

# 10,000 Maniacs Raise Roof In H

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By DAN KANE

They say a band never plays better than when they're on their home turf.

Saturday night at the Palace Civic Center, 10,000 Maniacs showed they were no exception to the rule as they not only overwhelmed the hometown crowd, but lived up to every accolade the rock press has printed about them.

The band took the stage unceremoniously with lead singer/lyricist Natalie Merchant approaching the stage front wearing a coy smile and a slightly mischievous glint in her eyes. It was

obvious at that point that the band was glad to be home and ready to raise the roof.

The Maniacs are the first rock band from this area to be signed to a major recording label. Their first release, *The Wishing Chair*, came out in late September and has been given the same reverential treatment as the Athens, Ga.-based R.E.M.'s albums.

But as fine as *The Wishing Chair* is for its meticulously-crafted songs and superb playing, it doesn't hold a candle

to the way the Maniacs tackle the songs live.

Drummer Jerome Augustyniak really knocks some life into these songs with the kind of sweet, solid drumming that separates the boys, who associate drumming with thudding the skins as hard as they can, from the men, who know the real secret is to make every beat count so the rest of the band will have an anchor to play off of.

And nobody can quite fill a space between beats like guitarist Robert