



Photo courtesy of Warner Records

Minneapolis' Hüsker Dü will perform Saturday at the Ranch Bowl in Omaha.

Hüsker Dü to play hardcore 'new punk' at Ranch Bowl

By Charles Lieurance
Senior Editor

With hardcore punk bands basically degenerating into millions of interchangeable atoms and their vital anger diluted into inconsequential musical tantrums, it's a mighty credit to their foresight that Minneapolis' Hüsker Dü got out while the getting was good.

Hüsker Dü will bring the plentiful benefits of this foresight to Omaha's Ranch Bowl Saturday at 9 p.m.

Identifiable melody has been regarded as a superfluous sell-out to mainstream rock values in those circles still intent upon punk's annihilation of what they perceive as "corporate"

hardcore the band came to pioneer. The songs are basic "Loud Fast Rules" rants.

With "Zen Arcade" Hüsker Dü redecored the shack of hardcore, on a completely new foundation. Using elements of the folk-rock revival, neo-psychedelia, Ramones-esque hook writing and the best L.A. hardcore, "Zen Arcade" was the "Sandinista" of hardcore. Hüsker went from ear-numbing assault ("Turn on the News") to heartsick ballads ("Never Talking to You Again") without ever burying their unerring ear for melody. Under the feedback and roar of Bob Mould's guitar lurked an intelligence and musical virtuosity that would make the rest of Hüskers' career urgently listenable and incredibly influential.

"New Day Rising," "Candy Apple Grey" and Hüsker Dü's most recent LP, "Warehouse: Stories and Songs," were not the sprawling monsters "Zen Arcade" was, but each marked new strides toward a perfect amalgam of pop and punk. The sound is simpler and often the group's pop instinct wins out over the absolute power they are capable of mustering at will. Much of the group's original anger has dissipated, and with this dissipation the songwriting has suffered marginally. Bob Mould and Grant Hart's lyrics have been, for the most part, recently centered on all-too-common themes like love, reflective angst and social detritus. Many Hüsker Dü fans blame this on the band's signing to corporate bloodsuckers Warner Brothers for the making of their last two LPs.

Still, Hüsker Dü remain the fathers of listenable and distinguishable hardcore, the bridling of which could be the savior of any efforts to infuse mainstream music with some of punk rock's undeniable passion.

Cost for Saturday's show is \$7, \$8 at the door. Tickets are available in Lincoln at Pickles Records.

Concert Preview

musical form. But Hüsker Dü enclose chiming pop songs inside a solid wall of punk noise and justifiable rancor, diverging on their last few albums to clear-eyed optimism.

Formed in 1980 while the hardcore scene was becoming decadent and losing all sense of direction in Los Angeles, this Minneapolis trio moved the alternative focus to the Midwest. In the cultural ice-vacuum Hüsker Dü, The Replacements and their kindred in oblivion recreated punk rock in the image of their landscape. The sound was desolate, exaggerated stops, starts and dynamics imitated the exaggerated nature of the Midwest — too much space, too much time to think and too much hostile nature to do that thinking in — and the passion was unmistakable, often sacrificing any kind of musical professionalism.

The first three Hüsker Dü LPs, "Land Speed Record," "Everything Falls Apart" and "Metal Circus" show little sign of the "progressive"

Christmas specials air on ETV

Some of the upcoming Christmas specials on Nebraska ETV include:

- An award-winning animated story of a country boy who builds a snowman who comes to life in a Christmas Eve dream, "The Snowman," airs Dec. 20 at 9:30 a.m., and Dec. 24 at 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

- "Bach's Christmas Oratorio: The Nativity" is performed by Nikolaus Harnoncourt conducting the Vienna Concentus Musicus and the Tolzer Boys Choir of Munich on "Great Performances" at 10 a.m. Dec. 20 and at 9:30 a.m. Dec. 23.

- "Christmas with Flicka" on "Great Performances" airs at 2 p.m. Dec. 20 and Dec. 24. Set in a snowy Austrian village, the story follows mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade and two children through a day of traditional holiday activities, including shopping, baking and trimming the tree.

- "A Christmas Calendar" airs Dec. 20 at 3 p.m. This special traces some of the best-loved Christmas traditions to their origins in Germany. Host Loretta Swit visits locations in Germany depicted on an Advent calendar to experience the holiday traditions first hand.

- Locally produced "Nebraska High School Caroling Choirs" begins Dec. 21. The holiday series features eight new programs. Airing at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., and repeating at 8 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. each day, programs include singing groups from Omaha Central and Tekamah-Herman high schools (Dec. 21); Hastings and Henderson high schools (Dec. 22); North Platte St. Patrick's and Holdrege high schools (Dec. 23); and Millard North and Lincoln High (Dec. 24).

- "Caroling, Caroling" airs at 12:30 p.m. Dec. 21 and features the Mormon Youth Symphony and Chorus performing a concert of

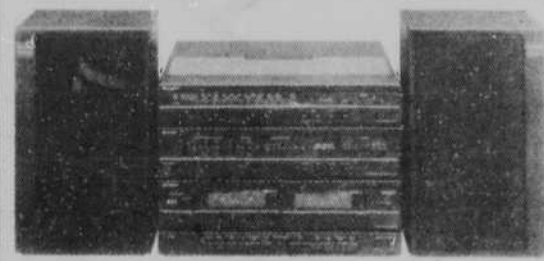
Christmas music videotaped at the world-famous Mormon Tabernacle.

- "A Brandywine Christmas Carol" airs Dec. 23 at 12:30 p.m. A sleigh full of Christmas carols, musical gifts and a glimpse of St. Nicholas are part of this special, hosted by actor John Bleasdale. Following at 1 p.m., amid the early-baroque splendor of the Cloister Church in Waldhausen, Austria, Nikolaus Harnoncourt leads the Concentus Musicus of Vienna in "Bach's Christmas Oratorio: The Epiphany" on "Great Performances." The history of the most prominent American Christmas customs and traditions — from the early 17th century to present — is traced in poetry and song at 2:30 p.m. by The Singing Sergeants, the official chorus of the United States Air Force, and the USAF Symphony Orchestra on "An American Christmas." Capping the day at 7 p.m., "A Child's Christmas in Wales" captures the warmth and ageless spirit of Dylan Thomas' poem about Christmastime in a small Welsh town. Denholm Elliot stars as Old Geraint, who shares memories of boyhood Christmases with his grandson.

- "Sounds of Christmas," featuring singer Tony Sandler performing with the nuns of St. Cecilia's Choral, begins at 9:30 a.m. Dec. 24. Beginning at 1 p.m., 3,000 San Francisco Bay-area music lovers gather at Louise Davies Symphony Hall for an annual holiday tradition, the singing of Handel's "Messiah" on "The Sing-It-Yourself 'Messiah,'" and at 7 p.m. Dec. 24, excerpts from Handel's "Messiah" are performed by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus under the direction of Robert Shaw in "Handel's 'Messiah'" with Robert Shaw and the Atlanta Symphony. This special also repeats Christmas Day at 9 a.m.

HO!HO!HO!

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