his plodding love. Nicola longs for his wife but is too proud to bring his family together again — we cannot tell whether his reconciliation with her is a flash forward or only a daydream, but the latter seems more likely.

A return to childhood innocence and the purity of country life is shut off to the wandering brothers. Raffaele goes to see his old wet nurse and finds the fig tree in her garden much smaller than he thought it was when he was a kid, and Nicola and an old love of his discover the time for them is past. In the flash forward or daydream about his wife, Nicola talks about how sad it is to realize his separation from his town, which threatens him with a loss of identity — in the city he will always feel homesick, but he can no longer connect with the country — an emigre's dilemma.

A beautiful shot reveals the brothers in relation to each other. The morning of the funeral, Rocco looks out the upper window, his back to us, and sees his brothers down in the courtyard. Nicola is weeping against the wall and Raffaele is crying on a bench.

Rocco weeps at the sight. All are framed together, by the camera's eye and by their shared compassion and grief.

## Reflections from atop life's compost heap

Excerpts from the cable television program *At The Concession Stand*.

Announcer: And now once again, America, like Phoenixes rising from the ashes, here are America's answer to *Cahier du Cinema*, Tom Mockler and Glenn Stuva.

Glenn: I know you folks out there in cableland were expecting both Tom and myself to be here this

## Tom Mockler & Glenn Stuva

week, discussing film in our unusually insightful manner, but Tom couldn't make it. Tom, the always caring and sensitive person that he is, took this week off so he could travel to the Soviet Union to pay his final respects to a good friend of ours, Yuri Andropov, who, as you know, died this week. Yuri was a good man; a communist, but still a good man. I don't know about you, but I'm sure gonna miss the old guy. (The audience politely applauds.)

Well, since Tom couldn't be with us, I decided to change the format a little. Quite frankly, I'm tired of talking about film.

When I first started this show, I was young and idealistic. I thought that I had finally found my true calling as a film critic. A critic is like a gardener. It's his job to weed out the bad and make room for the flowers to grow unhindered. But let's face it, most of what's coming out of Hollywood today is pure muck. There are so few good movies being produced that the garden is nearly empty, and soon there will be nothing but brown dirt for us critics to tend to.

And so today I am here to talk to you, not specifically about the film industry, but about a greater malady that is threatening to unweave the very fabric of our society. I'm not exactly sure what it is, but that doesn't mean I can't talk about it anyway. This is America, is it not? (The audience cheers.)

We now live in very different time than that of our mothers and fathers. Back then it was simple to be an American.

Everyone shuffled off every morning to their safe middle-class jobs, and ate their lunches out of little

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