

'Face' falls flat

BY NEAL OBERMEYER

In the summer of 1999, I found myself admitting something to myself that I never thought would happen. I liked a pop-punk song.

Even worse, it was a pop-punk cover song. Covers by pop-punk bands are perhaps the single most annoying and unclever invention in the pop world today. Yet the perpetrators of these crimes are so convinced of their brilliance that they often make it a mini-career.

But Face to Face's cover of INXS' "Don't Change" was catching on as quite a college radio hit that summer and, much to my surprise, I would listen and enjoy when I heard it.

And then I figured it out - I figured out why I liked the song in spite of my better judgment: it was such a faithful rendition of the original that only the band themselves could have made a more perfect copy. It was just like hearing the INXS version on a bad radio station or something.

Just as punkifying non-punk songs for the sake of punkifying a non-punk song is not clever, doing cover songs simply for the sake of doing cover songs is also not a good idea.

It's a big risk to play someone else's song because if you don't make some statement of originality, you become nothing more than a wedding/prom band. Or Shithead.

It can be done, though, even in the punk world. Local band Rocket FM does a cover of "Don't You Forget About Me" by Simple Minds, and what makes their ver-

Face to Face

tion brilliant is the fact that those guys make it sound like that's how the song was meant to be played.

Face to Face's new album, "Standards and Practices," is a collection of covers originally performed by '80s indie rock legends.

Perhaps intended to be a tribute to the band's influences, the moral of this story is that Face to Face is such a boring and uncreative group that even though they listened to bands like this, they still couldn't be inspired to come up with an idea of their own.

They don't remake songs, they just replay them. This is the repertoire of a pseudo-punk band who has just learned how to play their instruments and think they're cool because they can play Ramones songs.

Other bands covered - cloned - include the aforementioned INXS, the Pogues, the Pixies and Fugazi.

Their version of "Heaven" by the Psychedelic Furs even includes a desperate attempt to replicate Richard Butler's whine.

Perhaps the most daring move was to cover a Sugar song instead of Hüsker Dü. Forsaking old skool Bob Mould for newer is an act of rebellion only a true suburban south-California punk would attempt.

The only reason this album deserves the half-star it receives is because it saves you the time of making a 10-song mixed tape of the originals.

Face to Face "Standards and Practices" Vagrant Records

Gifts ideas abound for Valentine's

BY CASEY JOHNSON

Ideas for Valentine's Day gift can come in many different forms, and UNL students have different ideas about what's best.

Perhaps one of the most traditional gift ideas for Cupid day is jewelry.

Bob Fixter, general manager of Sartor Hamann Jewelers, said college students were one of the most important segments of his store's business.

"Valentine's Day is one of our biggest days of the year, and it is definitely a last minute holiday, especially for men," he said.

While men generally buy women jewelry and lingerie, Audrie Sparks, owner of Priscilla's, said that trend was changing in the

intimate item department.

"Most of my customers are women, although it becomes about 50-50 during Valentine's Day," she said.

Besides those who don't have a significant other, some UNL students won't be celebrating Valentine's Day for one reason or another.

Carly Reese, a senior in business management said that she looks forward to Valentine's Day, but because of circumstances, she won't be able to celebrate on Valentine's Day.

"It's bad that it's (today) because I have night class then, and my boyfriend lives in a different state, so I don't have to worry about that until this weekend," she said.

For those who will be celebrating today,

some prefer to take the simple approach.

Josh Thelen, a senior agribusiness major, said he tried to keep it simple because it was too easy to fall into the predictable realm.

"It's easier to be creative on a spontaneous day that's not supposed to mean anything because then it does," Thelen said.

Some UNL students have chosen to avoid Valentine's Day clichés by doing non-traditional activities for the holiday.

Said Jenny Thomsen, a senior business management major: "I wanted to do something very creative that (my boyfriend) wouldn't be able to guess, and I got him tickets to the Three Doors Down and Fuel concert that's going to be at Pershing because it's partially a present for myself that way, too."

PJ Harvey, Liz Phair part of V-Day downer list

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7. Chris Isaac, "Forever Blue" "Forever Blue" got a second notice in 1999 when "Eyes Wide Shut" was released. And while Chris Isaac will always be remembered rolling around in the sand with a model on the video, "Wicked Game," his lonely, heartbreaking lyrics make him a choice selection for people

doing an extended stay at the heartbreak hotel.

8. Nine Inch Nails, "Pretty Hate Machine" "Something I Can Never Have," "Head Like a Hole," "Sin," where do you start? For beginners, just push 'play' and get ready for a 45 minute scream therapy session.

9. PJ Harvey, "Rid of Me" PJ Harvey has grown more

sophisticated in her music craft, but "Rid of Me" still stands as her most raw, blistering album. Harvey warns a jilted lover that their breakup is going to be a lot messier than he thinks in the title track and on the song, "Dry," she lays down on of the biggest disses to a former lover ever put to tape.

10. Liz Phair, "Exile in Guyville" While many of the artists in

this list rely on grandiose lyrical skills, Liz Phair opts make her voice as detached as possible. "Canary," and "Shatter" are frank, start studies in wilting relationships while "Divorce Song" remains one of the best breakup songs of all time. If you don't know the extent of Phair's philosophy on relationships, look no further than the song, "Fuck and Run."

