

Traveling comedian appears at Lied

Poundstone stays close to audience despite lifestyle

comedy

By Mark Baldridge
Senior Editor

Paula Poundstone is out of touch. According to her, it's impossible not to be out of touch in "the business" — seeing America from the perspectives of a hotel room or an airplane window.

For the past 12 years she has traveled a part of each week.

But there is nothing in her manner that supports her conclusion. No one seems more like someone you might like to know.

This week Poundstone travels to Lincoln and the Lied Center for Performing Arts where she will perform Monday at 8 p.m. — thanks to the University Program Council's Major Concerts committee.

But all that traveling gets a comedian nowhere when it comes to finding common ground with an audience made up of un-famous people, some of whom never even ride on airplanes.

"I do tell airplane jokes and tragically I could think of more," Poundstone said. "But I've got to try to stop myself. I try to avoid talking about the job itself."

It's a problem for all successful

traveling comics: It's easy to forget what it's like to stay home and grow roots.

But Poundstone exudes genuineness, something lacking in the slick comedy of this generation. Her manner is refreshing; she respects her audience.

Poundstone remains connected to the common folk because, in a way, she's still one of them.

"Anyone can do it," she said, speaking of her profession. "Making a living and being good don't have nothing to do with one another."

She said some of the comics out there — comedians doing quite well for themselves — make her skin crawl because of their presumptuous attitudes toward people in the audience.

"Being on television is no measure of talent," she said.

But it takes something special to be Paula Poundstone, the friendly comic. In an atmosphere where viciousness seems to be the formula for success, listening to her talk serves as a reminder that one can be fresh and funny and not out to draw blood.

And she is very funny, although her material isn't so different from anyone else's. And really, it can't be.

"Sometimes I lie awake at night and think, 'There are only three jokes,'" she said.

But her energy and delivery are all her own and have to be experienced. She has been compared to great comics such as Robin Williams and Jay Leno — but she's like no one else.

After listening to her for just a few moments, one gets the feeling of having known her for a long time and that there is more to her to know.

And therein lies her genius. Because she is nice to know and funny as hell on top of that.



The Lied Center for Performing Arts will be the site of Paula Poundstone's comedy act Monday at 8 p.m.

Courtesy of Michelle Marx, Inc.

Illinois band may attract fans in droves to The Edge

By Stacey McKenzie
Senior Reporter

The alternative experimentalist band They Came in Doves will roll into Lincoln Saturday to play at The Edge, 227 N. 9th St.

This band from Springfield, Ill., isn't willing to test out self-fulfilling prophecy on its name.

They Came in Doves leaves no room for chance in its music. It is clearly put together, but still sounds tough and guitar-driven.

For those fans disenchanted by U2's latest endeavors, including the Zoo TV extravaganza, the second and latest release by this band could be a remedy.

"Hundred Acre Wood," released on the band's independent label, Cardboard Town, sounds a lot like early U2.

Glenn Dillman — credited on the release as "The Voice and Guitars" — has early Bono qualities, long howls and melodic but lyricless vocal passages.

"Hundred Acre Wood," a title gleaned from Winnie the Pooh lore, is filled with 13 tracks of great tunes.

"Strings" and "Wonder," the first two tracks on the release, are meaty with the skilled guitar work of Ted Brannon. Bassist Mark Finney and drummer Gary Hawthorne keep ev-

See DROVES on 13

Jamaica's Shabba Ranks rocks all styles with "X-tra Naked"

Reviews



Shabba Ranks
"X-tra Naked"
Epic

Coming from Jamaica, "X-tra Naked" is the latest album from Shabba Ranks.

The album goes beyond one single style to offer something for everyone.

Shabba Ranks could be called the LL Cool J of the dancehall reggae scene. The different sides of Shabba's music can be compared to aspects of LL, as well as a similar charisma that draws in the listener.

Some listeners might remember the Shabba Ranks/KRS-One team up on "The Jam" from Shabba's 1991 album "As Raw As Ever," an album that broke a lot of ground for dancehall reggae.

Queen Latifah is recruited on the new album to rap on "What 'Cha Gonna Do?"

