

state

OF THE ARTS

By Cliff Hicks

Musicians break cruel stereotypes

A little more than a year ago, I was just another guy going to concerts like anyone else. I could've been any face in the crowd, looking up at a band, watching the guys with the laminates go to the places where guys with laminates go.

Well, a year has passed since those days and now I'm one of the guys with the laminates, going the places where it lets me go.

You know what the common misconception about rock stars is? A lot of people, when I tell them that I hung out with Sean Kelly of the Samples in his trailer, or that I bought the guys from Too Much Joy a drink, think that it must be weird meeting rock stars.

Sort of, but not really. Musicians are people like everyone else. They have hopes, wishes, desires and dreams like the rest of us. I haven't met a band yet who said, "Oh well, we're trying to stay small."

But musicians are nice people, which is what a lot of people seem to miss out on.

When I was at the Sean Kelly (the lead guitarist/vocalist for the Samples, who was on an acoustic tour by himself) concert, they didn't have to let me try out the guitar amp for them. That's what roadies are for, but for a few minutes, I was on an empty stage playing a guitar to an empty house, and got a little echo of fame.

Sean was a prime example of how great musicians make friends — they just treat people how they themselves would want to be treated.

Part of it, I suppose, just a bunch of wise choices on my part. I've never tried to interview a band who had a bad reputation in dealing with the press. I also try not to be too cumbersome to the band before or after the show. If they invite me over for an hour or two, great. If not, I'll live.

And, in addition to that, maybe I am still a little wide-eyed by the whole business. I'm not going about it with a light foot, though, and I'm not afraid to ask tough questions. Still, I love that I'm now the guy who gets to see it all, walking around wearing a laminate.

So if you're asking if I like working in music, the answer is a definitive yes. The people are nice, the music is great if you know how to pick it, and it can be a lot of fun. Overall, I love the job.

Plus, when someone asks you "Are you with the band?" you can just smile and show them your laminate, and the world will become a more interesting place for you... or, since I'm the one with the laminate, for me.

Hicks is a sophomore news-editorial and English major as well as a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.



DAN WILSON, lead singer of Semisonic, jams during Edgifest Sunday.

JAY CALDERON/DN

Edgifest saved by Semisonic

By Cliff Hicks
Music Critic

Despite a little rain, a little cool air, a couple of cancellations and a very gray sky, Edgifest went as planned... mostly.

Like any festival, there were performances to remember and those some of us would much rather forget. Edgifest was no exception.

The bad performances were, thankfully, few. Reacharound completely failed to strike any kind of resonance with most of the audience and just lacked luster. They tried, but they simply couldn't connect.

Either the crowd loved or hated

Goldfinger. I hated them. Not only were they as obnoxious as possible, they missed chords, were a bit flat and, to be quite honest, sucked. After being insulted enough, I left to go get a sausage from a booth.

Mediocre performances made up a lot of the festival. Seven Mary Three and The Verve Pipe just sort of played, not poorly, but nothing to write home about. Local H, who also put on a so-so performance, opened the show. They were so on again, off again, though, it didn't stick.

Blue Moon Ghetto would've been a lot better if the amps had been set towards acoustic, but it wasn't clear enough to enjoy.

But there were two great... no, fan-

tastic performances.

The Refreshments put on a fantastic set with their southwestern-tinged rock. They were there to have a good time and share with everyone, and I think the goal was accomplished. They were the second best performance of the show.

Nothing was going to stop Semisonic from stealing the show, though. They played second and were untoppable the entire festival. Their incredible power-pop was one of the best performances the Midwest has had in a while. Their drummer said they'd be back later this fall, and I'll fight anyone for tickets.

Edgifest was good, but not great. Oh well, there's always next year.

Hootie tour makes stop in Omaha

By Cliff Hicks
Staff Reporter

For the first time in two years, Hootie and the Blowfish will return to Omaha for a concert Oct. 26 at the Civic Auditorium.

