

Springsteen's album lacks bounce

By Scott Nelson

After a long, long wait, Bruce Springsteen's fourth album, *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, is out, and the unconventional rocker is singing his street songs again. Only this time it's the same story ten times over. For all the attention and noise that has greeted the new release, it comes up short.

review

Springsteen's explosive arrival, when he hit the cover of *Time*, was billed as the renegade savior of rock and roll. His album *Born to Run* was a wide-open mural of the street people and the electric nights in New York. Springsteen had gone from a cult figure to prophet overnight.

Then he went into hiding, taking two and one-half

years before reappearing with this album. Springsteen said the time was spent reworking over the 75 songs he'd written right after *Born to Run*.

For polishing, Springsteen dulled more than the rough edges and *Darkness on the Edge of Town* seems flat in comparison to his early brilliance.

With few exceptions, most of the album is straight Springsteen stock, a formula come-on with a howling and over-blown voice and token, uninspired guitar work. Gone are the Clarence Clemons tenor sax solos that raged through *Born to Run*, leaving only short, leashed repeats of the theme. Springsteen's glowing night-time picture of life in the city have been replaced with ragged portraits of himself.

Springsteen takes to preaching and plays the role of leading people from the bitter existence of working days in a night-time search for the promised land. The album is just as corny.

Springsteen has a fine piece called "Prove It All Night," which has a fine mysterious meaning. But he says

the same thing almost a dozen different ways throughout the album and the point gets old.

He also has some blistering guitar work in a track called "Candy's Room" that breaks away from the usual thumping bass.

His best lines are not preachy and the meaning is clear:

I'll be on that hill with everything I got,
Lives on the line where dreams are found and lost,
I'll be there on the line and I'll pay the cost,
For wanting things that can only be found
In the darkness on the edge of town.

But it's a shame that Springsteen surfaces only once in a great while, and sadder still when he misses his mark. Save your money on this one, and hang in there for another in two and one-half years.

Calendar of Events

Thursday, July 20

Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "Habeas Corpus," Studio Theater in Temple Building, 8 p.m.

Sheldon Film Theatre, "Homage to Chagall—The Colours of Love," 7 and 9:15 p.m.

Friday, July 21

Sheldon Film Theatre, "Homage to Chagall—The Colours of Love," matinee 3 p.m., 7 and 9:15 p.m.

Saturday, July 22

Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "Dames at Sea," Howell Theater in Temple Building, 8 p.m.

Sheldon Film Theatre, "Homage to Chagall—The Colours of Love," matinee 3 p.m., 7 and 9:15 p.m.

Sunday, July 23

Sheldon Film Theatre, "Homage to Chagall—The Colours of Love," matinee 3 p.m., 7 and 9:15 p.m.

Monday, July 24

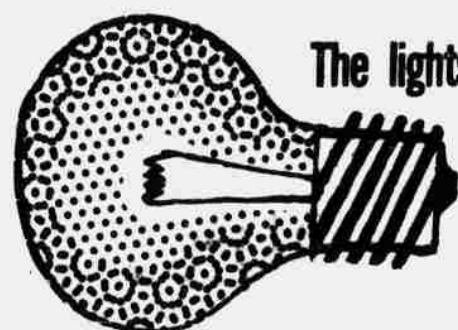
Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "Habeas Corpus," Studio Theater in Temple Building, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, July 25

Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "Dames at Sea," Howell Theatre in Temple Building, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, July 26

Summer Film Festival, "Almos' a Man" (Richard Wright), "La Grande Breteche" (Orson Welles Great Mystery Series), "Brats" (1930 Laurel and Hardy), Nebraska Union lounge, noon.



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