

Arts & Entertainment

Servant: Righteous rock 'n' roll

By Chris Burbach and Chris Welsch

Instead of the usual pre-concert cloud of ganja smoke, bubble-gum baited breath filled the Centennial Room of the Nebraska Union Friday night. The crowd anticipated righteous rock 'n' roll and indeed they got it. Oregon-based Servant played upright Christian tunes to a full house.

Servant led off with several high-energy songs. "I'm Gonna Live" set the pace for the first half-hour of the show. The band played tightly and aggressively, letting the

and drums — provided driving background to hearty vocals by each member of the band.

The band's stage antics, while energetic and sometimes acrobatic, lacked spontaneity and seemed forced.

Brock took over the final portion of the show with a grating rendition of "Come Jesus." Although loud, her voice reverberated on the reviewers' eardrums like a belt sander gone awry. She followed that song with a twenty-minute sermonette which ended in a sort of emotional rapture for the entire crowd, save two (who?).

The warm-up groups for Servant turned in contrasting sets.

Lloyd Thogmartin involved the crowd extensively in his short performance. In "My Yahweh," Thogmartin's voice was well-suited for his material, bluesy and gritty. When he attempted a shift to ballads he lost the crowd — his voice just didn't jibe.

Will McFarlane, impressive at first, soon became very boring. McFarlane, formerly a guitarist for Bonnie Raitt, had a good Allman Brothers-style of guitar playing. However, his material was too laden with religious pap to ever get off the stage.

One bright spot in McFarlane's meager set was sax-man Ronnie Eades. Eades has played as a session man with Aretha Franklin, Elton John and Bob Dylan. His excellent sax solos dominated the group's set. Eades played baritone sax on most of the songs, and turned in wailing solos on alto and tenor horns. The combination of McFarlane's incessant preaching and scoffing at non-believers with almost churchy lyrics made his set sound like a Christian radio broadcast.

Owen Brock, rhythm guitarist with Servant, said "Ultimately Christianity is supposed to be a way of life and not a religion." He said it was difficult to



Staff photo by Joel Sartore

Members of the Christian rock group Servant, from left to right, are Owen Brock, Rob Martens, Sandie Brock, Bob Hardy, drummer David Holmes, Bruce Wright and Matt Spransy. The group performed Friday night in the Nebraska Union Centennial Room.

separate his band's show from its message, although the show can stand on its own.

Brock said the band's purpose is three-fold. Servant tries to present the Gospel to non-believers in a way they can relate to it, they want to provide Christians with an entertainment alternative to secular sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll and they want to challenge Christians to live a more committed life to each other and God.

"People's lives are changed by what they see on stage," Brock said. He said that Servant's audience is mostly Christians, but, depending on promotion, the crowd may be up to 40 percent non-believers.

For this show, the non-believers were few (who?).

Servant is billed as "The Largest Christian Rock-Gospel Show in America." According to Contemporary Christian Music magazine, Servant's 1983 three-month tour is one of the largest ever by a Christian group.

Overall, the three groups provided sound entertainment, aside from the church-like atmosphere during Sandie Brock's sermon and her plea for recruits into the small Oregon Christian community of the Highway Missionary Society.

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crowd-know that Christians can rock with the best. Strobe lights and exploding smoke bombs accompanied the churning guitars and lively stage antics of the group.

The songs carried religious messages in spite of the hellacious beat. "Two Masters" decried the evils of believing in both Christ and materialism.

"New Revolution" was Servant's religious aerobic song. Vocalist Sandie Brock told the crowd it was time to get "fit for the king."

"Let's see you become firm believers tonight," she said. The entire crowd, save two (who?), rose and danced on Brock's command.

Lead guitarist Bruce Wright highlighted the show by ripping through "Holy Roller Blues" with a vengeful solo that would put Eric Clapton to shame. Like Moses parting the Red Sea with his staff, Wright and his guitar rent the background music asunder.

