

Arts & Entertainment

Jayhawks fly with folk rock

Minneapolis band deals in near perfect country pop

By Charles Lieurance
Divisions Editor

In the early '80s, the Minneapolis band Safety Last was a religion — rockabilly without the greased pompadour posing of bands like the

Band Preview

Stray Cats. Safety Last played rockabilly and roots R & B as if Elvis had just recorded "Mystery Train" the day before. The band's two albums are sacred staples of the rockabilly revival that spawned such bands as the Rockats and the Pillsouls and gave Lincoln's own Charlie Burton a new lease on life at the beginning of the decade. When the quartet broke up around 1983 and disappeared into the vinyl limbo reserved for most independent recording artists, Gary Louris, Safety Last's guitarist and vocalist, joined up with one of his fans, Mark Olson. They conjured up a rhythm section, forming the newest addition to the Minneapolis pantheon, The Jayhawks. Passionate folk rock

authentic folk rock, or folk R & B if you want to really find the roots of this music. Louris strums, picks or twangs away at the strings "just on the edge of distortion and feedback" (Louris' words), while Olson is the purist, the diehard traditionalist with more than a few bones to pick with modern music.

The great thing is that when you pick a bone like Buck Owens picks a string, it doesn't sound much like a grudge. Fact is, it sounds like heaven on a fret.

The Jayhawks don't produce anything as venerably exciting as their Twin City peers such as the Replacements, Husker Du or even Safety Last or the Suburbs. What they do is make damn-near perfect country pop, sort of a cross between the old Poco, the folkier aspects of the Eagles, and the Buffalo Springfield/Byrds/Flying Burrito Brothers contingent. This sort of music is not going to drive anyone into the next phase of rock 'n' roll or convince anyone that the rock can save the world, but it does have its pleasures. **Drunken binges and Jesus**

For one thing, the songwriting is sincere and persuasive, lyrically

the highway beelining away from Jesus toward another drunken binge or rounders on the mend trudging, a bit hesitantly, toward Jesus. Characters find or lose salvation and grace conversationally, and the tone of the conversation is Olson's light, fragile voice — one part Richie Furay, two parts Everly Brothers (take your pick) and a pinch of folksy Jerry Garcia for good measure.

The real star of this LP and, according to reports from the Twin Cities, the live show, too, is Louris, whose guitar-playing is incessant and varied. There doesn't seem to be much room for him to rest anywhere on the album. His lead parts seem to come out of everywhere, alternately influenced by everything from pure hillbilly bottleneck to modern steel guitar and the rockabilly electric jitter that made him famous.

The Jayhawks' self-titled LP is available at Pickle's and Dirt Cheap Records. Their live show will grace The Drumstick tonight. Reviews from other venues indicate that the Hawks manage greater variety and energy on stage than on record, so the smart money's on a live show.



Courtesy of 20th Century Fox

Exile Russian boxing champ Alek coaches two young contenders in "Streets of Gold."

Lincoln socked with yet another boxing movie

By Stew Magnuson
Staff Reviewer

"Streets of Gold" 20th Century Fox

Boxing films almost have become a separate movie genre. Of all the sports, none has received such attention from filmmakers as boxing. The "Rocky" series is one of the most successful cycles in the last decade, and "Raging Bull" was perhaps one of the greatest boxing films of all time.

Movie Review

The latest entry in the boxing film tradition is "Streets of Gold," a typical boxing film with enough new twists to keep it interesting.

"Streets of Gold" is about a Russian-Jew immigrant, Alek (Klaus Maria Brandauer), who was once the Soviet Union's champion boxer, but now works as a dishwasher in a Long Island restaurant. Alek has come a long way since his No. 1 status. He's now a middle-aged man with a little extra around the waistline. He has a terrible job and lives in a tiny, dingy room in a boarding house full of fellow Russian immigrants.

"In Russia I lived like an American. Now, I'm in America, and I live like a Russian," he sadly says.

