

Arts & Entertainment

The Fall 'shrieks' dirges tonight

By Charles Lieurance
Senior Reporter

The Fall.
Ruin...collapse...the long walk
off the short pier...decline...The Roman
Empire...did he jump?...
The Third Reich.

Concert Preview

Manchester, England, is as cold and gray a place as you're likely to find in the industrialized Western World. Here's where Darwin's gypsy moth lost its color due to factory offal. Manchester is as bleak as Detroit, but older, with more ghosts, more capable of ruin. Of Fall.

Out of this came the Fall, who are gracing the Nebraska Union Centennial Room with their presence tonight.

Manchester, since 1976, has produced two of the most uncompromising bands in the history of alternative rock. Joy Division was so committed to its sluggish death rock that its lead singer, Ian Curtis, hung himself before its first U.S. tour. Joy Division and Mark E. Smith's The Fall have been an overwhelming influence on new rock and anti-rock.

Without Joy Division, bands like Christian Death, Sisters of Mercy and The Cocteau Twins may not have been possible.

Without The Fall, Sonic Youth, PiL and Mission of Burma would have had as much chance of putting out an album as Mel Torme would have of becoming the lead singer for REM.

Listing the personnel for The Fall since 1977 is a bit like trying to remember how many times Billy Martin has been fired and hired as a baseball coach.

Suffice it to say that Smith, a sophisticated, radical, populist, realistic poet is The Fall's driving force. His iconoclastic deadpan vocal delivery and complexly experimental songwriting have turned The Fall into one of the most important and deliberately obscure bands since The Velvet Underground.

The Fall share The Underground's love of noise for noise's sake. Guitars rake across whole landscapes of drum. Bass and keyboard distortions are like bursts of sniper fire on an unsuspecting church. The Fall have always sounded like their name. It would be horrible if a band with a name like that sounded like The Monkees.



Courtesy of Jem Records

The Fall

1979's "Live at the Witch Trials" is so harsh and vehement, that any slippage to moderation would have made Smith's gorgeously planned assault on rock's sacred cows seem like empty posing.

But in 1985 with "Our Nation's Saving Grace," The Fall is just as passionate and just as challenging, a well-oiled battle-ready machine that is not content to be the grandfathers of a new generation of sonic noise mongers.

"Cruiser's Creek," a melodic, more conventional, riff-happy single from "Saving Grace" would, if it stood by itself, show some tempering in the band's sound. But the rest of the album is a collage of violent guitar, moody keyboards, switches in and out of stereo, radio feedback, megaphone announcements and a thudding beat that seems somehow free from the songs themselves.

As usual, Smith goes for the pretentious rock poet hall of fame, to join the venerable likes of Patti Smith, Jim Carroll and Sonic Youth. His lyrics are as justifiably caustic, relentless and brilliant as the music that shrieks around them.

If Smith's The Fall play before an empty room tonight, I'm going to a beach in Mexico forever to eat limes and whittle ironwood sculptures for tourists.

Like the old shrew, tradition, rolling down the stairs on her head, The Fall know from whence they speak. This is not for the weak or squeamish. I trust you'll be strong.

The Go Batz, a four-piece Lincoln band with a penchant for the Cramps, will open for The Fall. The Show begins at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$7.50 for students and \$9.50 for non-students.

Technological realities explode with surreal '50s technicolor

"Now, there are cat atoms streaming through the universe... It would be funny if life weren't so sacred..." — Andre in Kurt Neumann's "The Fly"



Charles Lieurance

As I watched the '50s cinemascope classic "The Fly" at midnight Saturday at The Alternative Film Club, 905 O St., my life was changed. It hit me like religion, like whatever it was that got to Saul on the road to Damascus (God, Von Daniken's space-settlers). There weren't any lights in the sky, just that surreal '50s color, a color I associate with Frigidaires, Automobile Fins, and the bomb.

"The Fly" is nuclear art. The neon tubes in the laboratory where the main character has invented a matter transmitter ("It's just like sending TV or radio waves," he says,) flash with the same supernatural, inexplicable gorgeousness as any religious miracle. These '50s horror movies are the height of the nuclear aes-

thetic, atomic epiphany.

In every home there is a lab. "Here's the master bedroom, here's the bathroom, here's little Phillip's room and here's the laboratory..."

The scientist's wife is frightened of all this technology. Her husband is downstairs zapping cats into an unpleasant oblivion where its hysterical mewling can be heard as its atoms disconnect from each other, ("It's a little frightening isn't it, dear?" she asks,) hopping into the machine himself with oops, a fly, and coming out, wow, half-man, half-fly. ("You've still got your intelligence"...she says, "and your work...")

Meanwhile, she's making cupcakes in her checkered apron, wrestling with a Beaver Cleaver look-alike on the living room floor and waxing the linoleum.

"You're not frightened of TV's or radio, or that the world is round, are you, dear?" The husband confronts the wife, who bites into her fluorescent lipstick with indecision.

"You're a strange man, Andre," she says, and holds him close.

"It disintegrated perfectly," he says, speaking of the cat, who's stopped mewling by then. "It just never reintegrated."

