

Lincoln band embarks on maiden tour



Elysium Crossing

Courtesy of Thomas Irvin

By Carter Van Pelt
Staff Reporter

Among the numerous milestones en route to the success of a rock 'n' roll band is the groundbreaking first tour. The chance to gain exposure on a wide scale is fundamental to the progress of most bands.

Lincoln band Elysium Crossing, which is about to enter its fifth year of existence, has just taken this fateful step. The dates for the tour were ambitiously arranged by bassist Julian Vermaas, who had sent press kits to clubs and then followed up with phone calls to arrange dates.

Band members Shamus Adams, Michael Arsenault, Marty Klabunde, Thomas Irvin and Vermaas took to the road this month to play dates in Minneapolis, Milwaukee and Chicago. They recounted their week on the road, adding that they hope to follow this tour up with others as soon as possible.

The first gig took place in Minneapolis on the Uptown Theatre's New

Band Night where the band played to a small but receptive audience.

"We basically rocked the house," Irvin said.

After the success of the shows in Minneapolis, "we felt like we were playing in a new league," he said.

The band was made conscious of the mystique that has been left on city by the legend of rock star Prince. Band members even met a guy who claimed to have been Prince's janitor at one time.

After Monday night's gig, the band discovered a new method for economical accommodations while on tour. They checked into motels at the earliest possible hour, usually around 9 a.m., slept all day, played a show that evening and then slept all night before checking out. This earned them two nights' sleep for the price of one.

On Wednesday, they checked out Seventh Street where they would be returning to play in several weeks. The adjoining club, First Avenue, is

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ARB's borrowed lyrics and approach create enjoyable, danceable collection

By Shannon Uehling
Staff Reporter

Take a jammin' dance beat and some sassy raps, borrow some lines from various clichés and add some sampling and what you come up with is "The Hard and Soft" by ARB.

Despite the similarity in names, the opening track "New Jac City" has nothing to do with the movie "New Jack City." However, it is a combination of Marvin Gaye-ish soulful singing by Darryl Adams (from Basic Black) and a short rap by Timmy Arthur near the end.

The only mellow song on the entire album is the second tune, "All or Nothing." This well-done piece is as sappy as anything Bobby Brown might do. It is a ballad that, in its beginning, is about undying love that takes a turn for the worse when the couple breaks up.

"I want you to know that I have found someone/ Someone who cares with love and affection/ The girl is perfect, but there's one question/ That I'd like to ask, love/ Was it a waste?"

He goes on to ask why his first love couldn't have been the one.

The only problem with "All or Nothing" is that the foreground vocals are somewhat difficult to hear



over the background wailing. This is especially true with the first half of the song when the female singer Ko Ko sings.

"Crank It Up" is the third track. Because it uses a mixture of jazz, a busy drum track and fast-paced raps, the song is almost over-killed. At best, it is an ideal dance tune because of its beat.

Probably the worst song on the album is "Just Music." The whole thing is made up almost entirely of the two lines "It's just music/ It's music." This redundancy can get on the nerves of the most patient person.

The feminist listeners in the audience will probably enjoy "It's a Woman's Thang," the bonus track. It

starts out with the lines "Now it's your turn to see how it feels/ Being used as an object of sex appeal."

As the story unfolds, Ko Ko raps about her rich, lazy man and how she plans to leave him, taking the diamonds and furs that he gave her.

The most blatant use of sampling occurs near the end of "It's a Woman's Thang." ARB samples Snap!'s line "I've got the power" without crediting the band.

Two of the songs on the second side seem to have borrowed elements. "Make You Sweat" is a title that is almost an institution in itself. Keith Sweat and C&C Music Factory have both used this title, and now ARB jumps on the bandwagon.

Which came first: ARB or Vanilla Ice? Both use the hoarsely whispered refrain of "Workit, workit, workit," in the background of a song. Given the track record of the two artists, either could have copied from the other.

No one can say that ARB doesn't have a sense of humor. The band displays this in the song "Cuttin' Like Jason." That's right, Jason. As in Friday the 13th. Even Freddy makes his way into the lyrics. But that's not what

See ARB on 10

Morrison updates jazz by using technology

By James Finley
Staff Reporter

Old-time jazz finally meets up with new technologies, and the result is incredible.

James Morrison (not Jim, he's dead) uses '90s recording technologies to create one of the best albums to come along in quite some time. Playing trumpet, trombone, saxophone, euphonium (baritone) and piano at one time or another (sometimes at the same time), Morrison showcases his own versatility as well as the potential for editing.

This album is structured a little differently, as the first side is strictly Morrison playing with the standard backing trio. This is made up of Ray Brown on bass, Herb Ellis on guitar and Jeff Hamilton on drums.

The second side is devoted to big band arrangements, with Morrison playing all the horn parts. The overdubbing is not noticeable, and it is impossible to tell that it is one man playing all the parts instead of a real band.

In the quartet songs, Morrison



solos on trumpet and trombone, but he also shares the spotlight with the other members. Ellis puts in several great solos, always in the style, and each one different from the one before.

Morrison shows off his ability to play many styles as well as many instruments on the first side. He includes some slow ballads, traditional swing and be-bop tunes on this side, and he does them all equally well. A special note goes to the second song, "But Beautiful," which is one of the smoothest

See MORRISON on 10

Save your money; 'China' a good idea turned bad

By Jim Hanna
Senior Reporter

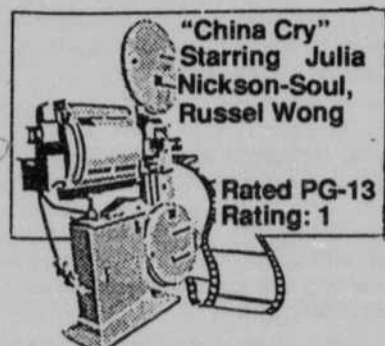
You're faced with a big choice: Either go see the new movie "China Cry" or throw a five-dollar bill on an open fire.

Hmmm... decisions, decisions. All things considered, you'd be better off torching your Abe Lincolns. You might at least be able to toast a marshmallow over the flame of your burning bill.

"China Cry" is an exceptionally bad movie that is bound to make you yearn for your wasted cash at the end.

The premise of the movie is interesting. It is based upon the true story of a woman's suffering and eventual escape from China at the height of the Communist Revolution. The woman, Neng Yee (Julia Nickson-Soul), is a top student at Soochow University in Shanghai. She is also a dedicated supporter of the revolution.

Her father is a well-respected doctor in a local hospital. Neng Yee's problems begin when her father is inexplicably demoted from his position and



is forced to scrub floors as part of his labor re-education.

Eventually, the family is forced from its home and separated. Neng Yee perseveres, however, and continues to be an advocate for the revolution and its ideals. She also manages to marry a sensitive man, Lam (Russel Wong), who wears Western clothes.

She earns a highly touted teaching position at a Chinese military school where she is in charge of educating

See CHINA on 10



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