

POLKAPALOOZA



The Grammy-nominated polka band Brave Combo put on a live stage show Wednesday evening at Homer's, 1339 O St. The band concluded a two-day stay in Lincoln with a show at the Zoo Bar last night.

Wustman

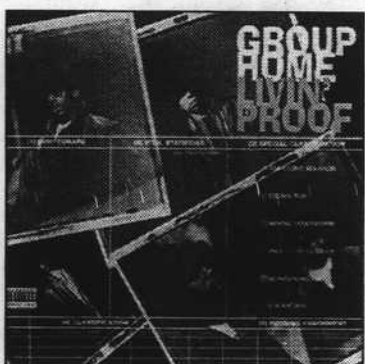
Continued from Page 12

birth, at the University of Illinois. Wustman faces a daunting task because more than 300 of Schubert's songs are rarely performed, Shomos said. "There are three volumes of Schubert," he said. "People mostly hear from volume one songs, so there's a multitude of songs never done. "What's wonderful about this program is that it gives the audience a chance to hear live what otherwise can only be found on recordings. "It's also great for the performers to perform songs not done otherwise." The majority of Wustman's performances have been at colleges and universities in the Midwest, Shomos said. Wustman also has performed in Nevada, Florida and in the New England area. Shomos said Friday's concert

would be Wustman's second Nebraska appearance for the project. His first was in 1994. The performers are from a class that Wustman teaches on interpreting Schubert, Shomos said. Formal education aside, Wustman's education also has come from his stints as accompanist for world-class performers such as Nicolai Gedda, Luciano Pavarotti, Birgit Nilsson and Elizabeth Swazkopf, Shomos said. By accompanying Swazkopf, Wustman gained invaluable interpretation techniques. "She's arguably one of the greatest interpreters of German art songs in this century," Shomos said. "He's an accompanist by trade. So much of his life revolves around the German composers of the 19th century and the German art songs," Shomos said. "He did all of Hugo Wolf's songs at the University of Illinois." Shomos said he respected Wustman's abilities.

"One thing that makes him such an incredible player is his ability to make the piano sing," he said. "When he is playing for someone, it's not so much him and the singer, it's like two singers." Shomos said that the audience would gain much from Wustman's performance. "If they will read programs with the translations, assuming they don't know German, they will experience something on a couple of levels," Shomos said. "First, they can experience the genius of Franz Schubert and how he is able to capture the meaning of poem through his incredible gift of melody. "The other level is for the audience to experience live interpretation in this musical setting under the guidance of someone who is perhaps the most brilliant accompanist and interpreter of Schubert's songs alive today." Friday's concert will start at 8 p.m. Admission is free.

Music Reviews



Group Home
"Livin' Proof"
Payday/FFRR
Grade: A-

Group Home is the latest installment in the Gang Starr family of hip-hop. DJ Premier and Guru have consistently had a hand in work from quality rappers, and "Livin' Proof" is no exception.

L'il Dap first appeared on Gang Starr's "I'm the Man" with Jeru, another brilliant Primo creation. Now in conjunction with the other half of his duo, Malachi the Nutcracker, Dap brings the real.

You might think with no gimmicks or funny voices, they could go unnoticed in the downpour of rappers coming out of New York.

OK, you would never say that about something produced by Premier, but what is it that makes Group Home's style so appealing? The answer is honesty. These two don't pretend to be anything they are not.

If you doubt it, listen to "Suspended in Time" or the title track. Dap and Mal could be the guys next door if you didn't know better.

Group Home's first introduction as a separate entity came with "Supa Star," one of last year's best singles. The rest of the album is just as good. Any track could potentially be a single.

"Serious Rap Shit" pops in with classic Premier bounce and a guest shot from Guru, who still rips it as well as ever.

Never giving listeners any fluff, Group Home has 11 tight songs, no doubt.

It is Group Home that has pushed New York hip-hop to raise the stakes of the game.

— Greg Schick

Ritual Device
"Rabe 7-inch"
Ism Recordings/Caufield Records
Grade: B+

When Ritual Device called it quits last summer, many local music fans were disappointed and felt that the Omaha/Lincoln music scene had lost something unique.

Well-known for lead singer Tim Moss' stage antics — which included pelting concertgoers with raw pigs' ears and hoofs at the Lollapalooza '92 show in Des Moines, Iowa — the band always drew attention to itself. And it helped many of the current local bands get off the ground.

The "Rabe 7-inch" was scheduled to be released as "Porkfist" in early 1993, and was to feature cover art by famed poster artist Frank Kozik. But Kozik never followed through and, after the band's demise, the former members made a cover for themselves. Appropriately, they named the record after the person who supplied the grisly cartilage cover art.

"Porkfist," which was recorded by David Wm. Simms of the Jesus Lizard at Steve Albini's Chicago studio, represents Ritual Device at its best. This song is two minutes long and features Mike Saklar on slide guitar. Moss' vocals are amazingly more evil than usual. And, as always, drummer Eric Ebers provides the perfect backbone.

"The Young at Heart," a Frank Sinatra cover, is the B-side and sounds nothing like the original. Ritual Device succeeds in destroying this song about the pleasures of life and turning it into its own. The minor key playing of Saklar, along with the distorted bass playing of Jerry Hug, build and release tension throughout this song. This thrill ride is deserving of more than a typical B-side billing.

This record features two "classic" Ritual Device songs and is an essential for any local music fan. All things considered, it's a nice ending for a band that should have enjoyed a great deal of success.

— Brooks Hitt

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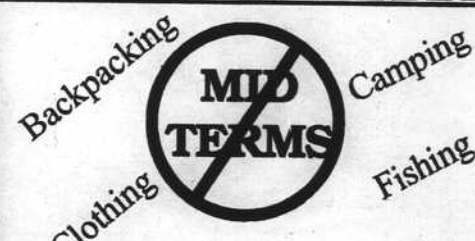
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