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# R.E.M. able to import success from intimate setting to arena

The burning question surrounding the R.E.M. tour these days is whether the long-time college radio darlings can continue to satisfy their loyal followers while playing live shows in huge, impersonal arenas.

Judging from Saturday night's performance in the sold-out Smith Center, the answer would have to be an ardent, unequivocal and firm, "Sure... for the most part."

"America's hippest rock band," as Rolling Stone recently called it, played 29 songs over a two-hour period, including seven of the 11 tunes off *Green*, the group's latest album.

Highlights included "Pretty Persuasion," "Perfect Circle," "King of Birds," "You Are the Everything," "World Leader Pretend" and a smooth cover of George Gershwin's "Summertime." Noted omissions from the show were "Superman," "(Don't Go Back To) Rockville," "The One I Love" and "I Remember California."

True R.E.M. fans got what they came for: some quirky stage antics from rock 'n' roll's most enigmatic lead singer, some political pandering from said singer, and a healthy dose of sarcasm to boot, also from front man Michael Stipe. Musically, the group laid down a succession of no-nonsense material spanning seven albums and virtually every major genre this side of rap.

Latecomers to the fold were also accommodated, as evidenced by their gleeful hopping and bopping to the inane "Stand," the group's current single.

Stipe, now in his late 20s and growing more cynical by the day, provided the audience with one of the evening's stranger moments during "Sitting Still," about 45 minutes into the show. Sitting on a speaker at the stagefront, Stipe removed his left boot and proceeded to retape his foot, faltering on not a single note along the way. Witnesses to this unprecedented act glanced around to survey their neighbors' reactions; then, seeing quizzical gazes safely segue into understanding smiles, they shook

their heads and said, "Hey, that's just Stipe."

R.E.M.'s political agenda Saturday night included references — some more veiled than others — to Central America, Vietnam, the Alaskan oil spill, Eddie Hatcher and Joseph McCarthy. Stipe, the Athens, Ga., answer to a Dubliner named Paul Hewson, used his influence to promote Greenpeace and the Nature Conservancy. He also pointedly issued this two-word advisory: "Boycott Exxon."

Strip away all the political preaching and what you are left with is one of the top technical bands in the world. Backing Stipe's vocals, as always, were the lead guitar of Peter Buck and the rhythm section of bassist Mike Mills and drummer Bill Berry. Peter Holsapple — former member of the band dB — who has joined R.E.M. on its *Green* tour, chipped in with a solid showing on keyboards and rhythm guitar.

Buck's frequent dips and shrugs on the left side of the stage called to mind a young Keith Richards, and Buck's ever-present confrontational glare did nothing to discourage comparisons to the rolling stone.

Drivin' n' cryin' opened the evening with an eight-song, 30-minute set derived mainly from its third album *Mystery Road*. Kevn Kinney's four-man band from McLean, Ga., turned in a spirited performance good enough to make those who arrived fashionably late regret doing so.

Once again, R.E.M.'s stage show was augmented by video images and written messages that flashed up on a giant screen behind the band. During the evening's opening number, "Pop Song '89," key words such as weather, government, educate, listen and talk took turns vying for audience attention. At various other times the screen showed a fish

## Mike Berardino

### Concert

before June to discuss student interests where research is concerned, Student Body President Brien Lewis said Sunday.

Allen Adams, chairman of the task force on research, said the research

performed at UNC contributed to the success of the Research Triangle.

"Obviously you could not have a Research Triangle unless the University there had great research capabilities."

tation, not from student activities fees, he said.

"We've told the administration and the library that we have a need, and we need to demonstrate that need," Hall said.

Arrangements have also been made to keep the lobby of the Student Union open 24 hours for study breaks, Rierson said. Union Station will not have extended hours, but Marriott will provide free coffee and refreshments in the Union lobby after the snack bar closes, she said.

Donald Boulton, vice chancellor and dean of student affairs, said he hoped students would take advantage of these services.

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## BOV

according to the report.

The research task force said the extensive research program at UNC did not conflict with the teaching mission of the University, and both undergraduate and graduate students benefit from the complementary existence of research and teaching.

"Our committee came away 100 percent committed to both the research and teaching at this University," said Susan Culp, chairwoman of the task force committee assigned to study the effect of research on students. "They are not in conflict; they are complementary."

Culp said students had not officially been consulted during the study, but that she would like more student opinion included in the report before its presentation to the BOT in June.

Culp will meet with student leaders

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tank, sad-eyed young children and a roller-coaster ride, all without much of a clearcut purpose.

The most effective use of the screen, however, was for comic relief. Early in the show, a "Group Participation Moment" took place, complete with typically trite rock show sayings like "It's great to be back in (your city here)." That was followed by a chant-along of patented arena-speak instructions and three simple rules: 1) no standing on the chairs, 2) no "hurling missiles or other objects," and 3) "no rushing the stage because Peter (Buck) doesn't like that."

The 75-minute opening set concluded with a passable rendition of "It's the End of the World as We Know It (And I Feel Fine)." The first encore featured "Stand," *Fables of the Reconstruction's* "Driver 8" and "You Are the Everything." After a short break, the group came back with "Finest Worksong," "King of Birds," "Swan Swan Hummingbird" and a cover of Mission of Burma's "Academy Fight Song."

Another short break followed before R.E.M. returned for its final four tunes: the Gershwin cover, "Crazy" off *Dead Letter Office*, "Perfect Circle" and a cover of "After Hours," by The Velvet Underground.

Sadly, the group wasn't joking with its singular designation of a "Group Participation Moment." Stipe, who clearly misses the small club atmosphere R.E.M.'s tours enjoyed up until this one, seemed distant most of the night, off in his own cubist world of anti-establishment brooding. And on the few occasions when the young singer did directly address the good folks who happened to shell out \$17.50 apiece for tickets, it was with an entirely disagreeable tone.

When the group up front begged for "Superman" during the second encore, Stipe shot back, "We don't take requests, and I hate that song."

Not exactly the textbook way to treat an audience. But then Stipe and his band could never be accused of doing things by the book.

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