

Spotlight

Folk music pioneer to play at Cradle

By **MATTHEW McCAFFERTY**
Staff Writer

The local crowd of neo-folk singers, folk singer groupies and just plain old fans of great American music have a rare opportunity to see and hear an original doing it right tonight.

Songwriter-singer Eric Andersen will play the Cat's Cradle at 10 p.m. as part of the first leg of a yearlong international tour. The tour, which began Sept. 1, will cover much of Canada, the United States and Europe, as well as a two-and-a-half week trip to Japan. Andersen's maiden voyage to that country in 1976 paved the way to the Orient for many other American singer-songwriters, and he returns there often.

Andersen first came into prominence in the mid-'60s as a member of the folk scene in Greenwich Village, New York City, where he and friends such as Bob Dylan and Tom Paxton were simultaneously defining and chronicling an era. Early classics like "Thirsty Boots" and "Violets of Dawn" earned Andersen a spot in the history books and a flock of devoted fans.

The real news, however, is Andersen's new album on Gold Castle Records, the current home of Joan Baez and Peter, Paul and Mary, among others. *Ghosts Upon the Road* is his first American release in 12 years and is quite possibly his best work ever.

Developed over a two year period of writing, arranging and recording with musical director and producer Steve Addabbo (Auzanne Vega's co-producer), the album displays the literary and musical excellence of a mature, masterful songwriter. Addabbo and his engineering team achieve aural depth rivaling any of the day's big-budget major label releases but resist the temptation to overproduce. The result is a contemporary record that is likely to ring true for years to come. Gold Castle Records was built on exactly this kind of quality, trend-resistant music.

The trendy nature of the American music industry has made life difficult for Andersen, but he has survived without compromise and now stands to reap the benefits of a resurgence in interest in a genre which he helped create.

After several years in limbo, "singer-songwriters" again have respect and a place in professional music, and, as usual, musicians are coming out of the woodwork to capitalize on the latest fashion. The better of the new folk singers, such as Tracy Chapman, are succeeding with acoustic songs possessing immediacy, passion and honesty—the same qualities which marked Andersen's 1964 debut *Today Is the Highway*.

While *Ghosts Upon the Road* is definitely a passionate and at times brutally honest record, it is also a very sophisticated work of art. Andersen's new songs poetically chronicle the nomadic, bohemian lifestyle that he, like many of his beat-generation counterparts, chose over more stable options. The title song paints a particularly bleak picture of Andersen and others suffering for the sake of their art in mid-'60s America and offers some of the hard-won wisdom he gained through his experiences. One senses the painful truth in lines such as "life and death were indistinguishable/ til death put an end to that."

The album, like most of Andersen's material, has a very serious tone and, to be fully appreciated, demands the listener's undivided attention. It is not, however, a depressing work. There is joy here, resulting from the artist's obvious love of life and his unmistakable dedication to true creative instincts. The record abounds with the imagery of romantic, foreign places, owing no doubt to the songwriter's vast travel experiences and to his current residency in Norway.

Andersen also fills his songs with references to important literary figures and their legendary characters, and



Folk singer Eric Andersen will perform tonight at Cat's Cradle

when he sings "both my head and I were dressed/like Holden Caulfield on that day," he invites his listeners to recall J.D. Salinger's youth classic and the personal feelings that accompany such memories. The result is art that is as rich in connotation as it is in evident beauty.

Concertgoers can expect to hear many songs from *Ghosts*, as well as the

early classics, in what will likely be Andersen's only area performance for several years to come. He will be appearing solo, a setting which suits this seasoned veteran well.

Eric Andersen will perform at the Cat's Cradle at 10 p.m. tonight. Tickets are \$6 in advance and \$7 at the door.

Aussie band receives international acclaim

Carrie McLaren
Album

Even the land Down Under goes underground to drag out new music. While the climb to ground level can take its toll on musicians, Died Pretty, the latest Aussie band to hit the States, has managed to successfully poke a hole through some crusty antipodean terra.

With its new album *Lost* out to help conquer foreign territory, Died Pretty is touring the United States once again. Triangle fans were treated last night when the band played at the Brewery in Raleigh.

But the path upward hasn't been easy for the Sydney-via-Brisbane foursome.

Fortunately, the soil was still warm. Who is to thank for breaking the ground? Olivia Newton-John? Men at Work? The Little River Band? No. No. No.

Perhaps Kylie Minogue. No, Died Pretty owe far more to their fellow garage rockers (Lime Spiders), pleasure popsters (Go-Betweens, the Church) and mood warpists (Crime and the City Solution, Bad Seeds). The band also cites the example set by Radio Birdman in the 1960s and '70s.

