



**Cliff Hicks**

## Acoustic groove hits Ranch Bowl

Those of you who have read my writings with any regularity (Mom, put your hand down) may recall that last semester I wrote about today's lack of acoustic music.

I stand corrected.

A week ago, I sat in Omaha's Ranch Bowl and listened to some of the most beautiful music I have heard in years. Sean Kelly of The Samples, from Boulder, Colo., was playing acoustically.

In a world surrounded by loud, distorted rock, acoustic music finds itself lacking an audience, and that's really depressing.

Bands like Bush, GreenDay, Pearl Jam and Alice In Chains continue to sell tons of records with blaring guitars and screaming, squeelchy voices.

Maybe I'm crazy, but I think there's more than enough angry music in the world for now. Let's get back to the beauty of life.

I want to thank Sean. Not only was he great to talk to before the show (and gave me the royal treatment), he put on one hell of a show.

Sean and Rob Somers (his friend and backup guitarist) played some of the most beautiful music I have heard in as long as I can remember.

The show ran about 80 minutes, and I wished it could have gone on forever. I was singing with the gentle melodies of "On The Losing End of Distance." During "Stillwater" and "The Last Drag," I was too entranced to do anything but listen.

The Ranch Bowl wasn't too packed, which was nice. There would have been nothing wrong if the room had been full, but there were chairs put out for us and we could sit and enjoy the music without getting tired of standing.

The main thing was the music, though. It wasn't loud, harsh, grating and everything else that the music I hear on the radio is.

Music is a thing of beauty. Yes, there is beauty that can be found in the wailing, crunching guitars that inhabit the airwaves now, but consider this analogy.

There is a pile of diamonds and a sapphire. Everyone gets to take a stone from the pile and I am first. I'll take the sapphire because everyone else has a diamond, and I'm the only one who has something that isn't common, value aside.

All forms of music are valid, but acoustic music is too much of a rarity in today's world. If I ran the world, there would be acoustic musicians playing good pop music of their own on the airwaves regularly.

Maybe I'm the only one who feels this way, though. I couldn't get a date to the show (I even did what Sean told me to and said I was with the band) and, judging from the crowd size, most everybody else there had the same luck.

Still, this is the time when everyone gets the fair share of air time, and I think it's about time we get more bands who are willing to play acoustically.

If you know of a band that plays good acoustic music, please mail me a copy of its stuff courtesy of the DN. I honestly won't believe it exists until I hear it.

Thanks to Sean and here's to hoping acoustic music will never die.

Hicks is a freshman news-editorial and English major and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.

## '...finally'



Photo courtesy of Discovery Records

Too Much Joy (l-r: Tim Quirk, William Wittman, Tommy Vinton and Jay Blumenfeld) will single-handedly conquer the stage at Mudslide Slims, 1418 O St., Tuesday night.

## Too Much Joy 'owns' the stage

By Cliff Hicks  
Staff Reporter

They were talking about oral sex in movie theaters long before Alanis Morissette was. They were sarcastic way before bands like Pavement and GreenDay learned how to smirk.

### Concert Preview



They are Too Much Joy and they will "own" Mudslide Slims' stage Tuesday night.

"You have to understand, the place may own the stage, but we rent it," said Tim Quirk, lead vocalist for TMJ. "For the 90 minutes or whatever that we're on stage, it's my stage. I own it."

TMJ is touring in support of its new album "...finally." The title may seem fitting to fans of the band,

since TMJ's last album, "Mutiny," was released in 1992, four years ago.

When asked where the band had been for the past few years, Quirk responded with a dry chuckle. "In the pits of bitterness and frustration and occasionally poking our heads out for a few moments of optimism and joy."

In those four years, a lot happened. First, the band changed labels. "Mutiny" was released on Giant Records, and "...finally" was released on Discovery Records.

"It had everything to do with the sales and general music business scumminess," Quirk said.

Once TMJ's contract came up for renewal with Giant, the label offered to renew with changed terms, Quirk said. TMJ refused and left the label, hoping to be picked up by another relatively soon.

Instead, TMJ found itself without a label for a bit longer than

expected.

