

NOT NEW WAVE

Musicians say label is media hype

By MARK MURRELL
Staff Writer

NEW wave isn't new anymore. Pogoing, thin ties, short hair, short songs and short skirts have become such a commercial success nationally, that some of the revolutionary appeal has left the music because of its own success. New wave music and fashion are becoming firmly entrenched in some segments of middle-class America.

Linda Ronstadt and Billy Joel are now slickly blasting out the kind of music that once couldn't be heard on the radio, while the large record companies are scrambling to sign myriads of groups with a "different" sound.

Though the nebulous movement may be aging and stagnating a bit, its following is bigger than ever. Local clubs in Chapel Hill have booked more new wave bands than ever in the past year, and new wave record sales have skyrocketed.

But has the whole purpose of a revolutionary rock sound been lost in the recent shuffle to pogo till you puke?

Many local band members, record store employees and new wave aficionados seem a bit worried about what this year's intense popularity and media exposure have done to the music.

They say innovative music has just been haphazardly shoved into a category and mislabeled by the press so that huge record companies can make a buck. There is a scorn for the term "new wave" in music circles.

"We don't really accept the new wave title," Butch Modern, lead singer of the punk rock-type Raleigh-based band Butchwax, said recently. "To me, it's

X-Teens guitarist Kitty Moses in action



been rock 'n' roll since 1955. New wave is like a package—a cereal box."

Once, the pride of punk rock musicians was that their music was fiercely different and rejected by most. But since punk softened into the commercially successful New Wave, its disciples have become more and more disillusioned.

"It's gotten to the point it's actually getting ridiculous," said Dave Giles, manager of Big Shot Records. "Once it gets commercial, all the bands sound alike. Who decides it anyway—just some media people. We're being fooled again."

Since many musicians have literally jumped on the new wave bandwagon, there is now a feeling that new wave will burn out prematurely because of an overkill.

"I'm worried about its future," said Kitty Moses, bass player with the local X-Teens. "I saw a band last weekend that said they were new wave, and a month before they were Southern boogie. The whole thing's spreading like wildfire around here. Some of it is bandwagon jumping; some of it is the real thing."

Indeed, Chapel Hill night clubs have become havens for the new wave bands in the past year. Managers of both Cat's Cradle and The Station said that the new wave crowd is one of the largest and most energetic crowds they have seen in a long time.

"That's the bread and butter nowadays," said Ed Hunter, manager of The Station in Carrboro. "People are listening to Elvis Costello in frat houses as well as in places that might be considered more hip. I do think it will begin to lose a portion of its audience, but it's still the most popular in terms of attendance."

ON the national pop music scene, new wave has already lost some of its appeal, according to Jeff Leonard, production coordinator for Casey Casem's "American Top 40."

"There's still a market for it, but it's in a very slow period right now," Leonard said. "There are not a whole lot of new groups that are getting on the charts. Maybe new wave is fading prematurely."

That may be true in Los Angeles, but not in Chapel Hill. Local bands said they are dedicated to playing music that still has some type of unique appeal and is not just run of the mill rock, or commercially polluted new wave.

"There's a lot of desire for this town to be caught up with what's happening," said Tim Rogers, an employee at Record Bar. "It's amazing that a town of this size would be that caught up in new wave."

Many local players scorn slick studio-produced albums and say the best new wave is now found in small clubs.

"That's just orchestrated rock," Robert Bittle, X-Teens lead guitarist said of studio-produced albums that cannot be recreated live. "It strikes me as being rock 'n' roll Muzak, and it's definitely stale."

Local artists said their music is as much for

dancing as it is for listening, and that the beauty of the music lies in its spontaneity.

"We used to practice and people would come over and dance," Moses said. "To me that's what music is for."

The musicians said they draw energy and inspiration from people pogoing—just leaping up and down. The dance was supposedly invented by Sex Pistols bass player Sid Vicious, who scorned dance steps. Some dancers have also been known to slam dance at the clubs—jumping up and down and running into each other.

