

# Mannequin Beach's new album filled with urgent music

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instrument. The three members come together best on "Harlequin," "Leech," "This Nightmare's For Real," and "Money Hungry Whore."

The song "Gerbil" is a reminder of Mannequin Beach's demo tape

"Gerbilife" and shows the band's view of the masses: "We jog for the lord/In the wheel round and round/Gerbils eat their young/And watch the world crash down."

Many of the lyrics are pessimistic, as are these from "Behind Your Back": "Back at work I'm civilized/ I use buttons instead of spears/How

does it feel to know/We haven't changed in a thousand years."

Our society and its masses deserve much criticism. But why stop with criticism? That is my only complaint about this album. The lyrics do a good job explaining things wrong with our society, yet do little to suggest avenues of change. Criticism can begin to open eyes, but suggestions for change are needed to open hearts and minds.

The criticisms are valid and piercing, as in this sample from "Money Hungry Whore": "Dressed up in a suit and tie/Trying to be the boss/

Good Samaritan parables/Some-where they got lost/All your business partners/Agree that its alright/To alter moral policy/If the money's right."

I have heard much of Mannequin Beach's fusion of punk, metal, and jazz, but I really only catch the first two. I hear glimpses of MDC ("Pathectic") and old Toxic Reasons ("Street Life"), but the glimpses are fleeting.

Mannequin Beach is its own band and seldom deviate from its metalish/punkish sound. One such departure,

"Time to Call the Vote," mixes slow and fast speeds while satirizing politicians who are concerned with power rather than with people.

"Don't Laugh, You're Next" is getting the national distribution it deserves. Mannequin Beach offers clear, burning condemnations of our society backed by rousing music. I hope the band will offer suggestions for change on their next release, in addition to criticisms.

"It's too much fun pulling bricks out of this leaning tower of sewage."

-- Mannequin Beach

## Band's new album offers good changes

By Mark Lage  
Staff Reporter

For Against  
December  
Independent Project Records

Its reputation for dissonant, effects-laden music notwithstanding, the best part of local Lincoln band For Against has always been the often irresistibly catchy guitar of Harry Dingman III.

Unfortunately, on the band's first LP release from two years ago, "Echelons," there were infrequent examples of this.

The band tended more towards slow, repetitive droning, sometimes even leaving the guitar out completely in lieu of simple keyboards. And when they did kick in to more up tempo, catchier songs like "Shine," or "It's a Lie," the guitar was mired somewhere deep in the murky, musty production of the album.

Buck.