The band's first album, "Cracked Rear View," has been certified platinum 13 times. The group has been nominated for two Grammys and won them both.

The band is on tour to promote their second album, "Fairweather Johnson." It will be touring the rest of this year.

In addition to their two albums, Hootie and the Blowfish have also contributed tracks to "Econimium: A Tribute To Led Zeppelin," the soundtrack for "White Man's Burden" and two tracks on "Sweet Relief II," which feature Nanci Griffith on backing vocals.

When Hootie and the Blowfish were last in Omaha, they were opening for Toad the Wet Sprocket at the Orpheum. This time, they are the main band.

They Might Be Giants, who've enjoyed underground success for many years with singles like "Particle Man," "Ana Ng," "Istanbul (Not Constantinople)" and "Birdhouse In Your Soul" will open for them.

Tickets go on sale Sept. 21 for \$28 plus service charge.

Lied Center

'Jam On The Groove' makes hip-hop happen, refutes myths of conventional dance culture

By Liza Holtmeier
Theater critic

"We're gonna turn y'all into hip-hop freaks!" the dancers of "Jam On The Groove" said at the beginning of their Friday performance at the Lied Center. Through the troop's unlimited energy and incredible technique, they accomplished that goal.

The energy level was high as audience members entered the theater to pounding bass lines being mixed by a DJ at center stage. As the house lights went down, clapping and hollering that lasted throughout the evening began.

The show started with one dancer setting the mood for the night by explaining that the group was there to dispel the myths about hip-hop culture. He talked about the importance of the drum, the progression of hip-hop, and the hip-hop vocabulary.

Humor that could be traced throughout the show first appeared when one dancer exclaimed, "What's missin'?" Oh, yeah. The graffiti. At this point, the back curtains opened to reveal a huge graffiti mural that said "Jam On The Groove."

The first number, "Concrete Jungle," began with one dancer creep-



ing on the stage basked in green and white light. While he played drums amid animal snarls and growls, his companions joined him on the stage.

As they danced the number became a commentary on the need for people to express themselves through hip-hop and the repressions and violence often issued by the police force in their community.

As the evening progressed, the agility and acrobatic ability of the dancers was constantly impressive. Flips, head spins, handstands and turns brought waves of applause, while the dancers used all levels of the stage.

The dancers moved smoothly from

diagonals to circles and from groups to duets and solos, all the time exhibiting their capacity to synchronize while retaining their individual style and technique. Synchronization was especially visible during "Moments." In this piece, the dancers appeared to be one wave of unified bodies.

The creativity and humor of the choreography also was amazing. "Jam On The Groove" took the duet to new heights in "Shadow" and "Puppet." In "Shadow," two dancers, one behind a screen and one in front, moved in synchronization until they broke into a comic round of shadow boxing. In "Puppet," two dancers pulled each

other's "strings" to make the other dance.

The ability to incorporate hip-hop with other styles of movements and dance was exhibited in pieces like "Spanish Harlem" and "Shaolin Temple." The latter combined karate-style moves with hip-hop. "Spanish Harlem," which contained the most creative choreography in the show, integrated Latin American dance with hip-hop. This piece also allowed the female dancers to let the true grace of hip-hop shine through.

Calvin Klein, the international tour sponsor of the group, provided the costumes for the show. The costumes' diversity ranged from Spanish style to 1930s fashion while retaining the distinctive hip-hop look. The graffiti murals truly enhanced the overall aesthetic value of the performance. In "Who's the Mac," the Fun Bar mural seemed to capture all the emotions the dancers were expressing on stage.

But most importantly the dancers were truly enjoying themselves. Their facial expressions and energy level exhibited the pride they felt in their work and gave the audience the desire to join them on stage. The true accomplishment of the "Jam On The Groove" dancers was their ability to turn a crowd of all ages into a group of hip-hop freaks.