

# Alternative to 'alternative'

## The Steve Morse Band delivers powerful punch, emotion that guitarist Joe Satriani can't

There's probably a French word for the feeling I have right now, but certainly not an English one.

Remember about five years ago when you and your friends were the only ones who listened to "alternative" music, and you felt a strange mixture of compassion and contempt for the unwashed hordes that only listened to corporate rock?

Owners of Beta video equipment experienced this feeling as they watched the inferior VHS format become the de facto standard. I'm feeling it right now because Joe Satriani is getting airplay while Steve Morse is not even easy to buy in your local record store.



Courtesy of Relativity Records, Inc.

You've probably at least heard of Joe Satriani. Chances are good that you've heard "Summer Song," a track from his album, "The Extremist," which was released this summer.

Chances are not so good that you've heard of Steve Morse. If you have, then chances are good that you play the guitar. "Coast To Coast" is his new musical offering, also released this summer, and I'm here to tell you how wonderful it is.

But first, I'd like to dispense unpleasant childish disputes about which guitarist has better chops. They are both electric-guitar virtuosos. To be honest, they're both in the same league, though Satriani is

the relatively new kid on the block.

Both were named Best Overall Guitarist in Guitar Player reader's polls. Morse however, took the title for five consecutive years after building a solid reputation as the guitarist in the late '70s/early '80s jazz-fusion band, The Dixie Dregs. He was then made ineligible, clearing the way for Steve Vai and Joe Satriani in later years.

But what about their music? Both albums are entirely instrumental rock 'n' roll. Both albums have a few fast, aggressive tracks. Both have a few slow, lyrical songs. Both albums have one classical-guitar piece, and one Celtic-influenced piece. Both albums impress me.

But only "Coast To Coast" by The Steve Morse Band moves me.

If my voice had the range of an electric guitar, I would sing every note of "Coast To Coast." I try to sing along, even without adequate vocal range, a fact to which my roommates will openly attest.

"The Extremist" doesn't make me sing at all, and maybe this is the key difference between the two. You know how easy-listening instrumental covers of familiar rock 'n' roll songs leave you feeling empty? The melody without the words isn't interesting enough to hold your attention.

That's the way Satriani sounds. With a couple of exceptions, his songs sound like they should have lyrics. "Summer Song" might have had the lyrics "The song I'm playing is called Summer Song," and it would have fit. Any 10-syllable phrase would work, and it would make the song bearable: "If this song bores you, you can sing along." The whole album is like that.

What makes it worse is that Satriani spends a lot of time in magazine interviews trying to con-

vince the reader why a song of his should conjure images implied by its title. He likes to tell you why "Friends" should make you think of friendship, why "War" should evoke thoughts of war, and why the song "Why" should sound like it's asking a question.

Here's my question: Who cares? I don't care if he was weeping when he wrote "Cryin'." I sure don't feel it.

Morse, on the other hand, delivers passion without wearing it on his sleeve. "Morning Rush Hour" is filled with hurried desperation. The Celtic-sounding "Get It In Writing" sounds as if Morse is both asking

and answering a question, and "Run-away Train" actually sounds like an out-of-control Zephyr.

In short, Morse is a master of melody, composition and rhythmic surprise. He is also a master of

technique.

Satriani is only a master of technique.

—Pohl Longsine is a senior mathematics and computer science major and Diversions contributor.



Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc.

**TAILGATE 92**  
**W.C.'s &**  
*classic rock 'n' roll*  
**92.9 KTGL**  
*The Eagle*



Pre-game tailgate party  
 9:30 a.m. till 12:30 p.m.  
 Before every home game

1228  
 "P"  
 Street

Come party with W.C.s & The Eagle.  
**Fun! Giveaways!**  
**Drink Specials!!!**

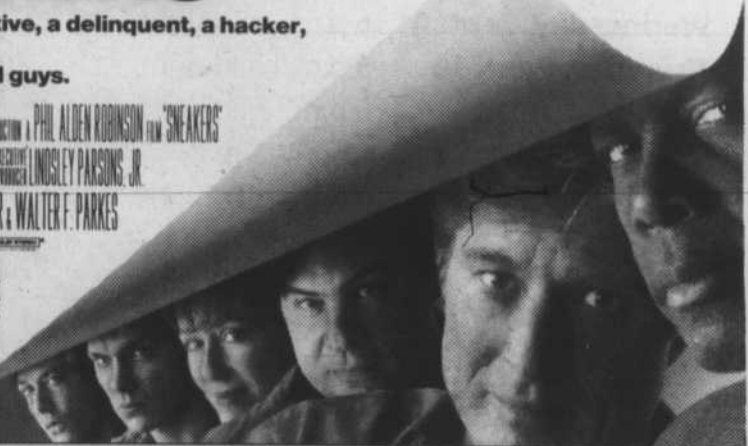
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "FIELD OF DREAMS"

**ROBERT REDFORD**  
**DAN AYKROYD**  
**BEN KINGSLEY**  
**MARY McDONNELL**  
**RIVER PHOENIX**  
**SIDNEY POITIER**  
**DAVID STRATHAIRN**  
**SNEAKERS**

A burglar, a spy, a fugitive, a delinquent, a hacker, and a piano teacher... and these are the good guys.

UNIVERSAL PICTURES PRESENTS A LASKER/PARKES PRODUCTION A PHIL ALDEN ROBINSON FILM "SNEAKERS"  
 MUSIC BY JAMES HURNER FEATURING BRANFORD MARSALIS COSTUME DESIGNER LINDSEY PARSONS, JR.  
 WRITTEN BY PHIL ALDEN ROBINSON AND LAWRENCE LASKER & WALTER F. PARKES  
 PRODUCED BY WALTER F. PARKES, LAWRENCE LASKER  
 DIRECTED BY PHIL ALDEN ROBINSON A UNIVERSAL PICTURE

PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED  
 Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13  
 READ IN NEW MEXICO THEATRE ONLY  
 UNIVERSAL PICTURES  
 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
 © 1992 UNIVERSAL PICTURES, INC.



COMING SOON TO A THEATRE NEAR YOU

MARY RIEPMA ROSS  
**FILM THEATER**  
 Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery; University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
 12th & R Streets; Lincoln, NE 68588-0302; Film Information Phone: 402/472-5353

Thursday, September 10 through Sunday, September 13  
 Screenings 7 & 9 p.m. Daily  
 Matinees on Saturdays at 1 & 3 p.m. and Sundays at 3 & 5 p.m.

**CARTOON FUN SO ADVANCED, IT'S PRE-HYSTERICAL!**

17 PREMIERES!  
 ALL NEW!

Animation from around the world!

**UNL STUDENTS WITH I.D. ONLY \$ 4**

... with the support of the Nebraska Arts Council.