

Writer targets at-risk kids

FRYE from page 9

He went to Havelock businesses and asked for donations, and he put enough money together to pay for a press run. But the day before he printed, he said he freaked out.

"I thought, 'Oh, man. What if I can't pay these people back?'"

But his fears were unfounded — he sold enough copies at Lincoln school libraries to reimburse his investors.

And though the subjects of Frye's books have expanded beyond at-risk youths, his methods of publishing remained the same for his next few novels, despite the intense effort he says it requires.

"I write, edit, typeset and raise the money. Selling them is hard to do," Frye said. "None of these books have been marketed properly."

In Frye's remaining books, his audience expanded from at-risk youths to both younger children and adults. "Squeaker: The Adventures of a Country Mouse" tells of a mouse's escapades during a flash flood.

And "Jason the Fear-Slayer" and "The Jewel Folk" are both fantasy books with wizards, elves and dwarves.

For his next novel, "Stag-Heart

Woods," Frye decided to publish with help from Dageforde Publishing, the company that recently published Dorcas Cavatt's book (proud step-mother of famous Dick).

He said the company does excellent marketing work, which could turn around the usual situation of selling only a thousand copies of a book.

And he has plans for a trilogy and a five-book series both based on an earlier novel. He said series books make more sense to him than compiling a lot into one novel. It's more reader-friendly, something that is important when his main audience is children.

"I don't want to write a book that's that thick, because kids won't read it."

Frye looks forward to a time when he will be able to publish without having to worry about where the money is coming from — when he can be a full-time writer without having to work jobs on the side.

But, the nine-time foster parent said, that doesn't mean his commitment to helping children will stop. It will just change the way he does it.

Instead of working with probation officers and teachers to keep adolescents on track, he can teach through his tales of troubled children finding their ways through difficult times.

New Releases

Sleater-Kinney
"The Hot Rock"
Kill Rock Stars Records
Grade: A

Right away, vocalist/guitarist Corin Tucker's voice draws a line in the sand between fans and non-fans of Sleater-Kinney.

Her voice is a powerful and beautiful instrument, at times sounding like a punk-rock trumpet. It is a demented siren's wail capable of clearing out half the room and hitting pleasure overdrive in the brains of the other half. But her voice is also capable of subtlety, emotion and grace.

Sleater-Kinney's new album, "The Hot Rock," most often emphasizes the latter.

The band's last album, 1997's "Dig Me Out," was one of the best rock albums of the last 10 years. The explosive urgency and emotion in songs such as "Things You Say," and the way the three women made such a huge sound with just a few guitars and some drums made this album matter in ways most rock albums in these lean times don't.

"The Hot Rock" is just a shade less amazing. Tucker has reined in her voice, the guitar textures are much subtler and the hooks don't jump out at you like they did on "Dig Me Out." Sleater-Kinney's emotionally powerful rock rarely cracks a smile, but the

band members sound like they're having fun anyway.

"The Hot Rock" lacks the visceral immediacy of the band's previous work, and takes a few listens to sink in. However, patient listeners will be rewarded immensely.

The album is full of little surprises. The opening song, "Start Together," weaves Tucker's and Carrie Brownstein's guitars in and out of each other, with a slightly more subdued vocal performance from the former. The title track is quiet and pretty and blends Tucker's and Brownstein's voices together, a technique they are using more and more.

"Banned From the End of the World" sounds like "Confusion is Sex"-era Sonic Youth played at 78 rpm. "Burn Don't Freeze" is as poppy as prime Go-Go's and "The Size of Our Love" is a violin-tinged ballad.

Interestingly enough, the songs that sound similar to the last few albums are hidden deep on the second half of the record. "Get Up" sounds like it was recorded at the sessions for "Dig Me Out," "Memorize Your Lines" has an enormously catchy, melodic chorus and "A Quarter to Three" sounds like a more melancholic companion to the last album's "Dance Song 97," complete with cheesy/creepy organ. "Living in Exile" and "One Song for You" showcase drummer Janet Weiss' punk

attack. In fact, Weiss will probably be the unsung heroine of the album. Much will be written about the guitar interplay between Tucker and Brownstein, but Weiss has grown as a musician, too. She is much subtler here than on any of Sleater-Kinney's previous albums or on those of her other band, Quasi. She is an incredible musician who serves the song, not herself.

Sleater-Kinney had to live up to the pressure of following up its brilliant last album, which landed in the top 10 in both the Village Voice and Spin magazine. "Dig Me Out" rates right up there with Nirvana's "Nevermind," Pavement's "Slanted and Enchanted," Liz Phair's "Exile in Guyville" and the Afghan Whigs' "Gentlemen" in the '90s rock pantheon. Like those artists, Sleater-Kinney's music has overcome the hype. Also like those artists, Sleater-Kinney has managed to transcend the often anonymous world of indie rock, in which some bands sound like they would rather be sleeping than playing, while avoiding the bombast and stupidity of stadium rock.

"The Hot Rock" is not an album that reaches out of the speakers and grabs you by the throat. Instead, Sleater-Kinney's new album slowly grows on you until you pleasantly realize it may be the best rock band on the planet.

