Pang's punch delivers anything but knockout

Courtesy of Metal Blade Records

By Michael Deeds
Senior Editor

Princess Pang
"Princess Pang"
Metal Blade

With a name like Princess Pang, you know what the bottom line in this band has got to be -- a woman lead vocalist.

Just why bands including women have to stick femininity in their titles is a good question. It seems to be an unwritten rule of headbanging.

However, it is laudable to see another group of musicians fighting the hex on women vocalists in the world of hard rock.

A few Joans and Litas are roaming successfully, but you can count them on one hand.

Princess Pang is not presenting any new approach, musically or visually. Vocalist Jeni Foster takes the "tough-but-pretty" route, while the rest of the band go with the "sexy dirtball" look.

Pang manages to crank out some typical L.A.-sounding blues/metal, and as usual for Brian Slagel of Metal Blade, the recording production is excellent.

But plenty of male-led bands are out there stomping out the same stuff as Princess Pang, and many do it better.

"Trouble In Paradise," the single/MTV video that has gotten steady play on "Headbangers Ball," is probably the catchiest tune on the album.

But other songs like "Baby Blue," "Scream And Shout" and "Too Much, Too Soon" begin to sound alike, much thanks to Foster.

Sadly enough, the make-or-break chores fall primarily on her. And Foster seems to be a little insecure at this point in her career; she has a few reverb and flanger hang-ups. She isn't sure how she wants to sound -- raspy, tough, strained, produced.

Consequently, she ends up sounding a little like Chrissie Hynde and Stevie Nicks, but it's all swirled up in a vicious mixing-board blender -- very average.

But hey, there always is the bad boys to lean on. Unfortunately, guitarists Jay Lewis and Andy Tjernon don't help much, either. Sure, they can play, but the leads all melt together in one big quagmire of lethargic mush.

If rock bands with women vocalists are your thing, Princess delivers a standard punch.

But inevitably, in a heavy metal world where most women are depicted in chains or on their backs, most female-led bands sink into a pit of failure, a tradition that will probably live on for years to come.

Princess Pang is no exception.

Hanna

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tive who made important decisions about the creative content of a network's programming. I think I could really spice up this dreary little show and bring a good dose of the reality and grittiness that today's TV audiences crave.

For starters, it is totally unfathomable that Mike and Carol have been together this long and have never had a fight on the air. There is never even a hint that something may be wrong between these two. If I were a producer for "The Bradys," I would have an episode where Carol catches Mike in bed with another woman. Or better yet, she catches him in bed with Alice. Or still better yet, she catches him in bed with Sam. Or still even better yet, how about in bed with Jan . . . Whoa! I guess I'd better not go too far. I'd still want my show to be tasteful.

In my Brady TV show, Alice would be hospitalized in a mental institution. We'll learn that Alice wigged out in the kitchen one day and tried to stuff one of Marcia's children in the oven. She now just sits in her hospital room, repeatedly muttering, ". . . cook at 450 degrees, basting occasionally . . . cook at 450 degrees, basting occasionally."

It is utterly absurd that Greg is now a baby doctor. In my show, Greg will be touring the country attending Grateful Dead concerts. We all remember the hippie pad he had during the original series so don't even tell me this boy doesn't still drop acid. In one moving episode, Mike and Carol will hire a deprogrammer to chase Greg down and de-brainwash him with the music of Whitney Houston. They will not succeed.

Marcia still will live at home with about eight or nine children, none of whom have the same father. She will leech off of Mike and Carol and collect welfare benefits.

Peter will be dead, killed in an attempted robbery of a convenience store.

Jan really will be into crystals. She'll own a pipe and herbs shop where she conducts workshops in crystal healing and shiatsu.

Bobby will come out of the closet on the first episode, much to the chagrin of Mike and Carol. The entire family will be rocked when he brings his lover to dinner one night and they learn that it's Oliver, the tiny John Denver look-alike that lived with the family near the end of the original series.

