

Music Reviews

Luna
"Penthouse"
Elektra
Grade: B-

Luna always has had the subtle, smooth sounds of a relaxed band, one that doesn't get too excited about anything. Mellow is its middle name.

It's also got a lot of talent. Led by Dean Wareham (of Galaxie 500), the band also includes Justin Harwood (of the Chills).

Still, "Penthouse" doesn't catch all that much. The soft tunes still continue with that lounge rock sound. It's almost as if the band didn't put its heart into it.

Songs like "Chinatown" and "Moon Palace" lack anything a person can latch onto. If Luna were just playing and Wareham weren't singing, it'd come off much better.

But there are some great tracks, especially the hidden "Bonnie and Clyde," which is by far the best song on the compact disc.

Tom Verlaine also plays some of the guitars on the disc, but he doesn't hold a candle to the guitar work contributed by the late, great Sterling Morrison on Luna's last record, "Bewitched."

Overall, "Penthouse" is the sophomore slump, even though it's the band's third album. Maybe next time it'll try a hook or two.

—Cliff Hicks

Craig Chaquico
"Acoustic Planet"
Higher Octave Music
Grade: A+

I can't believe I just gave an A+ to a New Age record, but I'll be damned if this isn't the best guitar music I've heard in years.

Craig Chaquico (pronounced cha-KEY-so) was the lead singer/songwriter/guitarist for Jefferson Starship. In other words, he's been in the music business for a long time. "Acoustic Planet" is his second instrumental album. It is the follow-up to "Acoustic Highway," and I may have to get that now.

Almost 50 minutes of blissful music, including plenty of guitars, both acoustic and electric, comprises the nine-song album.

The sound is nothing short of revolutionary, defining a trademark tone for Chaquico. It carries as a sound for the night, driving underneath starlight across vast expanses.

One of the songs, "Just One World," was launched on a NASA rocket as part of the Space Ark program. If an alien life form finds this recording, it will know what guitar music should be.

I only can hope that somehow he composes an "Acoustic Galaxy" to top it.

—Cliff Hicks

Toys ignite childhood memories, attract tractor collectors to show

By Patrick Hambrecht
Senior Reporter

Sunday's 10th annual "Husker Toy and Buckle Show" might have been more specifically titled the "Thousands of John Deere Tractor Toys and Buckle Show," because that is almost entirely what it was.

Scores of green and yellow miniature farm machinery filled the state fairground's Agriculture Hall, enough to sow and harvest a tiny crop across UNL's City Campus. Children got in free, and it was just as well — there were at least three or four adults for every child present.

Nine-year-old Ben Roth stood behind a crowd of adults for 5 minutes, waiting to buy a toy chain saw.

"It's cool," Roth said. "I'll prob-

ably go out and try to cut down fake trees."

A space opened up in the mob long enough for Roth to ask the price of the toy.

"35 dollars," the dealer said. Roth nodded and carefully placed the toy back on the table before walking away.

The show's organizer, Pat Bartek, said the old toys helped collectors remember their youth.

"This is a collectible, male-oriented toy show for all ages," Bartek said. "Everyone remembers their toys from carefree days, when they were kids, when they didn't have to worry about so much. These toys are a way to escape."

But toy tractors also had a deeper significance to many of the collectors,

said Janice Samuelson, a toy dealer. "Tractors are very special to farm families," Samuelson said. "They'll collect a toy tractor for every tractor they farmed with."

Samuelson's husband, Wayne, said the toy tractor community continued to grow, despite setbacks.

"Tractor collecting is still growing, but we lose a collector every few months, heart attacks or something," Wayne Samuelson said. "I've lost two or three good friends this year."

"But there's always new blood interested in tractors."

Community is the most important thing to Harold Kavalier, a toy dealer.

"These people are good people," Kavalier said. "They're honest. I take checks from people from all over and never check them."

'A Trilogy in Fiber' showcases original styles of winter clothes

By Patrick Hambrecht
Senior Reporter

Furniture and wool coats can be found in a number of art galleries. They're usually found in the gallery's offices and closets, however, and not on display.

But these items and several others serve as the centerpieces of the "Trilogy in Fiber" show at UNL's Textile, Clothing and Design Gallery on East Campus.

The displayed fabrics challenge in exciting and irreverent ways, mixing glitter and cosmopolitan fashion with currently popular rural styles.

The exhibit features the work of three accomplished UNL graduates. They are: Bonnie Luckey, Liz Shea

and Margaret Warner. Each artist manifests a distinctive attitude about textiles that shapes her individual work.

From "Reefer Madness" to "Glitz on the Prairie," Warner's sense of irony and humor is apparent. Her charming scarves and parkas mix Native American and other ingenious styles with glitter and posh appeal.

With multicultural pomp and dazzling hominess, Warner's visions are a scream, and must be seen to be believed.

The centerpiece of Luckey's pieces is a gorgeous wool Windbreaker called "Windows Coat II." This modern Joseph's coat was computer designed and hand-dyed to display a rainbow of warm colors in a subtle, elegant way.

Seamed with Ultrasuede, it begs the observer to try it on.

Shea's wall hangings have a distinctly exotic feel, combining Middle-Eastern and Celtic influences into smooth yet spiked and jagged interlocking lines, like the woven backbones of a few impossible beasts.

Shea described her work as "organic," saying her chief inspiration came from the "the subtleness of nature." The description fits, especially if the world's diverse but fluid cultures can be counted as part of nature's handiwork.

"A Trilogy in Fiber" is housed on the second floor of the Home Economics building at 35th and Holdrege streets, and will be on display through Feb. 15.

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