"For some it's an outlet for letting off steam," Modern of Butchwax said. "For others, it's an arty, intellectual-type thing. Still, there's a lot of people who just sit there, but we can always use a writhing mass."

Bittle of the X-Teens said that making the music danceable was his band's main concern when it first started.

Modern calls Butchwax "rock 'n' roll's last stand." He said his band refuses to dilute the harsh sound they have drawn from such bands as the Sex Pistols and Iggy and the Stooges.

And Butchwax manager Gary Broyhill is skeptical and wary of the new wave label.

"It's definitely spreading out and becoming assimilated into rock music and has not got a character of its own," he said. "It's becoming more watered down all the time. I just see it eventually becoming another product for the record companies. It's going to take another punk-type movement to raise people's heads again."

MODERN said big record companies have now dictated what type of new wave music they're looking for, and have stifled many groups and forced them to go underground because of commercialism. The bands that aren't selling out to the corporate giants are the only ones true to the spirit of rock and roll, he said.

"This is going to make a lot of money for the corporate giants, but rock 'n' roll is going to remain the outlaw it's always been," he said. "Nobody hard-core is going to make any money off rock 'n' roll."

Many say new wave music has stopped evolving, because the record companies are trying to milk it for every dime it will yield in its present popular form without risking money or newer sounds. Musicians say the music industry is waiting for the next big thing to shake it up—like Elvis, the Beatles and the Sex Pistols once did.

But today, they say, there is no leader, no revolutionary. There is no Johnny Rotten to shake



DTN/Scott Shupe

listeners out of their complacency with this new wave sound and keep it evolving.

The Sex Pistols were known for their fights against the media in the beginning, but later even they submitted to commercialism. Their feature film, *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* premiered in London this summer, and tells how the band's manager only wanted the Pistols to "swindle their way to the top of the rock 'n' roll industry."

"Being a star went to Johnny Rotten's head," Modern said. "He hated all that being used stuff, and was fighting against it only to find he was a puppet as well."

It was a grand plan that backfired. The Pistols set out to use the media, but the media ended up using the Pistols—molding and labeling them.

"The media was our helper and lover and that in effect was the Sex Pistols success" a Pistols record sleeve reads. "As today to control the media is to have the power of government, God, or both. It is all that matters to explain our great rock 'n' roll swindle. A true swindle of ideas that gives you back your right to decide for yourself."

Though the popularity of the music is higher than ever, there is no avoiding the question as to whether we are all being swindled by a media-created fad that has forced the rock 'n' roll industry to stagnate just to remain lucrative.

"A lot of people just sort of gave up the fight when the Sex Pistols went down," Modern said. "If there's no captain, how can you keep the ship afloat?"

From disco to darts, local clubs span all tastes

By ROB MONATH
Staff Writer

Chapel Hill is a party town through and through.

The area is absolutely teeming with local hot spots (bars, music clubs and restaurants) which cater to a broad range of personal tastes and needs for diversion, stimulation and general frolic.

Any seasoned UNC student who considers Chapel Hill merely as the home of a fine academic institution is misguided. This person either is so firmly enveloped in "heady" pursuits as to have missed many indulgence-oriented parts of any healthy adolescence, or else is just plain ignorant.

But safely assuming that only a negligible portion of you, both freshmen and returning students, fall into either of these categories, what follows is a cursory survey spanning everything from the more popular and well-known watering-holes to some of the more obscure, renamed or new nighttime establishments on the Hill. This list reflects the diverse preferences of both the student body and the community.

Live entertainment

There are several outlets in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area for enjoying local talent as well as musicians from abroad.

Nestled in the alleyway behind Dip's Country Kitchen, *Cat's Cradle* has

everything from new wave to folk and Texas swing music, all presented in an atmosphere suited for both quiet intimacy or wild romping, depending on the mood of the music. Owner David Robert's fondness for the unconventional has led to a unique decor and extremely broad beer selection, both of which suit the diverse, interesting and amiable clientele.

