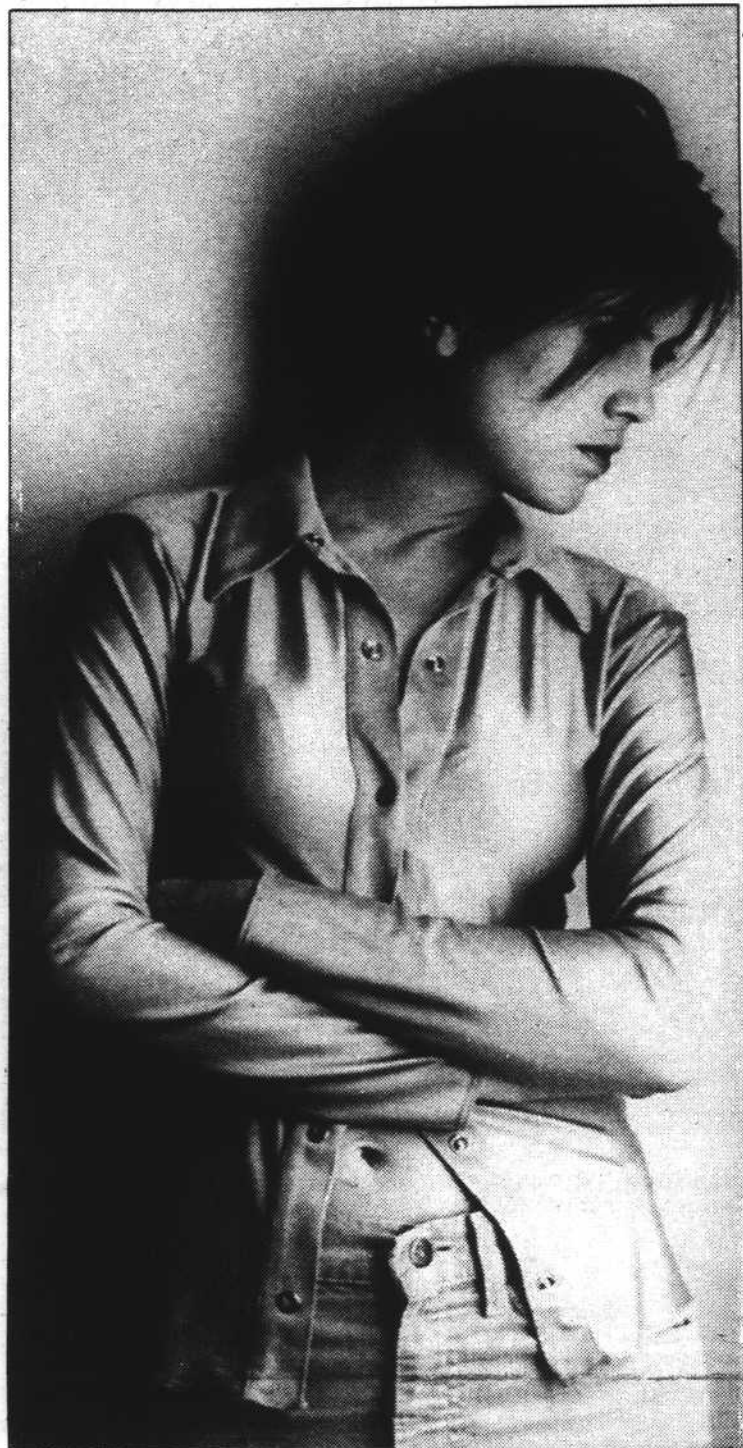


Hatfield breaking new ground



Courtesy of Atlantic Records

Juliana Hatfield, known for her work with Blake Babies and the Lemonheads and now a solo artist, plays Omaha's Ranch Bowl Saturday.

By Jeff Randall
Music Critic

After breaking out of bands such as the Blake Babies and the Lemonheads, it seems Juliana Hatfield has had yet another mold to escape.



In the past, she has been seen by many as a gifted songwriter, but not a serious rock 'n' roller. But "Only Everything," Hatfield's latest release, rights this misconception.

This album is a rollercoaster blend of melodic, lighthearted pop and fiery, fast-moving rock.

The first track, "What a Life," rockets off with a hard and speedy guitar line, jumping into an anthem-like progression. Hatfield's high and airy voice sharply contrasts the musical lead, cutting through the guitar heavy sound with beautiful simplicity.

And at the same time, songs such as "Live On Tomorrow" revel in the musical light, trading in distortion pedals for clear and anything but fuzzy guitar noise.

Hatfield's sounds may change throughout this album and her others, but her commitment to strong songwriting has never faltered. Whether exploring topics such as heartbreak, love, anger, jealousy or the definition of beauty, she always maintains a high standard.

Music fans will get the chance to witness that standard in action Saturday night, when Hatfield takes the stage at Omaha's Ranch Bowl.

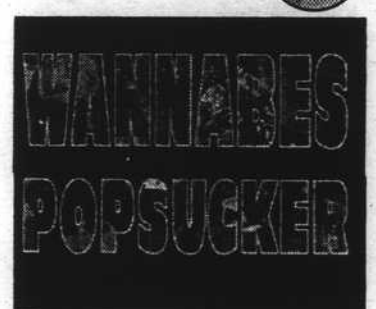
Opening for Hatfield will be John Doe, former singer and guitarist for Los Angeles punk band X.

Tickets for the all-ages show are \$9.75, \$11.75 on the day of the show. The music will begin at 9 p.m.

Music Reviews



The Wannabes
"Popsucker"
Deja Disc
Grade: B



"Popsucker" proves that even wannabes occasionally have talent.

The album title is a good description for the sound — pop-like, yet grungy. The guitar is anguished, but still a solid rock sound. Best of all, it crunches. Not just the guitar, but the bass and the drums. Maybe even the vocals.

The Wannabes are a rock band based around adrenaline, the rush, the high and the frenzy. Strangely enough, it's hard to imagine these boys as being anything but personable, a garage band made up of guys you knew in high school.

"Spotless," the opening track, is a good sampling of what the album is like. The Telecaster guitar is an energetic jam, the drums are a good thumping beat and Jennings' voice is somewhere between scream and croon.

Part of the fun of the Wannabes is in the twisted sound and feel-good atmosphere. With songs like "Boxing Manual" and "Ex Girlfriend Record Review" (which, if you pay attention to the lyrics, will have you chuckling), one has to crack a smile somewhere in the album.

"Would You Care To Dance" is a bit unnecessary though. A third of the way into the album, the drums start rolling over and over

again, the guitars squelching in bad noise (as opposed to good noise) and the pathetic voice calling "Would you care to dance" will make you glad it's only 40 seconds long.

Everyone on the record can play, though, which is what holds the album together. "Coffee Can" opens with a quirky standout bass line, a rarity in the days where everyone wants to be a guitarist.

Add in the fact that you have two '70s covers, "Don't Bring Me Down" by Jeff Lynne as well as a variation (which is an understatement) of Fleetwood Mac's "The Chain," and you start to wonder about these guys.

The Wannabes have got a good name for their band, because while they're pretty good, they still aren't creme-de-la-crop material. They lack that coherent spark to make them excellent, rather than good. That doesn't mean they aren't worth a listen, just that it's no record breaker.

— Cliff A. Hicks

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strange days

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