

Arts and Entertainment

R.E.M. displays 'power and polish'

Review By Mark Hendricks and Julie A. Jordan
Daily Nebraskan Staff Writers

R.E.M. was in perfect season Thursday night at Omaha's Music Hall. From the first note of "Radio Free Europe" it was apparent why the popularity of the Athens, Ga., based band has continued to surge.

Concert Review

"Pretty Persuasion," a cut from the band's latest album *Reckoning* is even played on the all-mighty top 40. But R.E.M. is far from falling into top 40 gulch to be spit out as profit-seeking music manufacturers. The band members have continued to intensify and move toward expressing their independent attitudes and styles.

R.E.M. has been recording actively since 1981 with the release of "Radio Free Europe" and "Sitting Still" on a Hip-Tone 45. In 1982 they released a five-song EP, *Chronic Town*, on the IRS label. In 1983 they released their first LP, *Murmur*, also on IRS. *Murmur* was chosen New Artist Album of the Year by the Rolling Stone Critics Poll. *Reckoning* released this year, is their second IRS LP.

On stage the band displayed an incredible amount of power and polish. Their sound has a spontaneity that is uplifting. A lot of it comes from the way the vocals and instruments interact. At times they are complementary, as are traditional harmonies. Other times dissonance is created by deliberately playing notes a half step sharp or flat.

Michael Stipe's syncopated vocals lent themselves to his on-stage antics, which included singing with his back to the audience, hitting himself on the back of the head with his



R.E.M.

Photo Courtesy of I.R.S. Records

hand as if to help the words out, and dropping out pieces of words.

Peter Buck was alive on stage, running and jumping about. His ringing Raga-guitar style and intricate rhythm licks are hypnotizing. It was a surprise to see Buck armed with Fender telecaster guitars instead of his usual Rickenbackers, but the tone was the same.

Bass player Mike Mills and drummer Bill Berry once played

together in a southern rock top 40 band and now provide R.E.M. with a sturdy rhythm section. Mills also does an excellent job singing back-up vocals. This allows Stipe to use his voice more experimentally and stylistically.

Stipe showed off his voice in a variety of songs, (thanks to an exceptionally good vocal mix). From upbeat rock songs like "Second Guessing" and "Chronic Town" to crooning

slow songs like "Camera" and "S. Central Rain (I'm Sorry)." During one encore the audience was presented with an a cappella version of "Moon River" by Stipe and Mills. Later on Stipe broke into what sounded like a Rudi Vallee imitation.

At one point during the show politics was mentioned briefly when Stipe said, "R.E.M. would like to remind everyone to register to vote. So we can get Reagan out of office."

Opening for R.E.M. were the New York-based dBs. The band recently has regrouped and changed their sound. Unfortunately, the sound is a little too distorted and their new material has too much of a mainstream touch. For example, the dBs played a good version of "Amplifier" that sounded a lot more innovative than the later "New Gun In Town" that had a definitely cloned metalloid tinge.

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed



Kimball to stage 'next wave' styles

A performance of "next wave" dance will be presented when the Trisha Brown Dance Company comes to the stage of Kimball Recital Hall Saturday at 8 p.m. as part of the UNL Kimball Performance Series.

The "next wave" features new works and collaborations by the next generation of international artists in every discipline. The first Next Wave Festival is being held this fall at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and Trisha Brown will perform works in her Lincoln performance which will be a part of the festival.

The program for her dance company will include "Decoy" (1979); "Son of Gone Fishin'" (1981), music by Robert Ashley; and "Set and Reset" (1983), music

by Laurie Anderson. The performance is part of the Mid-America Arts Alliance program.

Brown will explain how she "builds" a dance at 6:30 p.m. Friday in Kimball Hall. Then, using her company of dancers, Brown will demonstrate excerpts of the pieces of the company will perform at the concert.

An original member of the Judson Theater and the Grand Union, a now legendary improvisational group of the early '70s, Brown formed her own company in 1970.

Brown has made dances to be performed on museum walls and the sides of buildings and rooftops. Her kinesthesia — "the sheer sensation of the body in motion" — has made her one of the nation's

most original choreographers.

Currently, Brown is creating multi-layered dances for the proscenium stage in collaboration with visual and musical artists. Two of these dances will be seen in the Saturday performance.

The performance is made possible by support from the Nebraska Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts through their participation in the Mid-America Arts Alliance, a regional arts organization. It also is supported by a direct grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Tickets for Saturday's performance are \$10 or \$8, and \$6 or \$3 for UNL students. For more ticket information contact the Kimball box office between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Sheldon art display features forgotten urban open spaces

By Julie A. Jordan
Daily Nebraskan Staff Editor

Most of us notice very little of our environment. Each day we follow our routines while taking for granted many aspects of the environment and its design. That is, until a closed road or blockaded sidewalk causes us to change our routines.

Sheldon Art Gallery currently is displaying a Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit titled "Urban Open Spaces," which focuses on the design and nature of urban open spaces. Communal outdoor spaces, such as streets, sidewalks, parks and malls all are urban open spaces. The exhibit consists of photographs of various urban spaces and design applications throughout the world.

The UNL College of Architecture and the Nebraska Chapter of the American Planning Association (A.P.A.) have scheduled a series of events that coincide with the exhibit. They began Sept. 11 with a wine and cheese party that accompanied the grand opening of the exhibit.

Other upcoming events include: • Brown Bag Speaker Series, "Urban Spaces in Socialist Coun-

tries," Wednesday from noon to 1 p.m. in the Architectural Gallery. UNL geography professor Dean Rugg will use slides to illustrate his work in identifying a model of Socialist city planning.

• A walking tour of Lincoln's sidewalks and skywalks, Friday from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Meet in the Architectural Gallery at 4:30 to 5 p.m. Carol Jess of the Lincoln Center Association and Robert G. LeZotte of Bahr, Vermeer & Haecker provide a briefing on the importance of pedestrian pathways to the downtown environment. At 5 p.m., the walking tour of downtown begins, and it ends at 6 p.m. with drinks at the Cornhusker Hotel.

• The Urban Design Committee and the Downtown Streetscape, Friday, Sept. 28, from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Meet in the Architectural Gallery from 4:30 to 5 p.m. Members of the Urban Design Committee will describe the group's functions. They also will lead a walking tour of downtown that focuses on how their decisions impact the downtown's streetscape. The tour ends at 6 p.m. with drinks at H.B. Brand's in the newly developed Haymarket district.