

Performer combines disciplines

BY SARAH BAKER
Senior Reporter

It's storytelling with more than just words.

And it's probably not what anyone is going to expect.

Dan Froot, an experimental dance and performance artist, comes to Lincoln's Wagon Train Project this weekend.

Froot, who has presented his work across the United States and Europe, said he considers himself an "interdisciplinary artist."

"I play saxophone, I am an actor and also a dancer," Froot said. "In this act, I perform all those disciplines virtually at the same time, intermeshed."

Froot said his performance is more than just music, acting and dancing.

"I do all these things virtually simultaneously, and through that, tell stories," he said.

Froot said this particular piece is a collaboration of several of his own solo pieces and includes a duet with saxophonist David Dorfman.

"The dance part of the program doesn't fit into any certain mold," Froot said. "It's movement more than anything. It's very high-energy."

Froot said he decided to perform at the Wagon Train Project after he got to know director Amy Lamphere.

"I am an old colleague of Amy's, and I have been to Lincoln on several occasions, once just recently," he said. "But I have an ongoing relationship with the Wagon Train Project."

Lamphere said she thought Froot's show would be one of the more extraordinary acts to come to Lincoln.

"He dances and plays saxophone, and through those creates movement theater," Lamphere said. "His act is very unusual and very fun."

Froot said the show is experimental, but in a welcoming way.

"If people are put off by the thought of 'experimental' theater, this is something new," he said. "I try to demystify the arts and communicate with the audience on a more personal level."

Froot said the show has an intimate and comforting feel to it.

"I think the audience can expect to have whatever expectations they have coming into the show to be broken in some way before the night is over," he said. "It's going to be both fun and informative in a very provocative way."

Dan Froot performs this weekend at the Wagon Train Project, 504 S. Seventh St. Performances are Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Admission is free, but contributions of \$10 for adults and \$5 for students are suggested.

For more information, call the Wagon Train Project at (402) 435-7776.

What's for the frequency?

Radio King finds niche in rockabilly

BY BRET SCHULTE
Assignment Reporter

They wear old suits, play even older instruments and sing about love when it strikes a trailer park.

It may sound like a group of poor Elvis impersonators, but Radio King can't help the way it looks.

Radio King drummer Rand Paul said wearing suits to the shows began with the band's guitarist, Tony Robertson, who wears a suit every day.

"We're not trying to make Tony look like Elvis," Paul said. "He's always been that way. It's nothing intentional at all, we've been playing this kind of crap for a long time."

Although Robertson, Paul and bassist Marty Steinhausen have played together for years in an outfit called Cowtown, they formed Radio King as a means to take their music in a different direction.

"Some of the bands that we used to be in were pushing too hard toward that alternative kind of thing and got in a rut," Paul said.

After playing together for about four years, the Lincoln group made a musical U-turn and returned to the rock 'n' roll that the band always found itself playing just for fun: rockabilly.

A little after a year since its conception, Radio King continues to make a name for itself around Nebraska with its roots-rockabilly sound, vintage instruments and slick appearance.

"We're way more popular now that we went in the direction we were naturally drawn to," Paul said. "It's much more effortless now, and we don't have to think about the music as much."

Like most bands, Radio King's appearance closely relates to its



RADIO KING, a local band that is as known for its snappy attire as well as its music, will perform Thursday night at the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St.

Concert Preview

music, which in this case shows a strong fondness for classic American culture, especially its music.

Along with classic-looking suits, members play exclusively vintage instruments. Robertson owns several guitars from the '60s, including Gibsons and a '63 Gretsch. Neither Paul nor Steinhausen are as old as the instruments they play, said Steinhausen, who owns a Kay upright bass from the '50s.

"Vintage instruments seem to have more style and class," Steinhausen said.

Using classic instruments in the band helped members finally find the sound they were searching for, Paul said.

The result has been overwhelming responses from audiences, which frequently end up dancing near the stage to the group's rapid rockabilly delivery.

"It's a thrill when people dance," Steinhausen said. "We used to play in bands that people would never dance to. It's pretty typical now, especially

"Any time you see people in the crowd reacting - bobbing their heads, singing along or getting off to the music - that's where the real magic happens."

MARTY STEINHAUSEN
bassist

after they've had a few drinks."

The group has become so popular, in fact, that it cut an independent album only a few months after its conception. Steinhausen said the record has been selling well at their shows.

One of Radio King's most popular songs is "The Flies are Bitin'," a ballad with bullet-like delivery about love between two trailer-park residents.

Steinhausen said the songs he writes for the band usually involve classic American themes such as trains and jails, although he claims

never to have served any jail time.

Radio King plays Thursday night at the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St., at 10. There is a \$2 cover charge.

Steinhausen said he loves playing this music for people and watching them dance to it.

"Any time you see people in the crowd reacting - bobbing their heads, singing along or getting off to the music - that's where the real magic happens."

"If it wasn't for the feedback we'd stay in the basement and play with ourselves."

Madonna constructs ethereal electronica



Madonna
"Ray of Light"
Maverick/Warner Bros.
Grade: B

In her decade-plus of music industry work, Madonna has been called everything from a master of pop to a shameless self-promoter.

One thing she's rarely been called is derivative.

Music

But on "Ray of Light," Madonna's first post-childbirth album, the undisputed queen of MTV and dance-floor pop music is being just that. Along with co-producer William Orbit, she dives headfirst into the still-simmering kettle of electronic music that was all of last year's rage.

The result is an album full of songs that ring with familiarity and, occasionally, redundancy to anyone who is familiar with the so-called electronica genre.

For pretty much anyone else, such a trick would sound ugly and pointless; but in Madonna's hands, it sounds beautiful.

As America's dance-craze leader for a generation, Madonna's embrace of electronica in its truest form somehow legitimizes the entire genre.

From the opening track, "Drowned

World/Substitute for Love," it is evident that Madonna has changed her musical style yet again. The slow-jam style of this track and several others on the album reveals her penchant for the darker side of music, both lyrically and aurally.

The music follows the line of established electronic artists such as Faithless (most famous for its song "Insomnia"), whose stripped-down sonic approach and relatively simplistic song structures make for a more pedestrian and palatable form of electronic music.

This restrained approach is most likely because of Orbit's production. Orbit has earned a reputation with both his solo work and his production and remixing skills, which he previously has applied to other artists, including Peter Gabriel, Prince and Depeche Mode. His past work with Madonna (on remixes of "Justify My Love" and "Erotic," most notably) showed hints of what was to come on

this album.

But "Ray of Light" goes beyond the duo's previous collaborations and, even while working in a familiar genre, breaks new ground.

Tracks such as "Candy Perfume Girl" and "Frozen" are as strong as most of Madonna's past hit tracks.

Lyrical, most of the album follows Madonna's traditional vein of love and loss, lust and desire, with the occasional personal political statement injected for good measure. But on "Little Star," one of the album's last tracks, she sends a sweet message to her daughter that, although probably not destined for major radio airplay, is notable.

Overall, "Ray of Light" proves that just because Madonna has decided to take a couple years off, she cannot be kept on the sidelines of pop music. In fact, she still rules the game. And that condition will last for a long time.

—Jeff Randall