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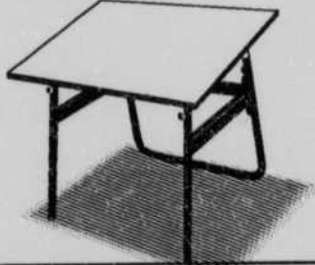
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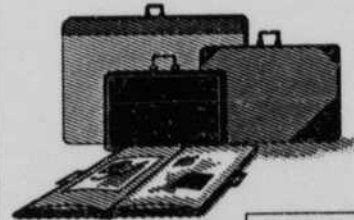
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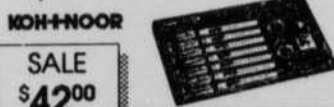
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Courtesy of Caroline Records

Live Skull plays Duffy's Tuesday night.

After touring Europe, Live Skull will perform at Duffy's Tavern

By Micki Haller
Senior Editor

The dark and seemingly foreboding sounds of Live Skull are coming to Duffy's Tavern Tuesday.

band REVIEW

But according to guitarist Mark C., critics are wrong when they call Live Skull's music "gloomy."

"We think we're very human," he said.

The music uses barrages of guitars that fall off into a pit of silence; the lyrics match the musical intensity with physical imagery that can often be gory, Mark said. The sum total equals some very strongly expressed music, something all the members want, he said.

"We used physical imagery as an emotional metaphor for feelings and sentiments," he said. Problems can arise from such

strong statements, however.

"People took it totally seriously," Mark said.

The band wants to provoke people to think, he added, and the goal is to make the music as interesting as the band could.

"We're always trying to expand the band within the original idea," Mark said.

Changes in the band's line-up since its 1982 beginning has also added to the sound. About 1 1/2 years ago, the bassist and drummer left Live Skull to return to school.

Singer Thalia Zadek joined about a year ago. She not only commands the lead vocals, but writes many of the lyrics, he said. "A central vocalist is important," he said.

The band currently consists of Mark, Zadek, guitarist Tom Paine, bassist Sonda Andersson and drummer Rich Hutchins.

The Lincoln stop is part of the band's first "serious" tour.

"We've been on kind of a massive tour starting in Europe,"

Mark said.

The European leg included Holland, Austria, Germany, France and England.

"Everything went really well," Mark said. "Especially in the big cities." The band came back to the states, and is touring for the newest album, "Positraction."

"We're really a working band," he said.

"In terms of 'Positraction,' the songs are basically kind of one song," Mark said.

The band concentrated on making things clearer on this album, Mark said. The band was more upfront on "Positraction," with a band picture on the cover, printed lyrics, a cleaner mix and prominent vocals, he said.

"We're trying to draw people more into the music," he added.

The band should be heard live, however, to be fully appreciated.

"It's very difficult to get the huge, reverberating tones we like to work with on a recording," he said.

Versatility is key to album's success

By Kelly Anders
Staff Reporter

Though relatively unknown at present, Anne G.'s debut album, "On a Mission," boasts of many of the elements that will raise her to star status in no time.

album REVIEW

Anne G. is blessed with one of those voices that can change pitch,

mood and style in the blink of an eye. She belts out the lyrics one minute and purrs or raps them the next. One second she's an alto, but she becomes a soprano before one has time to notice. Usually, only the best of seasoned artists can accomplish such feats.

Her band isn't too shabby, either -- it supports and enhances her voice without drowning her out.

Especially noteworthy are the keyboards and percussion. They do their jobs well, giving a strong base to

many of the songs on the album. The beats are powerful; the use of synthesizer sounds intricate, but smooth. Both are good enough to record solo.

Most cuts on "On a Mission" are pure dance material, but there are some nice ballads.

"If She Knew" kicks off the album. The beat is great -- fun and danceable. It alters slightly throughout the song which keeps it interesting. Anne G. uses her voice like an instrument. Although she's singing on the higher register, her voice sounds soft; it's not brassy or annoying as many high voices can sound.

"Mission" is another dance tune. Bass and percussion sport a strong and fast edge. Anne G.'s voice is low and smooth. She even raps during a segment of the song, and does so surprisingly well. The spacey background provided by the synthesizer gives the piece an intriguing personality.

One of the best cuts on the album is "Heart Donor." A nice mid-tempo dance tune, the song boasts of synthesizer and vocal pitch transitions galore.

The first, and prettiest, ballad on the album is "Love's Here." The beat is slow, with the slightest hint of calypso in it. Anne G. purrs the lyrics a la Karyn White. The background vocalists harmonize with her beautifully. The saxophone solo is as appropriate as can be, interrupting with a typically sexy ring.

"Give Me All Your Lovin'" is another upbeat piece. Nothing like the ZZ Top tune, it sounds like a blend of E.U.'s "Da Butt" and Karyn White's "The Way You Love Me."

Unlike many debut albums, Anne G.'s "On a Mission" has not one terrible tune -- Anne G. got a good foundation. Provided she works at it, she's sure to grow and develop into an influential, perhaps even innovative, artist.

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