

**Obscure videos from past years get little airplay**

**By Scott Harrah**  
Daily Nebraskan Staff Reporter

It has been three years since MTV first went on the air and introduced a new art form: The music video. Although most of the cable music channel's programming consists of safe pabulum, occasionally they will play more adventurous videos by esoteric groups. For this week's column, I'll report on the obscure videos from the past few years that have received little airplay.

**David Bowie, "Ashes To Ashes":** This 1980 video is paramount of any of its recent counterparts in both conceptual and creative content. Bowie sports the eerie clown costume featured on the cover of his *Scary Monsters* LP as he frolics around an iridescent pink ocean with a clan of ballerians, nuns and British pop star Steve Strange. Scenes involving David's astronaut alter ego Major Tom in a psychedelic cave, colorful cinematography and an overall surrealistic approach make this video bring new meaning to avant-garde art.

**Nina Hagen, "New York, New York":** Germany's Kurt Vonnegut of new wave music, Nina Hagen is at her satirical best in this promo for her send-up of Frank Sinatra's schmaltzy anthem. This piece is merely footage of Hagen singing with her band, but her wacky make-up, quirky clothes and campy voice make it the paragon of innovative parody.

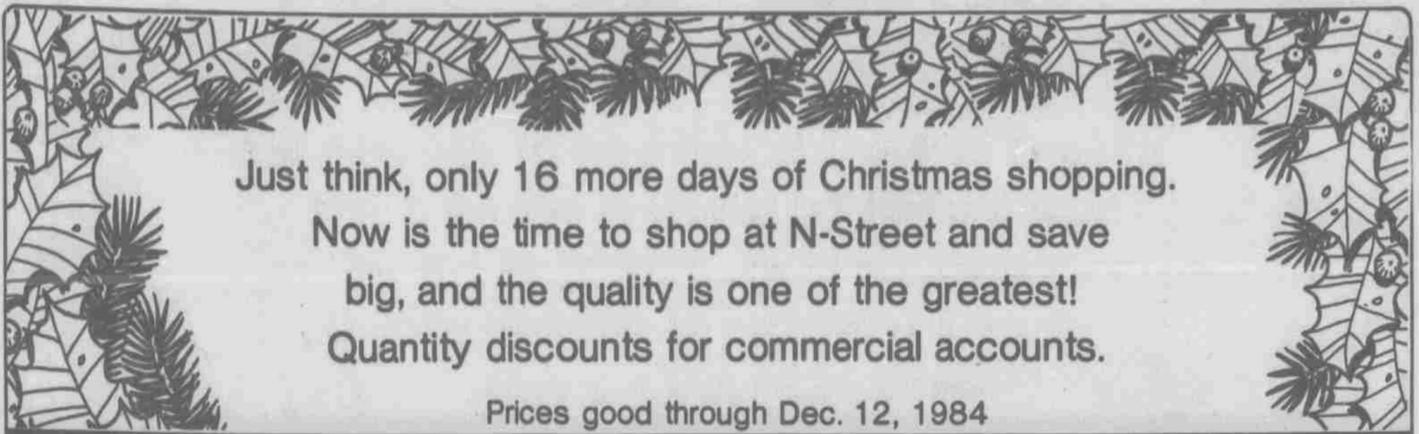
**Dead or Alive, "I'd Do Anything":** A lady in Kansas complained to MTV about "a woman exposing herself" in this video. She was referring to lead vocalist Peter Burns, diabolical version of Boy George. The video opens up showing Burns and a group of drug-dazed people in a white room as prurient adjectives in phonetic form flash across the screen. Burns, brandishing long frizzy hair and woman's leather pantsuit, growls and gyrates as his eyes metamorphize into a sinister black hue. None of this has much to do with phonetics, but it is so refreshingly bizarre that it really doesn't matter.

**Frankie Goes to Hollywood, "Relax":** MTV shows a cleaned-up version of this video, but USA and Showtime show the unexpurgated original. The video takes place in a seedy gay bar where band leader Holly Johnson eyes myriads of leather-frocked men. Like the band's music, this concept makes numerous social statements, but it paints a much too stereotypical and salacious picture of gay culture.

**Donal Fagen, "New Frontier":** Fagen, formerly of Steely Dan, uses animation, meticulously designed props, early '60s suburban settings and costumes to make a potent political statement with this video. Two high school kids, in Ward and June Cleaver attire, are shown sneaking into daddy's bomb shelter for a virginity-breaking ceremony.

As they indulge in mushroom clouds of passino, cartoons of Soviets pushing the Armageddon 'button' and shots of Space Age memorabilia are tossed in. The most amazing thing about all this symbolic action is that it combines humor, politics and imagination without being pretentious.

**Duran Duran, "Girls On Film":** Both the BBC and MTV banned this controversial video, but USA's "Night Flight" on cable shows it very late at night. The scene is a hedonistic nightclub where girls mudwrestle, strip, rub oil into sumo wrestlers' backs and act as sleazy as possible. It's all done in good fun, but fundamentalist Christians have called it "atheistic decadence that will corrupt young minds" — definitely a point in its favor!



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