The Station in Carrboro (literally the old train station) with its high ceilings and bucolic decor hosts everything from hoedowns with the Apple Chill Cloggers to reggae and rock 'n' roll. Like the Cradle, the atmosphere on any given night depends on the nature of the music, but the mood is usually a bit uptempo here.

In addition to these "big guns," other establishments have live music but are not exclusively music clubs. The Hobbit Hoagie Factory, for instance, offers a Saturday night "Open Mike Jam" (acoustic only) where the first 10 aspiring musicians who sign up can play for their friends or whoever has decided to check out these up-and-coming artists.

The Yacht Club, *Sing's at the Pines* and *Colonel Chatney's* all also host live entertainment, almost always acoustic, throughout the week.

Standards

Here are a few of the more well-known bars and restaurants:

The Village Green's outdoor garden and *He's Not Here* beer pagoda provide an ideal setting for mingling, musing or mischief among all elements of both town and school.

The bar's appeal is so magnetic that this reviewer lost all objectivity as a quick glimpse inadvertently

mushroomed into a twisted night of intensive drinking and conversation.

Other traditional places downtown include *Spanky's* and *Harrison's*, both pleasant and more subdued than the Village Green; *Four Corners*; *Papagayo* for a modern and Latin slant; the *Carollins Coffee Shop* for quiet conversation; *Kirpatrick's*; *Linda's*; and *Troll's Ltd.*, which is still the same earthy place it's always been barring the addition of a new rug (no doubt it will season shortly).

Purdy's membership-only club offers its patrons the opportunity to don their "colors" and raise hell to the sounds of disco and beach music. Purdy's regulars tend to dress up for their nights of shagging and discoing.

The more adventurous may want to check out *Crooks Corner* Barbecue for pork, seafood and drinks; *The Cave* for aggressive dart throwing; or *Tijuana Fats* for tacos, drinks and uptempo mirth-making. Other places along these lines are *Pyewacket Cafe*; *Darryl's* and *Chez Condoret*.

To satisfy your desire for late-night munchies or simply to get something in your stomach to quell the gripping nausea that follows an excessively heavy drinking bout, *Breadmen's*, Chapel Hill's very own greasy spoon, does the trick. And it serves drinks, too.

Some noteworthy changes and additions:

The old *Mad Hatter* will re-open in early September as *P.B. Jasper's* and will feature beer and beach music.

Molly Maguire's, replacing *Critie's Corner* in NCNB plaza, hosts a variety of uncommon imported beers, reasonably priced sandwiches, a cushioned shoe-shine bench alongside the bar and a low-key atmosphere

conducive to intimate conversation.

Talulah's Old Place (Restaurant and Saloon) has opened at Carr Mill Mall in Carrboro. The early 20th-century decor and Dixieland music on Wednesday and Saturday nights create a nostalgic atmosphere suitable for a date.

Feedick's seafood restaurant and oyster bar has replaced the *Ranch House* on Airport road. It's probably the only restaurant for miles around with an underground tunnel leading from the parking lot to an elevator that goes up into the restaurant.

Back Street—Hoagies Heroes has changed its name once again, this time from *Youngblood's*, but it's cranking out the same beers and hoagies as always.

As this survey indicates, Chapel Hill, despite its size, offers a variety of nighttime establishments which rivals many larger cities throughout the country. It's an asset well worth appreciating... and a helluva lot of fun, too.



He's Not Here ...but bar's popular



DTN/Scott Shupe

Students relax with a beer at outdoor night club ...talking and drinking only part of activities

Inside

What's an entertainment week in Chapel Hill like? See page C-11 to find out.

T.V. in Chapel Hill has taken a new turn. See page C-2.

Area art lovers have wealth of choices. See page C-6.

Burger buff's guide to the town is here. See page C-6.