

Spotlight

Pixies stick it to frenzied crowd of night owls at Cat's Cradle

The lights pulsed first purple, then blue, then green, over a sea of thrashing bodies, gyrating wildly to screams emanating from the three silhouetted figures on the stage. No, it wasn't a sinister satanic ritual; it was the Pixies concert Saturday night.

The Pixies played at the Cat's Cradle for a sold-out audience of at least 500 people. The place was packed. But if people were willing to ignore the heat and the smoke, the concert was worth the 10 bucks they dished out to see it. The Pixies — Black Francis, Kim Deal, Joey Santiago and David Lovering — were in good form, and they gave a fine concert.

Hasie Sirisena Concert

The Zulus, as the opening act, tried their best to rouse their audience. By the third song, they had half the audience dancing to their mix of hard rock tinged with faint echoes of the blues. Unfortunately, the audience couldn't hear the lead singer over the guitars, though the occasional reference to the sky did make its way through. At one point, the lead singer pulled out a harmonica and commenced playing, but it

was lost to the louder and much stronger lead guitar.

A few people were yawning by the sixth song, and one person seated at the side had gone to sleep. The crowd, which was still relatively small since most of the people had yet to file in, was obviously there to see the Pixies.

By the end of the Zulus, the crowd had begun to gather. A hazy film of smoke settled over the room and the heat sent many people to the overpriced concession stand. So people handed over their dollar for a can of Pepsi and waited. And waited. And waited.

Finally, around midnight, the Pixies came out, and the crowd flocked to-

wards the front of the room, packing themselves in as tightly as they could. The crowd roared as the lights came up on the beginning of the first song, "Bone Machine," which sent them into a thrashing frenzy that halted only long enough to scream the lyrics, "Your bone's got a little machine."

By the time the Pixies got to their more famous song, "Debaser," the crowd was wild. Near the stage, people were lifted into the air, while the stage was constantly barraged with small objects.

Lead singer Black Francis was at the top of his form, and when he screamed out the lyrics to "Debaser," his ability

to sustain such a pitch without faltering was amazing.

As the Pixies began "This Monkey's Gone to Heaven," Francis seemed to become a little tired, but it didn't detract from the song. In fact, the existential angst expressed by the lyrics seemed only enhanced by his weariness. "Now there's a hole in the sky/ And the ground's not cold/ And if the ground's not cold then everything is going to burn/ We'll all take turns/ I'll get mine too."

Joey Santiago, the lead guitarist, was excellent. Like Francis' voice, Santiago's guitar never gave in, though Santiago himself preferred to stay out

of the limelight. In fact, the show seemed to focus on Francis and Deal. Santiago remained at the edge of the stage in the darkness.

The show's only flaw was that it seemed very formulaic. Not only did the group sing their songs in alphabetical order, but they also rarely talked to the audience. They just churned out their songs.

Although the performance was competent, it would have been better if the Pixies had seemed more into the music; unfortunately, for the most part, they seemed put off by their audience, and even their refreshingly rough sound couldn't compensate.

Ex-Hüsker Mould to display new solo sound in Chapel Hill

By BRIAN SPRINGER

Staff Writer
When Hüsker Dü broke up in Janu-

ary of 1988, critics and fans mourned the loss of one of America's best bands. But tonight, singer-songwriter-guitar-

ist Bob Mould will carry the torch back to Chapel Hill in a performance at Cat's Cradle at 10 p.m.

Hüsker Dü appeared at Memorial Hall several years ago, but until now, Mould had not returned to Chapel Hill to perform. It took Mould 18 months to lick his wounds, but the result was his solo debut, last summer's stunning

Workbook.

As one of the thirtysomething introspective rockers, Mould has mellowed somewhat. *Workbook* replaced the trademark thrash pop of the Hüskers with tense layers of acoustic sound.

But, as Mould shows on the fierce electric rocker "Whichever Way the Wind Blows," or on the guitar solo in "Wishing Well," he still likes to rock. Mould's shows often turn out to be as noisily melodic as the Hüsker Dü shows of years past. Which side we will see tonight is anyone's guess.

The lineup for tonight's show is still uncertain. Mould's band for most of the tour has included drummer Anton Fier (kingpin of the Golden Palominos), bassist Tony Maimone (of Pere Ubu), and guitarist Chris Stamey (ex-dB's). This lineup has given the material from *Workbook* a harder sound, described by *Rolling Stone* as "like vintage Hüsker Dü meets *Who's Next*."

Whatever the sound, Mould is sure to maintain the melodic edge that he partially credits to one of his main influences, the Buzzcocks. Mould's performances have become more consistent since he has given up drinking and other exploits. Power struggles and drug and alcohol problems (particularly on the part of drummer Grant Hart) ripped apart Hüsker Dü.

In terms of material, Mould will probably perform most of *Workbook*, if not all. He has been known to cover classic tunes, such as Richard and Linda Thompson's "Shoot Out the Lights." Mould wrote more than 40 songs for *Workbook*, so we can probably expect some new and unfamiliar material. Don't expect any Hüsker Dü songs, though.

If many people discovered Hüsker Dü too late, tonight is a golden opportunity to see one of the music scene's most important songwriters. Even if the styles have changed somewhat, Bob Mould's nasal, razor-sharp vocals, and his guitar work, which ranges from liquid leads to ferocious feedback, remain intact.

Few artists are able to work out problems in public gracefully. Mould has accomplished just that, and this show is not to be missed — it will be a valid reason to fall asleep during Tuesday classes.

Bob Mould will perform at Cat's Cradle Monday, Oct. 16, at 10 p.m. Admission is \$6 in advance or \$7 at the door.



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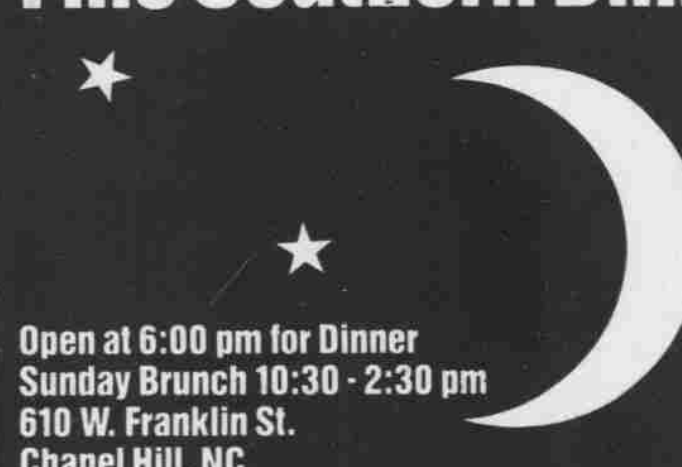
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