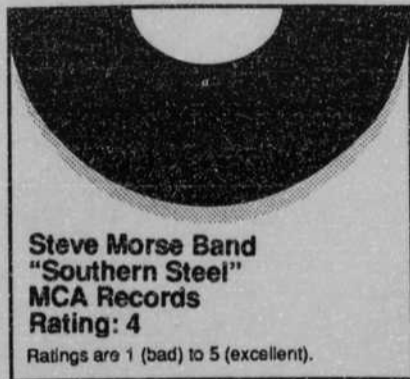


Album features guitar mastery



Steve Morse Band
"Southern Steel"
MCA Records
Rating: 4

Ratings are 1 (bad) to 5 (excellent).

By Shannon Uehling
Staff Reporter

He may not be a guitar god like Steve Vai or Joe Satriani, but Steve Morse is certainly no amateur on the guitar.

The Steve Morse Band's latest release entitled "Southern Steel" is a hard-rocking instrumental that is similar to a Steve Vai work, only more bluesy.

The Steve Morse Band has been nominated for five Grammy Awards. This is not surprising when one considers the band's mastery of complex rhythms and intense guitar playing.

The best song on the record is the title cut, "Southern Steel." It is a rather simple song made up of flowing guitar and mixed with clever bits of intricate guitar playing.

Of the 10 tracks on this record, eight are real hard rockers and two have a certain balladlike quality.

"Vista Grande" is the first of these and is very melodic compared to the rest of the album. It doesn't take much to imagine Damn Yankees or Warrant whimpering out a sappy rock ballad to this music.

The other piece of work on the album with a slower tempo is "Wolf Song." Not only does it contain guitar synth, but it also uses synthesized piano. It is one of the two best songs on the record in spite of its use of synthesizers.

Most people would never think of trying to put words to the music of Joe Satriani, but it's actually quite easy to picture lyrics to accompany the music of the Steve Morse Band.

For the most part, "Southern Steel" is a top rate record, but it is not without its faults.

There is only so much that can be done with an instrumental album without becoming redundant, so why does Morse repeat himself? While playing "Sleaze Factor," all one has to do is turn the tape over and listen to the same song with a different title of "Weekend Overdrive."

And considering Morse's talent on the guitar, he shouldn't have to use guitar synthesizers. Songs such as "Wolf Song" would have been just as good, if not better, had they not been adulterated by synthesizers.

For example, Y & T could sing the lyrics for "Arena Rock," and Sammy Hagar could do "Weekend Overdrive."

This is not to say that this album would be better if it contained lyrics. It stands on its own quite solidly without the use of vocals.

Despite any faults, this is a great investment for anyone who truly enjoys the music of Satriani or Vai.



Courtesy of Columbia

Jazz saxophonist Branford Marsalis will play to a sold-out house Saturday night at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

Jazz saxophonist to perform to full house at Lied Center

By Michael Stock
Staff Reporter

The show has been sold out since early January, and waiting lists for the show are pages long. But Saturday night, a full house will wait for jazz saxophonist Branford Marsalis to make his appearance at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

Marsalis' musical training began at age 4 on the piano. He moved to the clarinet at age 6 or 7 and to the alto sax at age 15. His choice of the alto saxophone was the result of a challenge from his father, who told him it was the hardest to play.

Marsalis attended Southern University in Baton Rouge, La., and the Berklee School of Music in Boston. He was included in numerous gigs with such jazz greats as Art Blakey, the Clark Terry Band and Lionel Hampton.

Studying classic jazz saxophone performers, including Sonny Rollins, Charlie Parker, Ornette Coleman, Wayne Shorter and Cannonball Adderly, Marsalis said, "I wanted to understand everybody's contributions to music."

This study of a wide range of saxo-

phonists lends itself to Marsalis' wide-ranging influences in his playing style.

Marsalis switched to tenor saxophone in 1981, calling it "the closest instrument to the human voice in terms of depth and emotionally moving a person."

Marsalis has played with various jazz artists as well as in the band of his brother Wynton. Wynton's second album features Marsalis on many of the tracks, and includes several of his own compositions.

Marsalis' wide range of successes have earned him Grammy Award nominations, successful movie roles and recording album contracts with such jazz greats as Dizzy Gillespie and Miles Davis.

Perhaps best known for his work with Sting on his award-winning and critically acclaimed albums, "The Dream of the Blue Turtles" in 1985 and "Nothing Like the Sun" in 1987, Branford is no longer known as simply "the older brother of Wynton Marsalis," his trumpet-playing sibling.

Sting's album, "The Dream of the Blue Turtles," sparked a world tour, enlisting

See MARSALIS on 10

Search for a keeper among punk, metal yields little to enjoy

the fifth column

album review

Last semester, Pickles Records held a 90 percent-off sale on albums, which yielded a bonanza for those who maintain record players in defiance of those damned little CD things.