Cynical and drunk on vodka, Alek finds himself watching an illegal boxing match in some warehouse where the neighborhood boys brawl and punch each other for a few bucks. In the most memorable scene in the film, the drunk Alek challenges the big, proud black fighter Rashad (Wesley Snipes) to try and hit him. The short, fat Russian

ducks every blow and makes Rashad look foolish.

The next day, another young fighter, Tommy (Adrian Paser), asks Alek to be his trainer. Soon Alek and Tommy are training every day, while the jealous Rashad looks on. Tommy and Rashad have a mutual racist hatred for one another, but soon Alek takes Rashad under his wing as well. Director Joe Roth takes the viewer through the customary training scenes, which I found tedious after watching the same sequences in all four "Rocky" films. I would just get caught up in the story of Alek, when it would shift to the two boxers hitting punching bags and doing endless sit-ups.

Actually, Alek's story is far more interesting than that of the two boxers. Alek never boxed outside the Soviet Union. Since he was a Jew, he wasn't allowed on the national team. When his former coach didn't stick up for him, he beat him up. Now the Soviets are bringing their national team to New York and Alek wants his two young boxers to box vicariously for him. Of course, this is starting to sound like "Rocky IV." But "Rocky IV" was a propagandist piece of trash. "Streets of Gold" isn't. It avoids heavy-handed politics and concentrates on the story. Also, the boxing looks real. Not one punch in four Rocky movies looked anything like a real punch in a real boxing match.

"Streets of Gold" has many of the cliches from other boxing films — two poor boys fighting their way out of the ghettos, tedious training scenes and a predictable ending — but Alek's story makes it worth watching for those who like boxing-genre movies.

"Streets of Gold," rate "R," is now showing at the Douglas 3 Theatre.

One man's vision of OU-NU

Why was the alarm set?

Voices. A loud hum. A forehead hitting a brick. Where am I? What's happening? Voices getting clearer. Hum getting louder. Becoming a scream. Beary eyes staggering open.

Screaming alarms! Dull throbbing head. Arm reaching blindly. Aching skull can't be lifted. Clock knocked off dresser. Peace and quiet restored. Ah, sleep, great welcoming comfort. Can't go to class today.

Geoff McMurtry

Memory slowly stumbles to life. It's Saturday. I don't have class today. Why did I set the alarm last night? What did I do last night? Where did I go? Why would I set the alarm on a Friday? Who cares? Sleep falls like a blanket.

Slumber. Heavy, deep. Head weighs more than body. Mind clear of all distractions. Saturday. Sleep in. Forever. Saturday. No worries. Saturday.

Something wrong. Nagging question creeps from back of mind. Why was the alarm set? It can't be Saturday. Nightmares: skipped test haunting me on skid row. Can't lift hundred-pound head. More nightmares: my shivering body on park bench, covered with unused notebooks. Trying to wake up.

The bends or attitude?

Question still nagging. Why was the alarm set? Stomach inside out. Wall pounding on head. Why was alarm set? Head and body ache. Can't sleep. Exhausted. Can't get up. Can't lift head. Altitude? The bends? Question interrupts. Why was alarm

set? There can't be a reason. Try to sleep. Groaning stomach won't allow it. Like Avis, trying harder. Fading out. Resting in peace at last.

Motionless. Mind shuts down. Body quits too. Lungs carry on alone. Why was the alarm set? Question dances alone through empty skull. Brain went home for the day. Why was alarm set? Question persists, becoming annoyance, overstaying welcome. Body can't move to show him door. Why was alarm set? No one here cares. Why was alarm set? Ignorance is bliss. So is sleep.

Spark of recollection ignites, but gets blown out. Memory wants to know about last night. What happened? All the details. No answer. No one here knows anyway. Memory feels left out. "Do Not Disturb" sign hangs from Logic Section.

A connection?