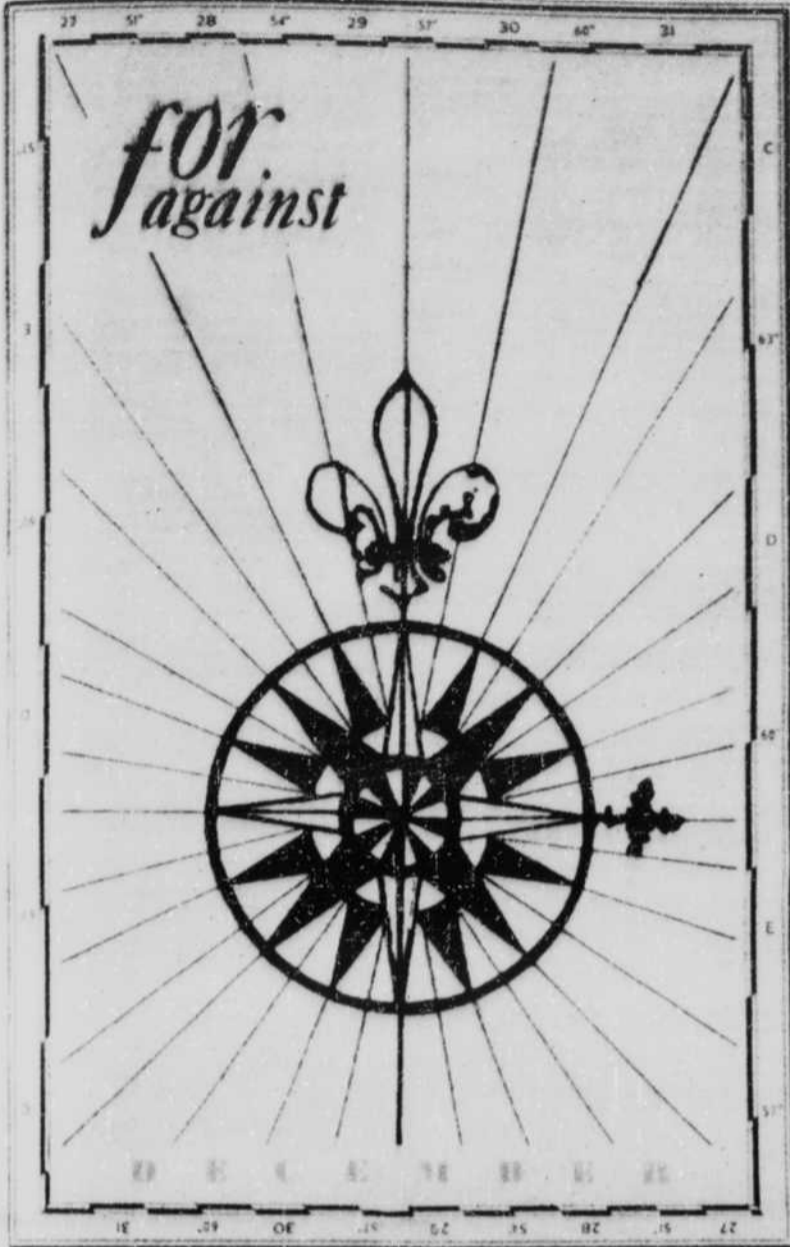
Dingman is never especially dexterous in the solo areas, but he proves again and again that just a few notes can always be good notes. At times he even sounds like a better version of A Flock of Seagulls' guitarist.

In fact, one minor problem with "December" is the band's enervating tendency to sound like the Flock as a whole in isolated moments. This is especially true when bassist/lead vocalist Jeffrey Runnings sings about being "Stranded in Greenland."

The album's best moments are also those which would be most surprising to people who have only read or heard about the "dark, forboding" sounds of For Against -- the solid, straight-ahead alternative pop of songs like "They Said," and "The Last Laugh."

And they also manage to incorporate some of Dingman's more ominous chord barrages into "December" (the title track), and "Clandestine High Holy," while avoiding the suffocating aura of "Echelons."

"December" isn't an album you could listen to every day for the rest of your life (very few albums are), and For Against doesn't seem to have the makings of a great band. But "December" is a collection of songs that simply sound good, emphatically displaying the ability to be a very good band.



Season's Greetings

Daily Nebraskan

album REVIEW

But some things have changed on For Against's recently released second album, "December," and the changes are all for the better. "December" is made up of nine songs which are all at least as good if not better than the best two or three from "Echelons."

The new album features a lighter, livelier production, less repetitive and more imaginatively structured songs, and a forcefulness which "Echelons" sometimes lacked. And the guitar doesn't sit out on any of the songs.


Dingman's chimey, clangy style is at the same time both unique, and reminiscent of other notable eighties guitarists -- less twisted early Edge, and sometimes Reckoning-era Peter

## CONGRATULATIONS & GOOD LUCK


The Daily Nebraskan would like to wish the Fall 1988 UNL Graduates the best of luck in all they do. We thank them for the contributions they have made to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

We would especially like to salute two outstanding members of our staff:

**Pat Pensick and Debi Trumble.**



**PAT PENSICK**, from Columbus, will finally graduate with a degree in Journalism - Advertising.



**DEBI TRUMBLE**, a North Platte native, will also finally graduate with a degree in Journalism - Advertising.

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