

Two-band lineup likely to draw crowd

BY SARAH BAKER
Staff Reporter

They are two bands that don't suck.

But according to Floating Opera pianist Richard Rebarber, that's not the only reason Friday's double bill of Floating Opera and Lincoln's own Mercy Rule is sure to draw a crowd.

"This is a big show," said Rebarber, who is also a University of Nebraska-Lincoln professor of mathematics. "This is the first time Mercy Rule has ever headlined a show with Floating Opera."

This may not seem like a big deal, but because of the history behind Floating Opera, it definitely is.

Most of Floating Opera's six core musicians are part of other musical acts, three of those six being in Mercy Rule.

"Mercy Rule is a really important part of the group," Rebarber said. "Floating Opera brings together bands who each have a very

different approach to making music."

Rebarber said Friday's show would include the core members of Floating Opera, as well as some guests, bringing the total to about nine people, most of whom will almost always be on the stage.

After Floating Opera is done playing, the three members of Mercy Rule will then take the stage for another set.

Rebarber said Floating Opera shows are few and far between for a reason.

"We try not to play too often, only about once every three months," he said. "We don't want to saturate the market. We want a Floating Opera show to be something special."

Even though they don't play all that often, Rebarber said he thought the band still had a loyal fan base.

"We definitely have a distinct following," he said. "We are a really song-oriented band, and I think that is something that draws the crowd."

He said he thought a lot of people might be surprised at what they heard at the show.

"We've changed a lot of things since the

CD came out (1997's 'Everybody's Somebody's Monster)," Rebarber said. "Our sound is so different from Mercy Rule's. This is a great show because you're going to get to hear Floating Opera playing with finesse, and Mercy Rule bashing things out."

Rebarber said the show will include one new song, as well as some unrecorded work.

"We try to incorporate at least one new song into every show," he said.

Rebarber said although he is always looking for new musicians to add to the group, the main core of the group is as stable as ever.

"I used to think of Floating Opera as a collective group, but now I think of them as a real band," he said.

Floating Opera and Mercy Rule will play at Knickerbockers, 901 O St., Friday night. The show begins at 10:45 p.m. and is open to people who are 18 and over.

For tickets or more information, call Knickerbockers at (402) 476-6865.

Children of all ages wage war at Laser Quest

LASER from page 5

they practice alone. On average, each member puts in two hours of practice time a week.

For non-members, the regulars would likely shred people apart.

UNL student Andy Schuerman, a junior business education major, invited his friends, Chanda Miller and Aleta Anthony for a game. It was Miller's and Anthony's first time at laser tag. It was Schuerman's second time.

"I didn't know what to expect at first," Schuerman said. "It was sweaty. I can understand how it attracts a lot of ages."

Miller, a junior international affairs major, said she thought she was a decent shot before

going into the arena.

"It's great for people who don't want to sit through a movie, people like us who have too much energy."

Anthony, a junior secondary education major, said laser tag was a decent alternative to the party scene.

"I'm sort of expecting it to be like 'Mission: Impossible,' lots of dives and rolls," Anthony said.

Twenty minutes later, Anthony, Miller and Schuerman emerged, sweat-soaked and exhilarated.

"I found myself being more competitive because I knew where to go this time," Schuerman said.

Anthony wasn't quite as happy. She placed seventh in the game.

"I'm a little frustrated. I'm a fairly competitive person," she said.

Miller placed second. She compared the experience to Anthony's parallel to "Mission: Impossible."

"I loved it, I was really getting into it, crouching and hiding out," she said.

Schuerman said downtown would be a perfect place to have another Laser Quest arena.

"It's something you can do and be competitive as you want or as recreational as you want," he said.

MUSIC

Slightly Stoopid
"The Longest Barrel Ride"
Skunk Records
Grade: A

Skunk Records, the label started in part by the late Brad Nowell of Sublime, is doing very well for itself. Bands that have been or are on the label include Sublime, Long Beach Dub All-Stars, the Ziggens and Slightly Stoopid, the last of which is probably right now the best band on the label.

Slightly Stoopid, hailing from San Diego, is three guys who blend reggae and punk into a mix that even Sublime had a tough time keeping up with. The Brad Nowell influence on the band is obvious, with "The Longest Barrel Ride" sounding like a less-ska and more-reggae version of Sublime's "40 Oz. to Freedom."

The album is the band's second on Skunk Records, and it contains fewer punk songs than the last one. However, songs such as "Johnny Law" and "Sinking Stone" still contain the driving guitar that pushed their last self-titled record.

"Castles of Sand" opens the album with a slow reggae groove and features a keyboard following along. The song is truly representative of the twenty songs on the record and serves as a great lead-in for the rest of the CD.

"Mr. Music" is another solid reggae sing-along which is distinguished by Adam's solid drum beats, which really push the song along. "Jedi" is Slightly Stoopid's contribution of a Star Wars reference that features bassist Kyle on a short solo and Tim Wu as a guest on saxophone.

While every song on the disc is notable and each is worthy of mention, "Ese Loco" is probably the best song here. It features slow reggae sections and well as hard-rocking parts that show the versatility of Slightly Stoopid, and it is the type of song that can stay on repeat for a while.

Slightly Stoopid may not be known on every block, but their music is good enough that most everyone can get something from this record. So be the first cool kid you know and pick this one up.

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