Cindy will be a wealthy, successful stockbroker who only drops in occasionally to snub her nose and collect interest on her many loans to Mike and Carol. In one funny episode, some of Cindy's thugs will bend Mike's fingers back until they break because he is late on a payment.

Until my show is accepted, however, the current excursion into mediocrity will continue to be broadcast. Millions of people will continue to tune into "The Bradys" for the next couple of weeks. Then, in about mid-April, the ratings will plummet and the series will be cancelled.

If, however, the bigwigs at CBS want a sure-fire winner that will bring them huge ratings success . . . they know where to reach me.

Hanna is a senior theater major and Daily Nebraskan columnist and reporter.

Stan

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directing.

"Stanley & Iris" may not be called to their feet around Acadamy Awards time, but the movie will call attention to a social problem affecting thousands of people and do it through a heart-rending plotline. It's the American dream come to life.

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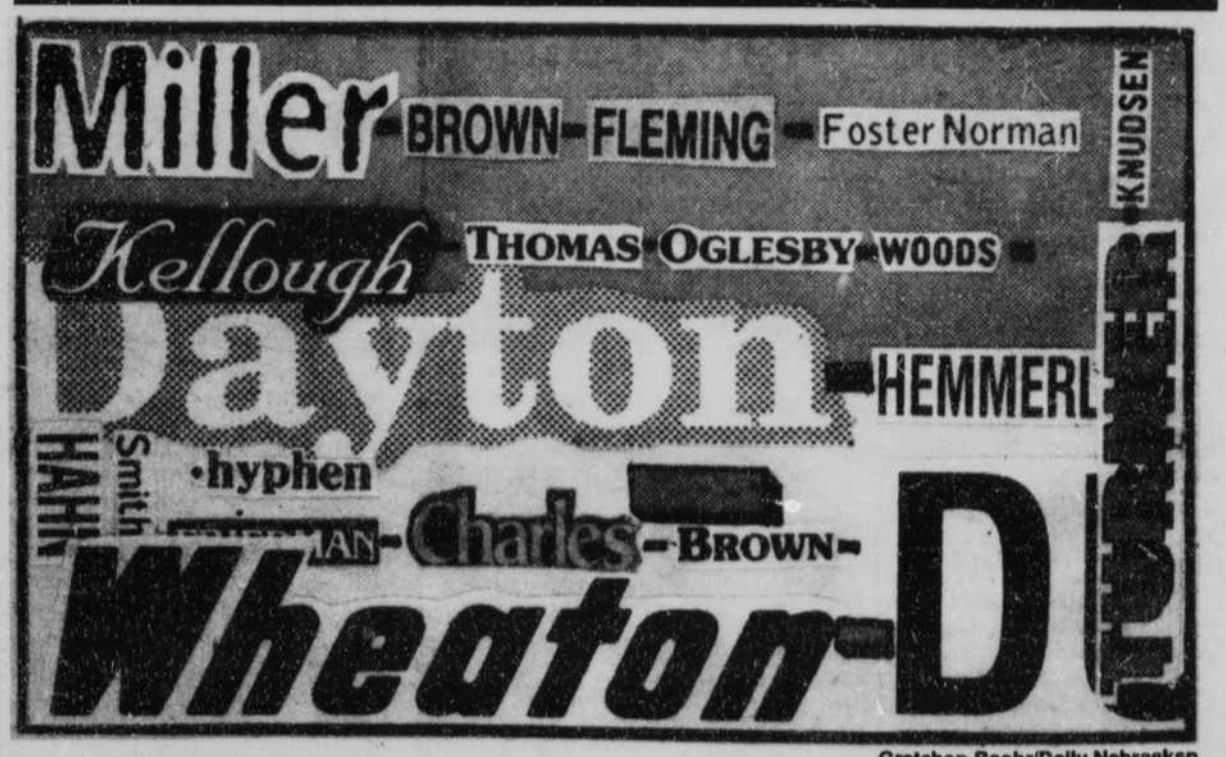

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