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Internet provides new horizons for dating

BY ALEXIS EINERSON

A person who's looking for love this Valentine's Day, but doesn't feel like hitting the local bar scene, has some more options.

Now the Internet offers free sites geared solely toward college-age people and dating.

CollegeDating.com and CollegeDates.com are two of many sites for single people ages 17-22.

CollegeDating.com offers personal ads with photos if available and games, including one where you can try out your pick-up lines. There's also a chat room called Club 205 where you can see who you are chatting with.

Dave Hooper, the designer, developer and owner of CollegeDating.com, said he designed his site because he noticed that most dating sites were geared toward older people.

"Occasionally I would do a search through the personals of different dating sites, and the majority of the singles it returned were much older than I was," Hooper said. "That's when I came up with CollegeDating.com: a site dedicated to college-age singles."

CollegeDates.com was created for a more distinct purpose. Jason Dubrow, the co-owner and cocreator of the site, said it was originally created for Purdue University students.

But after the site quickly grew and Purdue University tried to shut CollegeDates.com down,

Dubrow expanded the site. "Students can match themselves with other people at their school, nearby schools and even in other states and countries," Dubrow said.

Hooper and Dubrow said they had received many comments from people who had met through their sites, and CollegeDates.com actually has a kudos page where all can see special stories or comments.

"Just a few weeks ago we lost one of our first members when she graduated," Dubrow said. "She was very happy we provided the services for her to meet many friends and her fiancé."

Of course the Internet does have a few drawbacks.

Hooper said that there wasn't really a way to guard against people lying about themselves over the Internet, but there were things that he said he has done to make his site safer.

On the CollegeDating.com site, the e-mail goes through the site so you do not have to reveal your e-mail address until you feel comfortable, Hooper said.

Dubrow said that the CollegeDates.com site always advises people, if they plan on meeting, to first meet in a public place.

"Thankfully, we've never received any stories of bad experiences," Dubrow said. "If and when we do, we will take them very seriously and assist in any methods possible."



Julia Roberts and Albert Finney are both nominated for their work in "Erin Brockovich," which was also nominated for best picture and best director, Steven Soderbergh

Crowe, Hanks get nods in Oscar race

OSCARS from page 5

Changed" from "Wonder Boys;" Sting and David Hartley for "My Funny Friend and Me" from "The Emperor's New Groove;" and Randy Newman for "A Fool in Love" from "Meet the Parents." Also nominated was "A Love Before Time" from "Crouching Tiger."

Besides Phoenix, supporting-actor slots went to Jeff Bridges as a flamboyant president in "The Contender," Willem Dafoe as the undead Nosferatu in "Shadow of the Vampire," Benicio Del Toro as a Mexican drug cop in "Traffic" and Albert Finney as a pugnacious attorney in "Erin Brockovich."

For supporting actress, the nominees were Judi Dench as a cranky grandmother in "Chocolat," Marcia Gay Harden as the painter's wife in "Pollock," Kate Hudson as a '70s rock disciple and Frances McDormand as an obsessive mother in "Almost Famous," and Julie Walters as a disillusioned ballet teacher in "Billy Elliot."

Dench and McDormand have won Oscars.

"Almost Famous," which had emerged as a solid candidate for a best-picture nomination, was shut out in that category, and director Cameron Crowe also failed to get a nod. Besides its two supporting-actress nominations, the movie earned a nomination for Crowe's original screenplay and for film editing.

Miramax, always a scrappy

Oscar campaigner, pulled out a best-picture nomination for "Chocolat," considered something of a longshot. Miramax's past Oscar successes include "The English Patient," "Shakespeare in Love," "Life is Beautiful" and last year's "The Cider House Rules."

Along with "Crouching Tiger," nominees for best foreign language film were "Amores Perros" from Mexico, "Divided We Fall" from the Czech Republic, "Everybody Famous" from Belgium and "The Taste of Others" from France.

Nominees in most of the 23 categories are chosen by specific branches of the 5,300-member academy, such as actors, directors and film editors. Contenders in some categories, including documentaries and foreign-language films, are selected by committees.

All academy members can vote for best-picture nominees. The full academy also is eligible to vote in all categories for the awards themselves.

The Oscars will be presented March 25 in a live broadcast on ABC-TV from the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

Steve Martin will host the ceremony, taking over for Billy Crystal, who has been master of ceremonies for seven of the past eight Oscar shows.

Dino De Laurentiis, whose credits include "Hannibal" and "Serpico," will receive the Irving G. Thalberg award, presented to producers whose work reflects "consistently high quality."

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Hotels offer few lower fares for Valentine's Day

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\$79 single room rate. Howard Johnson, 5250 Cornhusker Hwy., is also at its standard rate, which is between \$49 and \$59.

Some of the lowest prices include Travelodge, 2801 West O St., at \$40 for a single, and the best deal was the Days Inn, 2920 NW 12th St., which is offering 25 percent off its single room rate of \$45.

This isn't that much different from Days Inn's normal year-

round discounts, which offers University of Nebraska students a 20 percent discount with ID. However, these rates reflect rates based on single occupancy, double occupancy rates may differ.

Students who would prefer to wait until the weekend to get that room may want to reconsider because of the High School State Wrestling Tournament starting Thursday. Many motels, as well as some of the hotels, are running low on vacancies for the weekend.