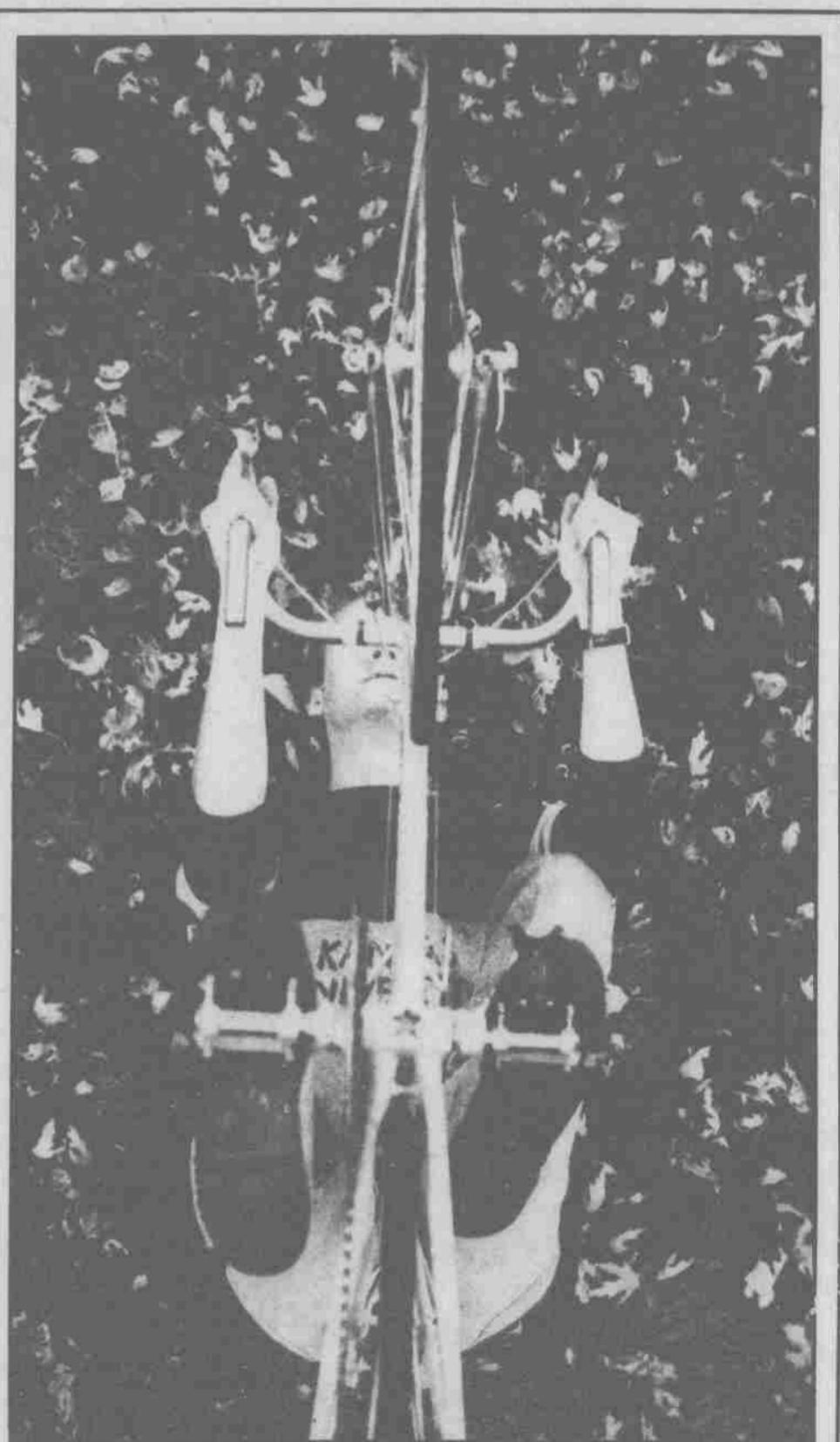
Like "The Fly," Tim O'Brien's latest novel, "The Nuclear Age" makes me howl, just as it terrifies me. The main character, William Cowling, doesn't have a lab, so he builds a fallout shelter.

Since he doesn't have the goggles the couple in "The Fly" have that protect them from the blinding dose of cinemascope technicolor, he buys a shovel and enough equipment to build the ultimate shelter and keep his wife and daughter out of the way. As is the case with Andre, this man has a wife and kid that just don't understand technology, the great phallic art of the 20th century.

"The Nuclear Age" is just as hilarious in its neurosis as "The Fly" is in its neurotic delusions. Andre, the truth-seeking man of science with the fly head and 96 eyes, and O'Brien's obsessed anti-scientist, would make a great pair on the Donahue show.

Andre is scrawling cryptic messages on the nature of matter, atoms and truth on his little slate while his fly hand keeps trying to sneak in and eat the chalk. O'Brien's modern anti-hero fidgets wildly to burrow underground and hide, rambling with poetic inco-

See NUCLEAR on 14



by Steve Moody

Backed against the ground

Steve Moody's upside-down bicyclist is the first photo selected for "Gallery Selections."

The selection board picked the photo for its uniqueness more than anything else. We assume it was posed. After all, it's not everyday that you find a frozen biker on your lawn.

Entries for "Gallery Selections" have been trickling in, though not as fast as we hoped. Again, we urge

all UNL students and staff to enter their favorite photo for possible printing in the paper. There are no prizes, but the photographer will, of course, be identified.

Moody is in the college of architecture.

Photos are selected by Bill Allen, entertainment editor, and David Creamer and Mark Davis, photo chief and assistant photo chief.