

Arts & Entertainment

Cruzados emerge from punk beginnings

By Charles Lieurance
Senior Editor

In 1979, Los Angeles joined London as a mecca of punk rock, establishing a mutant hybrid of the 1977 Brit-punk that made groups like the U.K. Subs and The Stranglers look like innocuous popsters. Black Flag, Circle Jerks, Germs and Fear took thrash very seriously, adding to the "loud, fast rules" dogma the American sense of competition. If Brits could play it fast and loud, we could play it much faster and much louder. Few of the groups survived, some of the crowd didn't survive at all, and most of the scene burnt out on its own creative nihilism.

Concert Preview

Henry Rollins of Black Flag decided he was a "serious" artist/poet, the Circle Jerks turned into a novelty band, Darby Crash of the Germs self-destructed, and Lee Ving from Fear went on to star in episodes of "Fame."

The Plugz, a more accessible part of the East L.A. Hispanic punk annex, became the Cruzados after the band formally split up in 1982. Renewed interest in the group caused by their role on the soundtrack of Alex Cox's "Repo Man" encouraged guitarist/vocalist Tito Larriva and lead guitarist Steven Hufsteter to reform under the new monicker.

The Cruzados' show at FarmAid III showed they are capable of pulling more from the overused blues rock genre than most others who sit dead-butted in the format (see Fabulous Thunderbirds).

Tonight's Cruzados show at the Royal Grove promises to have the same impact as the FarmAid show, if not more. Previously, during the L.A. punk explosion, the Plugz put out two taut, enervated LPs — "Electrify Me" (1979) and "Better Luck" (1981) — that showed them as a blend of influences above and beyond punk limitations. Reggae, pop, country and folk music all played a part on these early albums, all played with precision and

a new-wave ear for musical tension.

Their roots homages — a break-neck Spanish version of the Richie Valens classic "La Bamba" on the "Electrify Me" LP and a similarly charged version of Johnny Rivers' "Secret Agent Man" on the "Repo Man" soundtrack — have always kept them close to the barrio sound without being overly reverent as Los Lobos sometimes is.

The Cruzados' first LP, a self-titled effort that made Rolling Stone Magazine's list of top albums by new, young bands, found Hispanic roots that even Los Lobos had ignored. The romantic strains of mariachi guitar are behind the fluid, round-toned romantic lead guitar of Hufsteter, and Larriva's voice provides a lush serenade on the album's picture-perfect pop songs.

Although for some these are not the most respectable roots of Hispanic music, Larriva and Hufsteter make every passage luminous.

For the Cruzados' newest LP, Hufsteter departed, leaving Larriva with a more pedestrian working-class roots band. "After Dark" spawned a minor hit. "Bed of Lies" mimicked the blue jean/bandana rock of John Mellencamp without adding anything new to the brew. Still, on stage, the

'Larriva's voice provides a lush serenade on the album's picture-perfect pop songs.'

Cruzados manage to stretch their bluesy rock sound enough to surface from the heap of new roots guitar bands with a modicum of musical ingenuity. Larriva's voice is still in top form, ranging from a sewer-cat growl to a troubadour's romantic angst.

The opening band is Airstrike, regional thud metalheads, prancing through the cliches in search of that big record contract in the sky.

The doors open at 7:30 p.m. The cover is \$6.



Ward Williams/Daily Nebraskan

The Cruzados

Art League's art 'potentially' well-done

By Charles Lieurance
Senior Editor

The Art League Gallery in Richards Hall 205 has the creative ambience of a bohemian artist's loft studio. Its half-oval windows and uneven white-washed brick walls offer a secluded artistic grotto unique to this campus.

Designed as a non-juried spot where student artists can be shown in their formative stages, the gallery has been home to as many aesthetically confused pieces as it has been to minor masterpieces, but the idea of the gallery is the important thing.

Art Review

Reviewing the current exhibit without this disclaimer would be a mistake. Much of the work is so amateurish that criticism would be unfair; some of the work shows promise but that promise may be accidental, and what's left is obviously the work of very talented students.

