

...Is Only Part Of Their Growing Career

By TIM O'BRIEN

While Jamestown's 10,000 Maniacs are eagerly awaiting critical and commercial reaction to their second major album, *In My Tribe* is only one part of their growing career in the music industry.

The band, whose Elektra debut *The Wishing Chair* drew critical raves but limited sales, has been receiving various offers as a result of their popularity in Europe and growing respect among other American musicians.

The band's growing recognition has prompted offers to be involved in many causes, lead vocalist and lyricist Natalie Merchant said. "We were just asked to play a benefit for a hospital in Nicaragua."

People for Ethical Treatment of Animals has asked them to record a song for a benefit album, and the cause is one Ms. Merchant, a vegetarian for seven years, strongly supports.

"There are so many tests performed on animals that could be done in test tubes," she said.

Amnesty International, a well-known peace organization, also is organizing a tour which could put them in the same lineup as rock star Peter Gabriel.

Up-and-coming artists Crowded House and Suzanne Vega have also asked the band to perform as their opening acts. The Maniacs have already opened for some of Ms. Vega's performances.



10,000 MANIACS IN MY TRIBE

"We're getting to a really good point in the career," Ms. Merchant said.

Ms. Merchant said she does not think she wants to perform in a rock band forever but she envisions herself involved in music all her life.

"I do see music as my entire life, but not just in a rock band," she said.

She would like to write a musical and have it filmed, she said. A Rochester band called Nehru Zombies has already asked her to choreograph a dance.

Guitarist Robert Buck would also like to become involved in film scoring, she said, and he has the technical talents to do so.

The band will begin touring the

United States in August, and it will be in Europe throughout September before returning for more U.S. concerts. No performances are yet scheduled in Jamestown.

If the new album is a hit and enables band members to give up their part-time jobs and buy homes, she said, it is likely the band will leave the city where all five members still live.

"I think because we've seen all of America, we've seen places that would suit us more," she said.

Since she no longer has family living in the city, she said, there is less tying her to the area. "But it is home, and it's good to come home."

If she leaves, she added, she would miss Chautauqua Institution, the summers and, yes, even the snow.

But Ms. Merchant said she would prefer living in a large city with a variety of cultures like New York or Toronto.

"I love to be in cities where there is a mix of people from all areas," she said. "It makes me feel like a citizen of the world."

On "The Campfire Song," lead vocalist Michael Stipe of the popular band R.E.M. accompanies Ms. Merchant on vocals.

Like R.E.M., whose fourth album quietly achieved \$1 million in sales, 10,000 Maniacs is being given a chance by its record company to catch on over a series of albums.