



PSYCHOBILLY VETERANS The Cramps, still together after more than 20 years, bring their Southern-influenced rock to the Ranch Bowl Friday. PHOTO COURTESY OF EPITAPH

## Musical Midol

*The Cramps take inside track on tour*

BY BRET SCHULTE  
Senior Reporter

### Concert Preview

Lux Interior, lead singer of The Cramps, doesn't understand why people accuse his group of misogyny. After all, cramming his feet into a size 12 woman's stiletto heel hurts no one but himself.

"We are so far from being misogynist," Interior said. "We're helping to liberate people from a lot of things — from their uptight inhibitions and their other problems. People for the past 20 years have come up to us and said, 'You've saved my life.'"

With songs like "Naked Girl Falling Down the Stairs," "Swing the Blue-Eyed Rabbit" and "Like a Bad Girl Should," The Cramps have always countered accusations of misogyny with proclamations of sexual liberation and typical rock 'n' roll woman worship. Besides, Interior says, the band's lead guitarist is a woman, and his wife.

"People find it unusual that I am in a band and I write songs about girls," he said. "But that has been going on forever."

Granted, but unlike some other male rockers whose lyrics typically revolve around breaking up, getting

back together or gushing about the eye color of their beloved, The Cramps are curious about a different side to females — like the inside. On "What's Inside a Girl," Interior muses, accompanied with frothing guitar and pounding drums, about the composition of the female gender. The group is notorious for its almost always sexualized imagery, which is both shockingly humorous and dark in its explorations of the subversive and recreant.

As Interior says in disbelief, "Because I think women are sexy, I hate them?"

Friday, the Epitaph records recording artists will be trotting its vinyl-tight and female-focused rockabilly act at the Ranch Bowl for an all-ages show.

A notoriously raucous and signature West Coast band, Interior says that Nebraska is familiar ground for The Cramps, which has played Omaha's Ranch Bowl three times in the group's 20 years.

"I remember one time it was really empty when we played there," he said. "But the crowd was really good."

Interior believes that "An

American band" like The Cramps should be embraced anywhere its spiked heels may tread, citing its Southern rock influence and artistic conviction.

### Nothing's shocking

A rock 'n' roll anomaly back in 1976 when it formed in New York, The Cramps delivered rockabilly to most of the world out of its need for punk and love of garage bands of the '50s.

"An amazing amount of rockabilly came out in the '50s," Interior said. "It was all pretty obscure stuff except for a handful of singles; this music was being forgotten."

Since the late '70s, Interior, guitarist Poison Ivy and a host of rotating bassists and drummers have simultaneously impressed and shocked pop music culture with their sexually charged punk rock, ingrained infatuation for trailer-culture tack, and callous rock 'n' roll bravado — a legacy that, according to Interior, is questionable at best.

"Rock 'n' roll, like art, is supposed to shock people out of their boring, lazy, dull, stupid existences,"

Please see CRAMPS on 10

## Second 'Kombat' film just plain horrible

*Movie lacks ability to entertain*

BY GERRY BELTZ  
Film Critic

Okey dokey, boys and girls, today's lesson is "movies that never should have been made," and our guest is ... "Mortal Kombat: Annihilation!" Let's have a round of forced applause for this piece of cinematic swill.

Now, the original "Mortal Kombat" film wasn't exactly a candidate for Mensa graduates either, but at least it had some raw entertainment value if you took it down to the bones. There were actually a few humorous spots, as well as some decent fight scenes.

But, boys and girls, sadly, the new one is just ... nothing. It picks up right from where the other one left off and goes absolutely nowhere.

And it does it so quickly! Maybe that is the one good thing we can all say about this film! It has no point whatsoever, and it hits that point faster than a horny hummingbird's heartbeat.

Our five heroes from the original — Liu Kang, Sonya Blade, Kitana and Johnny Cage — have returned to Earth and are celebrating when bigger, badder bad guy Shao Khan shows up with a bajillion ninja wannabes and some new faces (if you don't play the video game).

These surprises include a satyr, a four-armed beast-woman, and Sindel, who just happens to be Kitana's mom.

### The Facts

Title: "Mortal Kombat: Annihilation"  
Stars: Robin Shou, Brian Thompson, James Remar, Talisa Soto  
Director: John Leonetti  
Rating: PG-13 (video-game violence)  
Grade: D-  
Five Words: Festering, rotten, pathetic, ridiculous garbage.

(Two more surprises for the audience — first, James Remar takes over the role of thunder god Rayden, formerly played by master thespian Christopher Lambert. The second surprise? Remar is a worse actor than Lambert, if that can be believed.)

If Shao Khan is not defeated soon, the Earth would fall into a deep, dark despair and succumb to the evil overlord of Shao Khan, yadda yadda yadda ... well, you know the drill — the standard "two worlds merging" garbage where he is the leader of both, blah blah blah.

This movie is a waste of time, space, energy, you name it. The fight scenes are deplorable, and the acting and writing make adult films look like Oscar material. The soundtrack, while designed to get the adrenaline pumping, is an hour of techno-crap not worthy of further mention.

All in all, boys and girls, "Mortal Kombat: Annihilation" can be described with one word: Can you say, "cowpie?"

I knew you could.

