

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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Star City handed its new musical 'Grooves'

By Doug Peters
Staff Reporter

Lincoln has been hopefully referred to as "the next Seattle," but never "the next Motown." In fact, R&B and hip-hop acts have been scarce in Lincoln.

Black Hand Groove wants to change that.

Cecil "C" Howell and Rudy "Deja" Moseley, collectively known as "Deja C," will begin that change tonight at 10 by performing with fellow R&B and hip-hop band Peace Nation at Duffy's Tavern, 1412 O St.

Howell and Moseley are Black Hand Groove's two vocalists.

Made up of eight University of Nebraska-Lincoln students, Black Hand Groove was formed last semester. Band members have tried to increase the variety of music available to the community.

Howell, Brian Tegtmeier, Tim Easter, Duane Wiles and Jim Jordan formed the band last fall and held weekly practices at the Culture Center. The five original members brought with them diverse backgrounds and musical tastes, and the addition of new members Moseley, Adam Vogt and Roland Pinto this semester has increased the mix.

Howell, a sophomore computer science and international business major with a vocal music minor, said the variety of musical interest had improved the band's material.

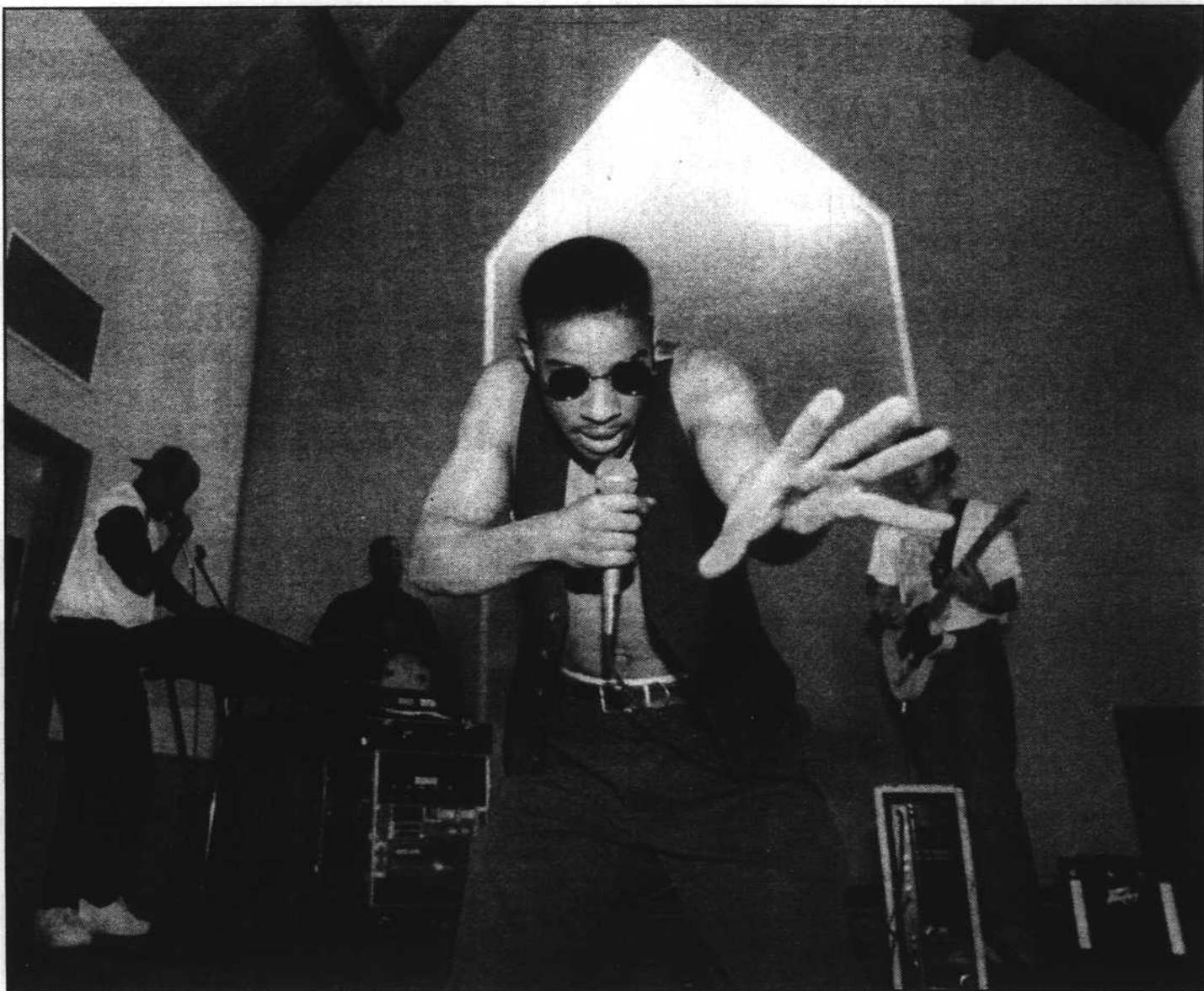
"Between last semester and this semester, we've really improved with Rudy and his reggae influence," Howell said. "It added more flavor — it spiced things up a bit."

