



Brooks Hitt

Alternative music label fading fast

Alternative music is past the time when it earned its name. Perhaps the first and definitely the longest running alternative band, R.E.M., has since altered its musical style to sell records. And any respectable bands that could possibly be classified as alternative—Fugazi, for example—run from the stigmatizing.

Yes, alternative, as it originated, is dead.

The music originated with bands on independent labels that chose not to take the typical route of punk rock.

The name alternative itself means change, something other than the norm. But with the realization that mass amounts of money could be made by playing this "new" style of music, all of the integrity that it ever had left.

Nirvana started the ball rolling with its landmark "Nevermind" album. This album was revolutionary, as it forever changed the face of popular music. Nirvana was unusual for a pop band. It was not trying to sell millions of records, but managed to do it anyway.

R.E.M. was one of the first alternative bands, but even it has lost sight of reality. How "alternative" is charging \$40 a ticket to see the band in concert? That sounds like Pink Floyd, not a grass-roots, down-to-earth, alternative band. No sooner was Kurt Cobain's blood dry, than Michael Stipe began to recall their "close" relationship. Anything for a dollar.

The biggest joke is Pearl Jam. It is the single biggest Nirvana coattail rider, and it's a band made for the radio. The members downplay their corporate tendencies by not promoting their albums. But if your albums nearly go platinum on their first day of release, not much promotion is needed. Oh sure, I forgot they were in that tough battle with Ticketmaster, fighting for all their fans. But even when using a different ticket agency, their tickets were more than \$20. If they don't want their fans to pay so much, they shouldn't play in monstrous auditoriums with massive sound systems. But then Eddie's voice probably wouldn't sound as good.

I'm curious whether all the radio stations that have suddenly sprung up will disappear just as fast. These stations are just like any other "teenybopper" station. They play songs that are in the "buzz bin" at least once an hour, having no sense of musical history, and rarely introduce anything risqué. Their set lists are just one big commercial for major record labels. Alternative is nothing special or provocative; it's just pop for the '90s.

The fact that alternative music is pop, is of little consequence. It's the fact that the artists act like the music is not money-driven garbage, when most of it is. The music being released does not inspire thought or serve any purpose other than pop's typical role of songs to sing in the shower.

Maybe you can think of this quasi-alliteration next time one of those pop tunes enters your thoughts. Majors make millions making alternative music mainstream.

Hitt is a sophomore physics major and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.

Socially relevant



Matt Miller/DN

Wendy Jane Bantam's art will be displayed at the Berkholder Project, 719 P St., throughout the month of March. Bantam is trying to organize a mural created by members of the Lincoln community.

Artist wants to create group-painted mural

By Patrick Hambrecht
Senior Reporter

Lincoln artists need to take immediate steps to overcome the elitist nature of the local art scene and galleries, painter Wendy Jane Bantam said.

Bantam's own art is being displayed until the end of the month at the Burkholder Project, 719 P St.

Often "the only people who know about your art being shown at a gallery are the people who have money," Bantam said.

Bantam has tried to make art more socially relevant in Lincoln by beginning a community-access art exhibit and organizing a new group-

"Childhood memories are very crisp, clear and clean. They have become a language that form a part of who I am now."

WENDY JANE BANTAM
artist

Painted mural, she said.

She is trying to find a building where all members of the community can display their art for the month. Visitors would be encouraged to attend with offers of free food and live music, she said.

Similarly, Bantam is also trying

to organize an art mural where all members of the community would be invited to create the theme and then paint the finished product, as she did during a community art festival in Lawrence, Kan.

"There are a lot of good buildings for murals down in the

Haymarket," Bantam said.

But stringent building codes and a wary business community make it hard to spruce up the downtown area, Bantam said.

Bantam was inspired to art activism by a mural painter she knew who moonlighted as a social graffiti artist.

The graffiti artist would make stencils of the images he wanted to paint, then spray-paint the images quickly on a public wall or sidewalk and flee.

By using guerrilla techniques, the artist was able to make statements to the community that would other-

See BANTAM on 13

Offbeat comedy explores pornography

By Brian Priesman
Theater Critic

Pornography. That's what "Miss Autobody," the latest production from UNL's Theatre and Dance department, is all about. Well, not completely. "Miss Autobody" also explores the roles that gender plays in society.

Did I also mention that it's a campy, comic musical?

"Miss Autobody" is a fun romp through the town of Pomponville, as the mayor prepares to open his newest bar, The Sex Complex.

Unfortunately for him, some of the town's residents have a problem

with The Sex Complex and the image it presents of women.

Thrown into the mix is the town's new auto garage, Miss Autobody, owned and operated entirely by very feminist females.

That's the basic story of "Miss Autobody," an offbeat comedy that was originally presented by the acclaimed French-Canadian comedy troupe "Les Folles Alliees."

What makes this production work is the fact that it's all women. The seven-member cast plays all the roles, including the men. But this also leads to the piece's greatest fault.

By using all women, the production, at times, resorts to almost preaching about the harmful effects of pornography on women and society.

Leading the cast is the sprightly Kristi Lee Covey as Pomponville's mayor, Maurice Malo. Covey is ex-

cellent as the chauvinistic-pig who feels that pornography is good for the economy and, therefore, democratic.

His wife, played with zest by Lori Norcia, tries to support her husband, but eventually admits that his obsession with pornography is wrong.

Other standouts include Becky Key as the strange Pandora Red, a slightly psychotic feminist who helps run the garage; Michelle Eckley as the spunky waitress Jeanine; and Kristin Hensley as Timothy Tremblay, a car-obsessed, hormone-crazy hot-rodder with a "little thing knocking around in his engine."

"Miss Autobody" is a thought-provoking comedy that forces the audience to look at the effects of pornography realistically.

"Miss Autobody" runs Tuesday through Saturday in the Studio The-

The Facts

Play: "Miss Autobody"
Stars: Kristi Lee Covey, Becky Key, Kristin Hensley
Director: Karen Libman
Company: UNL Theatre and Dance
Grade: B-
Five Words: Pornography on a campy parade

atre at the Temple Building, 12th and R streets, with performances at 8 each night.

Tickets are available from the Theatre and Dance Department Box Office. Admission is \$6 for students, \$7 for faculty, staff and senior citizens, and \$9 for the public.