Hip-hop is merely one of the facets of Shabba. An R & B flavor shows up on "Slow and Sexy," a song that features Johnny Gill.

The song is produced by Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, who add smooth bass grooves with a jazz piano beneath alternating verses of the two. Unfortunately, Gill's vocals really overshadow Shabba in this song. This isn't Shabba's best style.

An underground rap flavor is brought by Chubb Rock on "Two Bredderens." As Chubb says, "Here's a story of two roughnecks who've come to glory." Shabba's voice complements the background well.

It may seem that Shabba needs other artists to excel, but actually, the rest of the album is all Shabba.



Courtesy of Epic Records

Shabba Ranks gets some help from Johnny Gill and Queen Latifah on his debut album, "X-tra Naked."

Using both hip-hop and reggae beats, Shabba "toasts" his way through nine other tracks.

One track that stands out is "Ready-Ready, Goody-Goody." Using a familiar sample as background (also used by Terminator X in "Homey Don't Play That" and most recently by En Vogue in "My Lovin'"), this song is high powered and dance-oriented.

Here Shabba claims, "Shabba the greatest of them all/the girls

call the king of the dancehall." And king he is. This song rocks!

In the thick of dancehall, listeners might find it hard to understand the Jamaican accent. Shabba has an almost perfect balance of accent and clarity. That's one of his best qualities, along with his charisma.

Even though this album jumps around and samples pieces of many styles, Shabba can make them all work. Shabba's voice is dancehall candy for the ears.

—Greg Schick

Big Bub album has appeal above, beyond funny name

Reviews



"Comin' At Cha"
Big Bub
East/West Records America

With a name like Big Bub, there has to be some kind of appeal that would make a potential buyer want to buy this singer's album.

It might help the listener to know that Big Bub was the lead singer of the group Today, and he has gone solo so he can do his own thing. If that still does not have them convinced, then they should give Big Bub a chance and a listen.

"Comin' At Cha" opens up with "Head Bangin'," which is more like a prelude for what is to follow. "Head Bangin'" smoothly switches into the next cut, "I Don't Mind," a funky cut with the synthesizers heavy at work to make this tune a winner.

"I Want You 4 Me" is a cut that will feature the familiar "B to the I to the G" rap that Big Bub often incorporated when he was with the group Today.

Big Bub has a distinct voice that will capture the listening audience and make "Comin' At Cha" appealing. Big Bub also is able to use that new jack style to his advantage and

make it work.

"I Want You 4 Me," "Touch Me," featuring rapper YoYo, and "Hittin' Skinz" are all cuts that include some new jack swing.

While the first half of "Comin' At Cha" will get your attention, the last half of this LP will keep it.

Big Bub, staying with the Today formula, has a number of ballads that finish out the album.

"Tellin' Me Stories" is one of those ballads that start to put the listener at ease. This is one of the better songs on the LP, not because of the style of the song, but because of the way it is sung. Big Bub comes through and shows the torque of his voice.

"Take My Heart" and "Simon Sez" are other examples of the singing ability of Big Bub with which he is able to capture the listening audience with his distinct voice.

Overall, this is a very nice LP. "Comin' At Cha" is like the tale of two different albums, the first half slamming and up-tempo and the last half slowing to a nice relaxing pitch.

Big Bub is successfully able to make the transition from group member to soloist using the same formula that seems to work for him.

The appeal of "Comin' At Cha" is not in the name of Big Bub, but the music that he sings.

—Anthony D. Speights

entertainment

SHORTS

UNL musicians to sing operas

From Staff Reports

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln School of Music will present "Opera Showcase" today and Saturday in Kimball Hall.

"Opera Showcase" is a compilation of excerpts from seven famous operas: "Fidelio," "Abduction from Seraglio," "Cosi fan tutte," "A Month in the Country,"

"Lucia di Lammermoor," "Madama Butterfly" and "Albert Herring."

Visiting stage director David Bartholomew, 23 UNL students, Lincoln citizens and a member of the UNL voice faculty will perform the various scenes. Michael Cotton will accompany on the piano.

Tickets for the 8 p.m. shows are \$5 for adults and \$3 for students.