But reggae is just one ingredient in Black Hand Groove's music recipe. Band members said their influences include classic rock, soul, R&B, rap and Latin and calypso music. Elements of all these influences can be found in their music, because everyone is involved in the writing process, Howell said.

Both Howell and Moseley said the group went against some recent trends in hip-hop music, such as gangsta rap.

"We don't write things that are risqué," Howell said. "Our last concert was in a church."

Although there are few R&B and hip-



Jay Calderon/DN

Cecil Howell and the rest of the band Black Hand Groove rehearse Saturday at the Culture Center.

hop bands in Lincoln, Howell said, the bands work together to get maximum exposure.

"We're all pretty much interlinked," he said. "We're unique in our time and we're unique to this city, because we all come together."

None of the band members are sure about the group's long-term plans. Several members are working on solo projects and preparing demo tapes in hopes of getting a record deal; others are preparing for graduation and graduate school.

In the immediate future, however, the

group is planning to head for the studio later this month to record some new songs.

Meanwhile, the best way to get a feel for Black Hand Groove's style, Howell said, is to catch the band during its jam sessions Saturdays from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Culture Center.

HAVE BLUES, WILL TRAVEL



Jeff Haller/DN

Blues Traveler singer John Popper sings to a sold-out crowd Tuesday night at Omaha's Civic Auditorium Music Hall.

Fusion celebrates African heritage

By Charles Russell
Performance Critic

A very fortunate group of individuals from a spectrum of ethnic backgrounds checked their cynicism at the door to take part in the performance of Fusion Tuesday night in the Nebraska Union.

The group, a dance/music/theater ensemble from Atlanta is produced by Speech from "Arrested Development." Led by dancer/writer/choreographer Ajile, the group blends classic and modern African and African-American traditions to create a new and powerful form of expression.

In the words of Ajile, Fusion is "a merging of distinct positive elements into one unified whole." The object of this fusion is to teach and celebrate the rich and vital African heritage. Their message is a positive one, of hope and optimism, and their presentation was wonderful.

Fusion uses such diverse elements as dance, drums, slide projections and a disc jockey to reach

out to its audience.

Starting out their performance asking for audience participation, Ajile proclaimed, "It's not a show, folks!" She couldn't have been more right. What ensued was a brilliantly vibrant and passionate evening in which the audience was often asked to join the performers on stage.

The show began with a simple African dance technique in which a single dancer was accompanied by a single drummer.

The show progressed through several African styles, adding more dancers until a stylized recreation of the arrival of slave traders broke the established celebration and rhythm. The question was raised by Ajile, "What strange child will the rape of the Motherland give birth to?"

The answer was African-American music and dance. The musical traditions from Africa were traced from the pulsating beat of Brazil through plantation slave celebrations, all the way through the melodic grace of Motown.