With vinyl going the way of the eight-track cassette, I visited a super sale at Pickles this semester, but opted for cassettes this time around.

Keeping with the cosmopolitan nature of Fifth Column, we will sift through the metal, punk and rap realms in search of a lasting bargain.

Cleared of accusations in a recent backmasking/suicide message case, Judas Priest offers "Painkiller" on Columbia Records.

There are two parts to this album: the first is the title song itself, which opens the collection in a furious burst of speed and energy.

Let no one deny the influence of speedmetal upon the rest of the metal scene after listening to this scather.

Then there is the rest of the album, filled with the familiar Judas Priest staples like Rob Halford's screeching voice, overdone guitar solos and songs with titles like "Leather Rebel" and "Hell Patrol."

A few songs come close to "Painkiller" in intensity, but they tend to sink back into more familiar metal sounds and themes.

With the release of "Ishtar," New Jersey punksters Adrenaline O.D. have moved from the thrash underground of Buy Our Records to the punk middle-ground of Restless Records, who have been scooping up quite a number of punk bands lately.

Along the way, the band has kept its penchant for goofy and obscure lyrics that seize upon moments from the lives of band members and mean little to the listener.

Out of 12 songs on "Ishtar," "Tiny Fingers" has the best sound, yet one song does not an album make.

Two genres down and still looking for a keeper... what better place to start than with "Dangerous Music Straight From Oakland."

Too Short's "Short Dog's in the House" LP (Jive/RCA Records) comes complete with a parental advisory: An explicit lyrics sticker, a sure way to raise sales.

Yeah, I have some problems with these lyrics, but it's not about using curse words or graphic descriptions of sex.

Too Short was taken to task by the (female) rapper Choice over his sexual attitudes, but he is still at it, now joined by Ice Cube for one track.

Apparently it takes two people to tell me

See FIFTH on 10

Dark, dismal film

Movie combines miserable lives with murder

By Jim Hanna
Senior Reporter

Spring is just around the corner. Happiness and optimism dance in the air as nature gaily prepares to move into its annual rebirth. Hope springs eternal.

Thank God there are movies like "The Kill-Off" to send our joys crashing miserably to the ground.

The latest offering of the Sheldon Film Theater explores, nay, celebrates the utter wretchedness of human existence.

Set during the off-season at a dying beach resort town, "The Kill-Off" focuses on the pitiful, intertwined lives of the few remaining residents.

The gruesome matriarch of the town is Luane (Loretta Gross), an aging bedridden woman who ruins most

everyone's life with phone gossip. Luane has dirt on everyone in town and will not hesitate to spew gossip in order to wreck lives.

One of the only businesses in town is a crummy bar run by Pete (Jackson Sims). Luane's young husband Ralph (Steve Monroe) works as Pete's handyman and Rags (William Russell) is the bartender. They're all miserable.

Pete's daughter Myra (Jordan Fox) works in the bar in spite of the fact that he raped her when she was 12. Bobbie (Andrew Lee Barrett) is the psycho son of the town doctor who gets Myra hooked on heroin and beats her up from time to time. They're miserable, too.

To pick up business, Pete hires a local prostitute, Danny Lee (Cathy Haase) to strip at his bar. She eventually falls in love with Ralph, but that



"The Kill-Off"
Starring Loretta Gross, Jackson Sims
Not Rated
Rating: 4
Ratings are 1 (bad) to 5 (excellent).

doesn't keep her from being miserable.

Everybody in the movie has a reason to kill Luane. Danny Lee wants Ralph to kill his miserable wife so that they can run off together. Pete wants to retrieve the \$10,000 that Luane's father stole from him and left to her when he

died. Pete wants to kill her because he's nuts.

The miserable lives twist together into a pathetic cesspool of despair, from which death would be a welcome relief.

"The Kill-Off" is based upon a novel by Jim Thompson, an author noted for his gruesome crime stories. Thompson once attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and was even published in The Prairie Schooner, which adds a nice local twist for Lincoln audiences. Another movie based on a Thompson work, "The Grifters," is playing in Lincoln.

But "The Kill-Off" has enough twists all by itself. There is scarcely a redeeming moment in this most bleak of bleak films. Thompson's story makes Eugene O'Neill's plays seem downright cheery.

The actors are primarily stage actors who do very little film work. This translates to what may seem to be an unnaturalness in front of the camera. Actually, it lends an abnormal feel and adds to the overall unpleasantness.

The movie was made on a small budget and it shows. The interior scenes appear to have been filmed in somebody's basement with a couple of floodlights. But again, this potential flaw was most likely intentional and adds to the sense of incorrectness.

"The Kill-Off" won't cheer anybody up. It's a grim little film that would ruin even the happiest person's day.

Go see it.
"The Kill-Off" is playing at the Sheldon Film Theater, 12th and R streets.