Nagging Question persists yet again. Why was alarm set? Argument starts. Memory wants last night. Nagging Question wants somebody responsible for alarms. Memory says last night more important. Question says there may be a connection. I sleep through it all.

Danger. Memory and Question resolve differences, now working together. Why was alarm set last night? Sign taken down. Disturb proceedings begin. Brain called back to work. No answer. May have to leave without him.

It's SATURDAY? Realization hits, like cold shower. Sudden. Overwhelming. Wide awake now. It's *that* Saturday. Feeling much better. Vaulting out of bed. Head still hurts. Dressed in two minutes. Ten o'clock already. Late for beer breakfast. Flying through door.

Memory struggles to catch up.

Screaming. Loud music. Sea of faces. Seeing red. Also seeing through red. Memory asks about last night. Details sketchy. Allegations fly. Bars. Sidetrack? Maybe a party? No one here knows either. Memory not satisfied, but follows Curiosity to next room.

The journey of the stomach

Close to noon. Time running out. Extra hour granted. Curiosity asks, "Daylight Time?" No. TV game. Memory looks confused. Question looks smug. Head feeling better. Still hurts. But feeling better. Beer poured into it seems to soothe the throbbing. Stomach trying to find himself.

More beer. Focus problems. Easily corrected. More beer. Laughter best medicine. Only hurts when I move. Curiosity wanders downstairs. Memory starting to perk up.

Time lapse. Screaming red horde. Merging with larger one. Curiosity spots Brain next to sidewalk. Nifty grab. Uphill lines. Possibly for days. Body does the wave.

Stadium fills with red. Eyes still are. Coke tastes like 7-Up. Both taste like Smirnoff. Stomach screams for Runza. Curiosity nabs a hot dog. Memory still confused.

Time lapse. Blackshirts wearing red shirts. Red shirts wear White Hats. Wave causes dissidence. Smirnoff yells at Boz. Security yells at Smirnoff. Sooners do OK. Not great, OK. Curiosity looks for Husker Bob. White Hats survive shootout, ride into orange sunset. Head feels better. Sleep chased away. Memory concentrates. Wouldn't want this one to get away.

Go Big Red!

State of the Arts

By Stew Magnuson
Staff Reporter

Movie:

The film adaptation of the Broadway hit "A Chorus Line" shows tonight in the Nebraska Union at 7 and 9 p.m. The film is sponsored by the UPC American Film Committee, and tickets and \$1 for students and \$2 for nonstudents.

At Tooth's:

Tooth's Gallery, 905 O St., will present works by local artists Barry Schultz, Duran Knutsen and Janine Al-Bayati through next Thursday. Knutsen will display a style show in conjunction with the exhibition Saturday at 7 and 9 p.m. Tickets may be purchased at the door. The gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

At Mable Lee:

The UNL Department of Theatre Arts and Dance is presenting "Cabaret de Piaf" tonight and Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. Edith Piaf, a world-renowned cabaret performer in Paris during the 1940s could sing a sad song with feeling. The dance department is putting 18 of Piaf's songs to dance. Tickets cost \$5 for the general public and \$3 for students and are available at the Temple Box Office.

'Winterfest' on NETV; opera premieres

The television premiere of a new Gian Carlo Menotti opera, and the beginning of "Winterfest" highlight upcoming programming on the statewide Nebraska ETV Network.

Gian Carlo Menotti's long-awaited opera "Gova," starring tenor Placido Domingo as the Spanish painter, airs on "Great Performances," Nov. 30 at 2 p.m.

Two family-oriented programs, featuring the "Sesame Street" cast in a holiday special and an adapta-

tion of a popular children's classic as well as a look at endangered animal species, highlight the opening night of "Winterfest" Dec. 6 on NETV.

Sponsored by Nebraskans for Public Television, Inc. (NPTV), the nine-night "Winterfest" activities are meant to increase viewer awareness of Nebraska public television and encourage membership in the NPTV citizen-support organization.