Since signing with a major label and receiving U.S. distribution, Died Pretty has been spreading its music across continents. In 1984, with the release of the first single, the band was barely known beyond the shores. An EP, *Next To Nothing*, helped win a readers' poll for Best Underground Act in Australia's Juke magazine. The debut LP, *Free Dirt*, on the independent Citadel label, received equally lofty praise.

England's Sounds named "Stone-age Cinderella" single of the week, saying lead singer "Ronald S. Peno stomps all over the competition in a shotgun wedding between Iggy Pop and Bob Dylan with Alice Cooper coaching from the sidelines."

In the United States, critics tended to liken vocals more to Michael Stipe in a Velvets mode. Charlotte critic Fred Mills considers it the best LP of 1986. The Bob, an alternative magazine stationed in Ohio, began including an entire spread on Australian musicians every

issue, hailing Died Pretty on the front. A post-album run around the globe to New Zealand, America and Europe solidified an international audience. Died Pretty has slowly inched its way into the latest wave of underdog Aussie bands.

"I like America," guitarist/vocalist Brett Myers told Juke last year. "All the bands that influenced me musically come from America and primarily New York."

Ex-Birdman Rob Younger produced both *Free Dirt* and the band's latest effort *Lost*. The album recently returned from heavy rotation on WXYC. Cult fame hasn't led the band to make significant aural concessions. *Lost* pours out its soul in gritty emotion and raw power.

The result ambles back and forth between ballads and rockers, creating an atmosphere neither adrenaline-packed nor lethargic. The tempo may change but the sound remains the same. The vinyl slab ceases to be tangible grooves. It grabs and pulls in the hapless listener. You can imagine the guitar strings vibrate. It's rock done right: no fancy embellishments or earth-shattering innovations (drat!). It captures the intentions without looking back.

A pulsing bass saunters underneath Myers' lax vocals on "One Day." Its simplified instrumentation exemplifies the band's bare-bones approach. A segue into "Towers of Strength," another acoustic ballad, is barely noticeable.

"Lost" lashes out with electric guitar and checkered rhythms. "Out of My Hand" builds upon the same strategy while milking still more driven bass-work.

"Free Dirt" enlists a female vocalist, complete with cello, to wrap up the entire LP in a gentle ballad with lush harmonies.

Drug to combat AIDS virus is unsuccessful in human study

From Associated Press reports

PHILADELPHIA — An unapproved drug that was popular in underground efforts to fight the AIDS virus after showing promise in the laboratory is apparently ineffective in the body, according to a medical journal report.

In the Oct. 1 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, researchers report on the use of dextran sulfate in 18 healthy volunteers, saying that after administering the drug orally and intravenously, they found only traces of any effects of the drug.

The study appears to confirm preliminary results announced in February by Dr. Frank Young, com-

missioner of the Food and Drug Administration, that the drug is poorly absorbed into the bloodstream and shows little promise of fighting the AIDS virus.

The study's results show that the FDA should continue to move cautiously in allowing AIDS patients access to untested drugs, said the principal investigator, Paul Lietman of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

The study cautions "that just because it works in a laboratory, you can't just go stuffing it in your mouth," said Robert Yarchoan, an AIDS researcher at the National Cancer Institute.

Magner welcomes fun of Mr. UNC role

By **NOAH BARTOLUCCI**
Staff Writer

It's 11:59 p.m. on a Saturday. Tres Magner hears a crash outside his bedroom window.

"Hold on," he says. He puts down the phone and quickly looks outside.

"Somebody broke something out in the quad," he says. "People have been in and out all night. I think it's because it's Homecoming—some weekends it gets pretty hectic around here."

Magner hasn't forgotten the screams and applause that welcomed him as the new Mr. UNC Wednesday night, but he's already returned to his roles as a pre-med student and resident assistant. Despite the spirited reputation of Mr. UNC, the man behind the title is rather reserved.

Magner, who beat three other contestants for that title last week, has been an RA for two years, first in Grimes Residence Hall and now in Mangum.

"Being an RA has been a great experience. You get exposed to so many different people. You hate to tell people to be quiet; you hate to tell them to turn down their music. You feel like a bad guy. We (RA's) are a lot more than that—we're just trying to help people out."

Helping people out and working with them is Magner's strength, and it feeds into everything he does. As a cheerleader it earned him ease with crowds;

as an RA it earned him respect among residence hall members, and as a contestant it earned him the Mr. UNC title.

The role of Mr. UNC is a welcome break for the senior biology major, who recently dropped cheerleading to return his focus to academics. "I thought I would have a little fun my senior year," he said. Magner's goal is to become a doctor.

