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TROUT From Page 5

"But a lot of good bands in this town are stuck here," Pieper said. Trout Mystery doesn't see much validity in comments made around town that Lincoln's music scene is dying, or maybe isn't as vibrant as it once was.

"I don't think that's true," Albright said. For example, "13 Nightmares had a show to help get their album made, and everybody helped out."

"Lincoln's always been the same way -- segmented and clique-ish, and it never really changes much," Pieper said.

"Things go in spurts. Sometimes Duffy's is packed, and other times it's nearly empty," Sullivan said.

Pieper agreed, but added that generally the faces he sees at the shows are the same.

"That's distressing," he said.

"It shouldn't be that way. But we need some way to draw new people in," Sullivan said.

"Beer specials and INXS covers," Pieper suggested.

Sullivan said that the Lincoln bands need an agent, someone who would work hard, and had the resources to do it right.

"People with money won't do that here. The people won't give all their support to music," Pieper said. "Except for cover bands."

"You have to work twice as hard to get results out of this town, but some have done it," Sullivan said. He credits 13 Nightmares with being the hardest working band in Lincoln right now. He said that they have made leaps and bounds ahead of everybody else in both amount of effort directed at getting out of Lincoln, and amount of frustration resulting from the difficulty of the task.

"It doesn't matter how hard you work, you need feedback from your hometown," Pieper said.

"But basically, we're really happy as a band, we work really hard, we're not depressed too often," Sullivan said.

However, he said that they were a little depressed when drummer John Fleischli quit about two weeks ago, resulting in the cancellation of a couple nearby out of town dates and the search for new percussion.

"Everything seemed to fall apart in about one night," Albright said. They said that they are talking to someone who "is a really great drummer," and once they get settled, it shouldn't take too long to get going again.

"Two or three days is all it better take," Pieper said. "That may be our biggest problem with drummers. We lack patience."

"We're really aggressive about our feelings within the band, we don't care what the other people think," Sullivan said.

But Pieper said that they would "definitely" be playing at Duffy's on Wednesday, "with our new drummer, whoever it is."

The good news is that despite all of the frustrations with surroundings and percussionists one thing has survived -- Trout Mystery's humorous, good-natured arrogance.

"I think we're really great, I base everything I do on Trout Mystery," Sullivan said, "my job, my life, my moustache and my flare pants."

"Everybody wants to look like me," Albright added.

Trout Mystery hopes to be taking the stage at Duffy's on Wednesday with a new drummer. Their music, combining classic rock 'n' roll influences with more contemporary alternative ones and employing a great diversity of styles, along with their bizarre sense of stage humor, makes up a live show that at its best is loud, hilarious, and riveting.

And they would love to see droves of new faces at the show next week, but as Sullivan said, "You can't criticize this town too much, because you can't make people do what they don't want to do."

Mark Lage

After two years of existence, is the "brass" in New Brass Guns still shiny? And furthermore, does the "gun" still shoot straight?

What is "new" with New Brass Guns? Brian Barber, the drummer for the Lincoln four-piece band, cites the production of a new tape as the major development for the band over the last year.

"The biggest thing we've done recently was re-recording some songs for a tape. It's called 'White Dress,' and hopefully we'll have it out next week," said Barber.

This is the second such effort for the band, which consists of vocalist Lori Allison, bassist Marty Amsler, guitarist Doug

Hubner and Barber on drums. Hubner says the new tape is better than their first.

"Compare the first tape to the second. The performance and the song structures are very different."

Amsler agreed. "I'm almost embarrassed by the first tape. I'd like to go around and buy them all back."

In addition, "White Dress" utilizes multi-track recording as opposed to the live tracks on the first tape.

Amsler also cited the band's musical progression as an important development over the last year. "We're a lot better at this now than we were a year ago."

But Amsler said that despite this progression in New Brass Guns and other local bands, Lin-

coln seems unwilling to support its musical talent.

"People take local music for granted," Amsler stated. "Lincoln has amazing music for its size, and nobody cares. The music in Lincoln, now and last year, is far superior to most places, but there's no support for it. Duffy's was a great place to play, and now they're just having bands on Wednesdays because they were losing too much money. People didn't want to pay a \$2 cover charge to see a band -- they'd rather go to O'Rourke's and just drink."

Another new thing for the band, one that has brought them some relief from Lincoln's lack of support, has been taking their show to other towns. The band recently played in Lawrence, Kan., with two other local acts, 13 Nightmares and The Return, and then went on to St. Louis.

"It's nice to play for strangers once in a while instead of just for your friends," said Amsler. "In St. Louis they loved the show."

Although rumors have been circulating that the band is on the verge of breakup, Hubner said things are no different now than they have been in the past.

"There's definitely the possibility of us going our separate ways, with some people going to college or moving, but that's always been there. We just went into it with the attitude of having fun together as a band. We've had two years of it, and while breaking up could happen at any time, we'll have fun until then," he said.