— Josh Krauter





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Cold War culture seeps into Midwest

SOVIETS from page 9

Not all are screaming posters, but some unique items that have influenced the Red culture can be found. The exhibition includes a number of medals, some of which the state awarded to mothers who had a certain number of children.

"The government used these medals as an incentive," Keane said. "They were really into procreation and wanted their people to have children."

Medals were also given to people

for military, cultural and academic achievements as well.

Other items, such as ball-point pens with Lenin's face on them, show the impact the government had on the people.

The artifacts not only demonstrate the uniqueness of the culture, but also the connections between the Soviet Union and its Western neighbors.

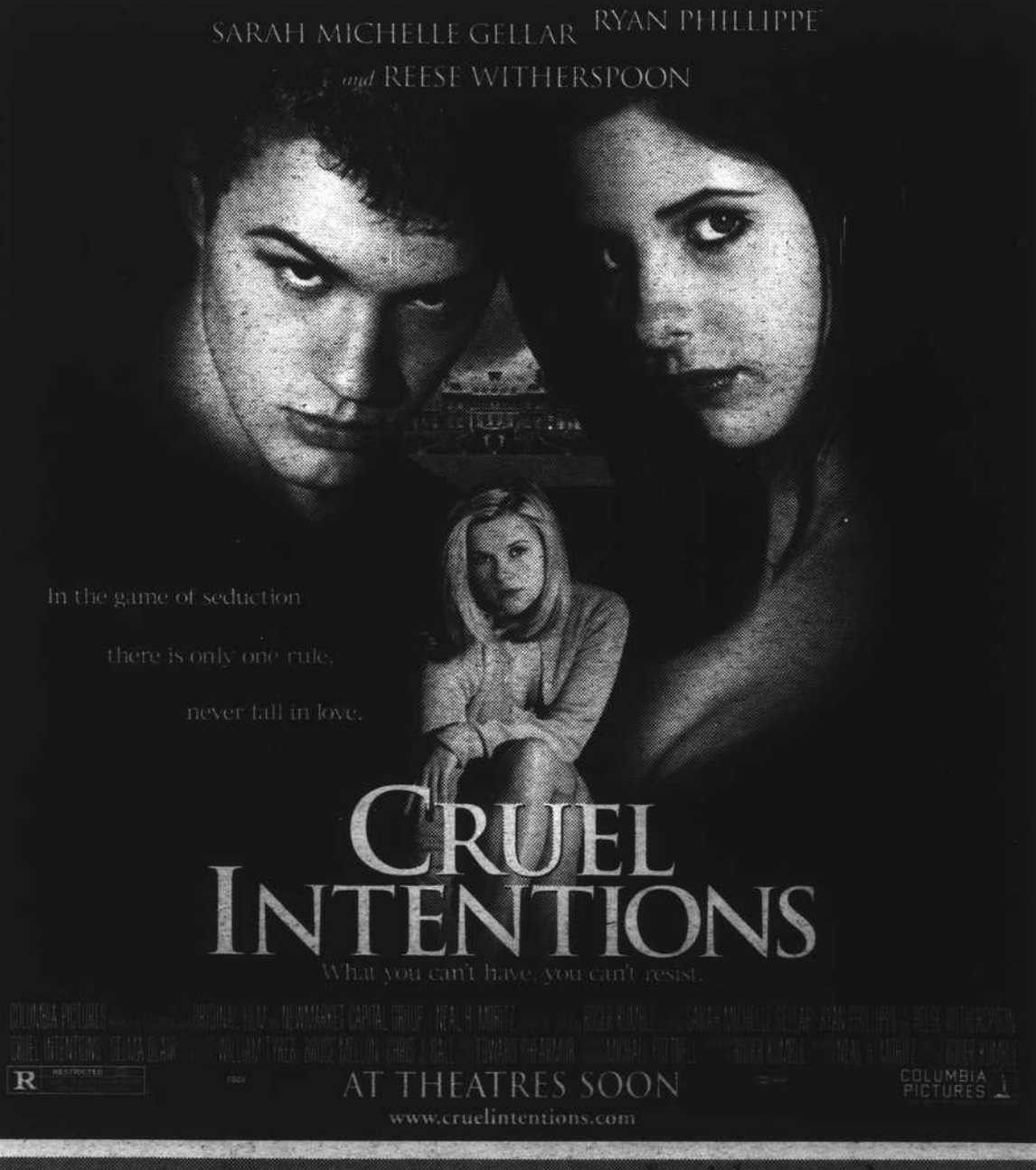
"While many things in the display seem very foreign, there are a lot of things that are similar," said O'Donnell. "I think it is wonderful to

show those differences as well as the similarities."

O'Donnell said there is a Russian military poster with a slogan that is similar to "We Want You" — a close replica of the famous United States image of Uncle Sam's large face.

"Darker Shade of Red" brings together the history of Russia through artifacts that were important to the Soviet people during communism. It gives a personal perspective of the conflicts that terrorized the country, as well as an up-close view of communist life.

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