The band displayed its musical prowess in a real rocker called "Why Should the Devil Have all the Good Music?," probably the best group performance of the night. The rhythm section — two guitars, a bass



Mekanik Destruktiw Komandoh

West German anti-fascists play hopeful hardcore rock

By Billy Shaffer

Fans of new music were treated to a nice slice of rock-cum-politics this weekend at the Drumstick.

Mekanik Destruktiw Komandoh, a West German band touring the states currently, turned in a couple of performances not to be forgotten soon by those in attendance.

Get ready, music fans. Here comes a short history of Berlin.

The Kreuzberg area of the divided city is a section of low-income housing, similar to what the United States calls a ghetto.

In 1979, the founding members of MDK

started an anti-fascist street theater centered in Kreuzberg. The area has become a spawning ground for new music and artists.

The group's early idealistic/socialistic/anti-nihilistic goals are evident throughout their lyrics, which are evidently lost on the majority of American listeners. The group the Police's theory of "one world, not three" permeates the MDK. The "rock star" has no place in the socialistic society.

The MDK's current U.S. tour, surprisingly enough, is being financed by the West German government.

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M★A★S★H postponed, pending release of captives

By Pat Clark

Last week: Nielsen, Spinoff and a television network executive named Brewster were taken captive by Dr. Donahue. Donahue, a member, and possibly the only member, of the dreaded February 28 Organization, wants Congress to pass legislation mandating that every American watch the last episode of "M★A★S★H" and believes that keeping our troika of video magnates hostage at Saint Dinista Hospital and Video Game Arcade will somehow help his cause. It is a vapor-

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thin line of reasoning, to be sure, but as veterans of years upon years of television viewing, both Donahue and his captives put considerable stock in vapor-thin lines of reasoning.

This week: Dr. Donahue has spared no expense during the past week to convert Saint Dinista into a facsimile of the 4077th, without the minefield. Where a heart-lung machine once stood, a do-it-yourself still brews gin, the yummy poison preferred by the medical Marx Brothers on the show. Khaki has replaced the standard white of the walls, clothes, towels and bedding. As for our heroes, Nielsen, Spinoff and Brewster find themselves living in a hastily erected and easily collapsed tent, in one room of a five-story concrete and steel hospital building.

Nielsen found it difficult to complain about the treatment he had been given; the hospital food was close enough to the cardboard texture and taste of his beloved TV dinners that he rapidly adjusted. Besides, he got to watch tele-

vision all the time. With the 24-hour cable stations available in the hospital, Nielsen often had to be coaxed into going to sleep. "Don't think of it as missing a TV show, think of it as being refreshed for the next one," Spinoff would say to him calmly, reminding him that everyone's eyes got tired eventually, even his.

Nielsen would have none of it. "I'm out of shape," he would say, on the verge of a tantrum. "You should have seen me when 'Roots' came around the first time. I stayed up and watched the whole week, even between episodes."

For his part, Brewster was making the most of the situation. "I worried about being taken captive at first — I didn't want one of those Gen. Dozier rescues or anything," he confided to Nielsen one afternoon. "But let's face it. I've got everything to gain from having everybody in the United States watch the last episode of 'M★A★S★H'. Let's not forget that the president of a certain major television network on which this show will air also signs my substantial paychecks. So if this Dr. Donahue should somehow get the legislation passed that he wants — and I'm not saying he will — I'll have to make some noncommittal public statement about it, sure, but in my heart of hearts there will be a five-piece band playing 'Happy Days Are Here Again'."

"M★A★S★H" mania was getting quite a bit of media attention and beside every story was a little sidebar about the Nielsen captivity with a rhetorical question headline like, "Nielsen: Could Korea Be His Waterloo?" While news accounts never said what Donahue was doing, he was doing it right, as five different Congressmen had drafted bills that would make "M★A★S★H" mandatory-viewing and finance feasibility studies for possible sequels.

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