Lane Van Ham

The big mailing.

That's what Thomas Irvin, singer for Elysium Crossing, is calling the project toward which much of the band's hopes and efforts have been devoted to lately.

The mailing refers to a package including the group's tape, "Rhythm of the Rain," which has been sent out to both major and independent labels in hopes of a record deal.

"We've got back a few responses, most of them noting an address change for an independent label," laughed Irvin. "Others, like MCA, sent back a letter that they were not accepting unsolicited projects at this time. So we're still waiting for the offers to pour in."

In the meantime, the band (Irvin, vocals; Shamus Adams, guitar; Julian Winston Terrence, bass; and Bill Sullivan, drums) is arranging a summer tour to get out of state exposure.

"Essentially we'll be going through the North and Midwest -- nothing west of the Rockies. We're still trying to arrange all the details right now."

Terrence commented that often out-of-state locations are more responsive and supportive of smaller acts than Lincoln is.

"Minneapolis is very supportive -- even Omaha is more supportive. When we play at Sokol Hall, everybody who's there is watching the band. People here are very discouraging.

All they're concerned with is shaving half their bob and wearing all black," he said.

"It would be so much more fun if people would actually go to shows instead of watching 'Suburbia' for the tenth time and drinking beers, and then when they got to the show, to actually watch the bands."

Irvin added that it's sometimes hard to find places to play that allow minors in.

"We feel that some of our under-21 fans might feel left out, but sometimes those are the only places we can play live. Even then the support is questionable. People have to be excited to see a band if they can't drink a beer at the same time. So

we're trying to make our shows not Las Vegas, but at least throw in some extras so that people will remember it and be interested in the performance itself.

In other developments, the band has written and partially recorded five new songs.

"Some try to incorporate me on guitar," said Irvin with a laugh, "but I have no amp at this time, so we'll see how that goes."

Elysium Crossing will be playing Saturday night at the Cherry Hut on West Cornhusker with other locals, Speed Wobble. Terrence said the show would start around 7:30 p.m. and cost \$2 or \$3.

Lane Van Ham

Randy Watson of the Lincoln band The Return isn't happy with Lincoln's music scene.

"It really sucks," the lead singer said. "I guess you could say we're having trouble finding our niche in Lincoln. This town hates us."

Greg Hill, drummer for The Return, agreed.

"We don't hang out, we're not cool, we're nerds and geeks," said Hill, formerly of For Against.

Dave Larson, who rounds out this Lincoln trio on bass, said Lincoln bands could really help each other out, "but instead there's just back-stabbing, no support, and no

The Return, but to relationships between other bands as well.

"It was going great for a while, then everyone started dumping on each other," Larson said.

It was his short-lived feelings of optimism toward Lincoln music that helped him decide to join The Return last year, after five years of playing in strictly cover bands, he

This optimism also inspired the opening of Black Sea studio, where local releases by 13 Nightmares and Trout Mystery, as well as For Against's second Independent

Projects album, were recorded, Watson said.

"We started the recording studio, but everyone hates us for what we did," he said. The studio alienated most people, because although the band came in less-than-

said. But despite the problems, Watson said that anyone in Lincoln interested in recording should get in touch with him.

"It could really be great," he said of Lincoln music at present. "13 Nightmares can be great, and Trout Mystery is really good. But once one band gets ahead, it's not

keeping up with the Joneses."

"We just do this for fun, and that seems to irritate some people," Larson said. As far as their band is concerned, the members of The Return seem pleased, despite

not playing a lot recently.

"We didn't play for four months, and people are still bad-mouthing us," Watson said. "No one would let us open for them."

After nine months of recording other bands at Black Sea, The Return was finally able to work on their own material, Watson said. The result is a six-song tape which

should be out within the month, he said.

Hill described the six songs on the tape as ranging "all the way from pop to noise," including experimental music as well as more familiar Return songs.

"We want to put a tape out, get a contract, get rich and get famous," Watson added. The band also played its first out-of-town date last Wednesday night in Lawrence,

Kansas.

"They loved us. They wanted us to come back," Watson said.

The only favorite bands the three members generally agree on are XTC and The Beatles, and after that, their individual tastes diverge widely, Watson said.

Due probably to the combination of Watson's British pop-influenced guitar style and Larson's five years of experience in more commercially geared "frat bands," The

Return occupies a blurry musical area somewhere in between Lincoln's alternative set and its cover bands.

The result is tight, clear, and slightly slick alternative pop, which was well represented in the band's energetic return to Duffy's Friday night.

The show, before a surprisingly large crowd considering the snowy weather, featured a very well-engineered sound set-up, and a wide variety of films projected onto the

stage.

But the most pervasive attitude for the band on this night was their frustration with the problems they perceive to be plaguing Lincoln's music.

"It's drying up, there aren't as many shows. It's the bands' fault, but they'll blame everybody else," Larson said.

Mark Lage

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