The Raleigh native has learned a lot about people from his heroes. He admires a diverse group of figures such as former president Abraham Lincoln, comedian Bill Cosby, Miami Herald humor columnist Dave Barry and cartoonist Gary Larson.

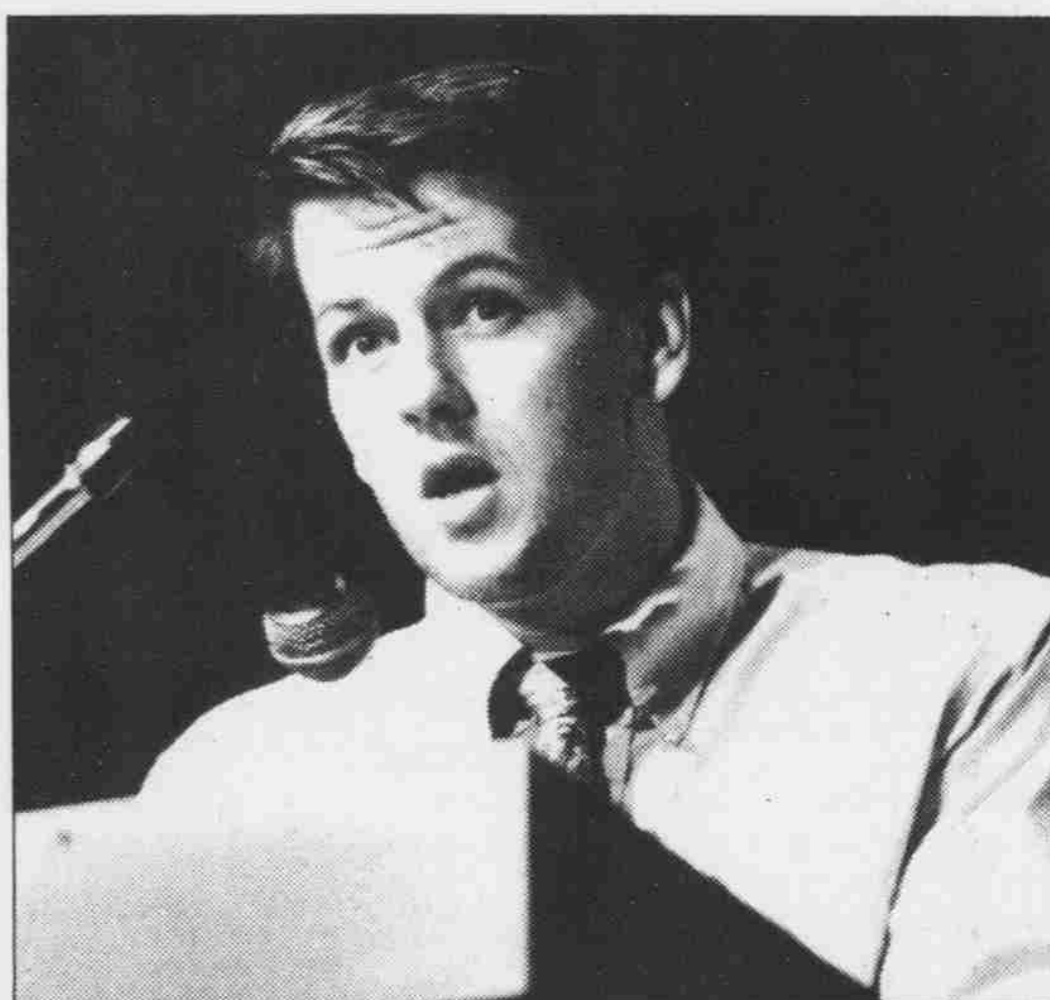
He admires Lincoln for his integrity, his knowledge of right versus wrong and, of course, for his ability to deal with people. The latter three have won his praise for their ability to make people laugh.

"I'd like to follow around Gary Larson for a week. That would be neat."

But Magner wasn't always comfortable working with people. He came to Chapel Hill from Cardinal Gibbons High School, Raleigh, where his graduating class was a total of 70 students.

"I was so nervous when I first got here. I couldn't eat the first week of school. But once classes started I was fine."

Things have changed since then.



Tres Magner won the Mr. UNC title during Homecoming Week

These days, if you want to find Mr. UNC, you'll probably see him roaming the halls of Mangum, and if you're lucky, maybe you'll catch him wearing the Burger King crown that came with his new title. Or if it's a Saturday,

you'll probably find him at a football game.

"I love the Tar Heels. I love them to death. But I guess we're still rebuilding. At least basketball season is almost here."

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