For instance, criticizing a wall hanging of U2 lyrics calligraphed with biblical reverence or a mediocre self-portrait done from what may be a high-school cheerleading photograph is like walking into a double-wide at the Shady View Trailer Court and insulting their gaudy macrame plant hangers or

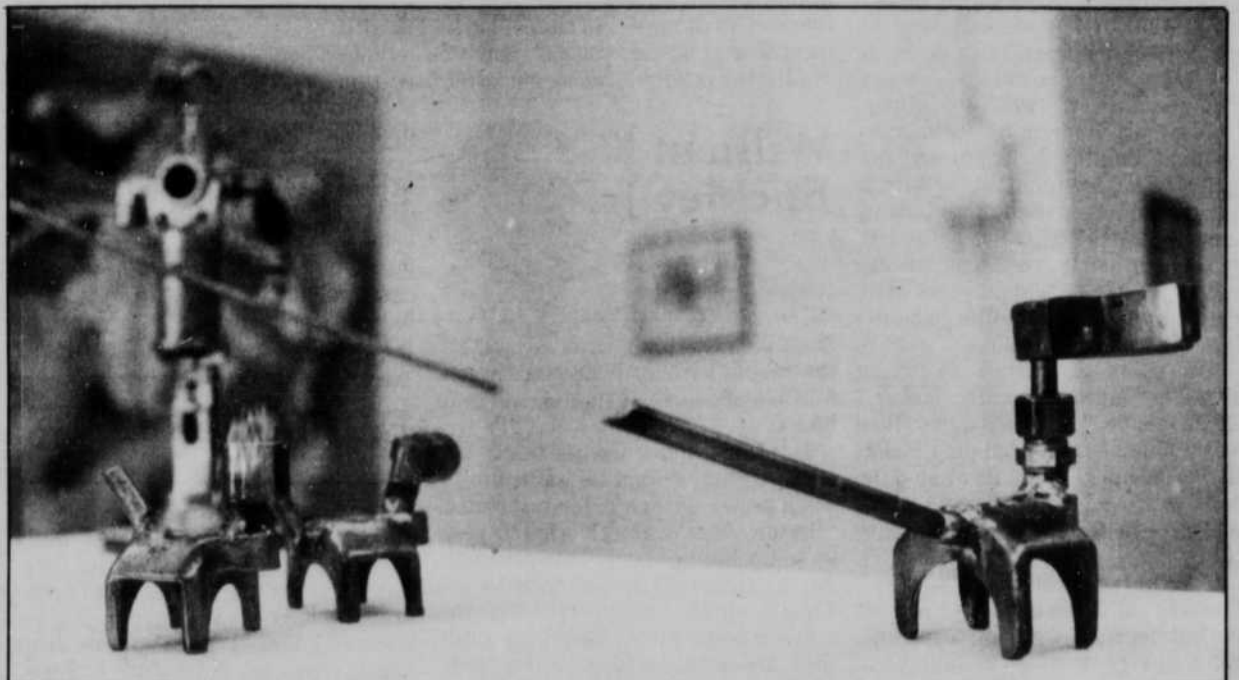
their chipmunk salt shakers from Mount Rushmore. If you don't want to see stuff like this, why did you go to the trailer park in the first place? If you don't want to see anything less than a Manet or an Oldenburg, don't go into a student art gallery.

Platitudes like "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" and "if you can't say something nice about someone, don't say anything at all" generously apply when dealing with such things.

Potential, potential, potential... that's the key word here.

Several pieces do stand out. A large painting called "3 Dreams" by Cindia (like Cher, or Madonna?) covers a great portion of the west wall of the gallery and simply vibrates with color. It's a bizarre floral world of interconnecting, organic shapes coiling around one another as an anonymous figure on stairs in the left-hand corner of the canvas lends her identity and personality to the dreamscape.

Although the midsection of the painting is overly busy, both sides of this show immense promise. The anonymous figure on the stairs has a lonely, alienated quality reminiscent of black urban art in the mid-1970s, and the large floral shape on the right side resembles Georgia O'Keefe in its use of muted desert colors. Too many shapes and colors in the center, though, detract from the spectacular use of color



Ward Williams/Daily Nebraskan

Scott Anderson's "While Shepherds Watched?" at the Art League Gallery.

and shape that accent the sides. "Chelsea Dethroned" by Karla Judt takes a pedestrian subject — a small child in a foul mood — and, by capturing a subtle nuance of expression, makes it fascinating. The face is nearly unforgettable, sort of a mix of spoiled pouting and juvenile anger. This separates this watercolor from the myriad of other cutesy child paintings that litter small galleries around the

country. Kate Brook's two pieces, "Underlined Lizard" and "Sidelined Lizard," seem to be most suited for the outside art world and larger galleries. On an amorphous clay-colored background, Brook creates an etched grid and places a lizard shape onto the grid or beside it. This is a polished use of experiments going on in the art world daily. Brook's use of texture, or-

ganic shape vs. staunch geometric shape and line, and surrealistic minimalism, is controlled and interesting.

"Begin" and "Changing Opinion" by David Stensland are similarly suited for viewing in more professional company. Brightly colored acrylic paint molecules wiped to indicate motion conflict

See ART on 7