"We were damaged goods. It was like we were in medieval times and we'd already been married. No one wanted to (expletive) us, which is strange, because the music industry thrives on (expletive)-ing bands," he said.

"We could've put out the new record at any time on a dinky little label, but we really wanted it to be in malls."

Besides changing labels, the band also changed bass players. Sandy Smallens, the original bass player, picked up a job at Atlantic Records and eventually left the band.

"For a little while he was at Atlantic and in TMJ," Quirk said. "It became unworkable, trying to play shows and schedule rehearsals. Sandy eventually said, 'I don't get the thrill I used to.' It was the proverbial split."

See TMJ on 10

## Crowd unmoved by Cajun beat

By Lane Hickenbottom  
Music Critic

When BeauSoleil took the stage again for an encore performance, it was the first time the Cajun musical group's music made sense.



### Concert Review

It was proved Saturday night that Cajun music belongs nowhere near the Lied Center. The upbeat style of Michael Doucet and BeauSoleil be-

longs in a place where dancing and feet stomping is a likely probability.

After two sets of music, BeauSoleil left the stage to a half-hearted ovation. Returning for an encore, Doucet told the crowd to keep standing. Finally.

The members of America's premiere Cajun band were for the most part peppy and upbeat, except for Acadian accordion player, Jimmy Breaux, who didn't move a muscle or crack a smile the entire night. Just getting paid appeared to satisfy him.

The Lied Center audience members associated best with Breaux—they would have rather been trapping alligators in the mosquito-in-

fest bayous of southern Louisiana than stand for the duration of two encore songs.

The music was indeed great. Doucet can play a mean fiddle, and the rest of the group knew what it was doing as well. Only the groups would have been better to see at an open-air, open-floor, not-so-conservative venue.

All in all, the night was like going to a Bush concert where the vast majority of concertgoers were on a field trip from a retirement home. There were a few among the audience who were happy to be there, but for the large remainder, BeauSoleil was just too damn loud.

## 'Substitute' predictable, lacks plot

By Gerry Beltz  
Film Critic

It ain't "Lean On Me." Not even close.

On the heels of such "classroom-feelgood" films as "Lean On Me" and "Dangerous Minds," director Robert Mandel takes a different approach with "The Substitute."

No rewards. No candy bars. Just the subtle things in life, such as a wristlock and dislocated fingers.

Shale (Tom Berenger) is a soldier of fortune with a conscience, so he is having a problem finding work for himself and his team.

His schoolteacher girlfriend, Jane Hetzko (Diane Venora), is attacked and hospitalized on the order of gang leader Juan Lucas (Marc Anthony), one of her students.

Shale forges teaching credentials and goes after the gang members responsible for her pain, but soon finds himself hip-deep in drugs and corruption, as well as dealing with the cop-turned-principal-running-for-mayor Claude Rollé (Ernie Hudson).

Oooooo. The tension. I can't (yawn) light it.

Anyhow, the film boils down to armed, stupid gangsters against Shale and his band of better-armed testosterone junkies battling it out in the halls of the high school.

Predictable? Somewhat. Fun? You betcha.

This film also has more B-movie stars than you can shake a dead rhino's butt at. Cliff DeYoung ("F/X") shows up as a weenie ... well, he's just a weenie, and Glenn Plummer ("Speed") plays the idealistic teacher who wants to help the kids and wholeheartedly believes in the administration.

(Yep, he's got "Star Trek Security Officer" written all over his body.)

It's surprising this flick didn't go straight to video, considering the simplicity and execution of the plot, but throwing it into theaters on the heels of films like "Dangerous Minds" was a good marketing strategy.

Berenger always has fun in the tough-guy roles, and this role amounted to a lighthearted version of his role in "Platoon," complete with the battle scars.

Director Robert Mandel ("F/X," "School Ties") keeps the action going, while providing some laughs and drama at the right times, and sometimes even overlapping them.

A worthwhile effort overall, but not worth more than a matinee price. "The Substitute" shouldn't be ignored.

### The Facts

**Film:** "The Substitute"

**Stars:** Tom Berenger, Ernie Hudson, Diane Venora

**Director:** Robert Mandel

**Rating:** R (language, violence, brief nudity)

**Grade:** B-

**Five Words:** Mercenary goes back to school