

Concert Preview

Silos do the lineup shuffle again

Group's music reflects changing locales, chemistry of musicians

BY SEAN MCCARTHY
Staff writer

The Silos have gone through more changes than David Bowie's wardrobe in their 12-year career.

The lineup, save lead singer and guitarist Walter Salas-Humara, has changed with every new album. They are currently on their fifth record label in the past 10 years.

And to top it all off, the touring musicians are not the same as those who recorded the Silos' latest album, "Heater" — a worthy feat, considering 12 musicians helped record the album.

In a phone interview from Minneapolis, Salas-Humara said all the changes the Silos have gone through were just a natural growing process. He said he was happy about the chemistry of the current touring lineup.

The lineup features David Gehrke on drums and Andrew Glackin on bass. Even though Salas-Humara was essentially starting from scratch with a new lineup, he said it didn't take long before a chemistry was established.

"Everything just sort of falls into place," Salas-Humara said, "It just kind of happens."

Tonight that chemistry comes to Duffy's Tavern, 1412 O St., when the

Silos take the stage for a 21-and-over show. The Silos have played the Ranch Bowl in Omaha, but this show will be the Silos' first Lincoln appearance.

Salas-Humara said he wasn't planning on extensively touring for now. The Silos are doing an exclusively Midwestern tour through Thanksgiving. So far, the band has played shows in Illinois, Wisconsin and Kentucky.

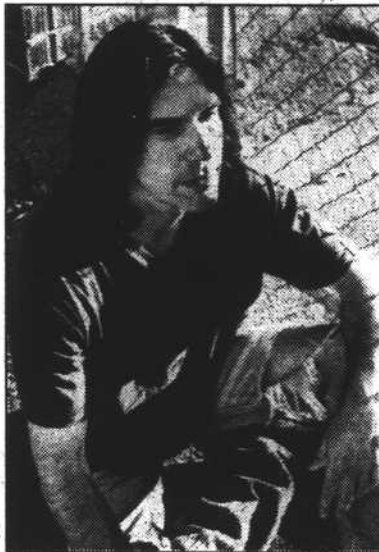
"We just got done playing this weird, little punk-rock club in Louisville," he said.

Punk rock is not the first adjective that comes to mind when describing the Silos' style of music. While their self-titled album and their independent releases are very much in the No Depression vein of alternative country rock, it certainly is not limited to that.

Salas-Humara was born in Cuba, raised in New York and has lived in Los Angeles. All the sounds from those cities seep through their releases, especially in their latest album, "Heater," the first album on Checkered Past records, which only took a month to record.

Unlike earlier works, Salas-Humara said he wrote most of the lyrics to "Heater" while he was recording. He said he liked how that approach captured a more spontaneous side of himself as a songwriter.

"For the newer records, the lyrics



COURTESY PHOTO
LED BY SINGER, songwriter, producer and guitarist Walter Salas-Humara, the Silos describe themselves only as an "American band."

have been less personal and more fictional," Salas-Humara said, "But it's impossible not to have personal events creep in on some level."

Tonight's show starts at 10 with opening guest Marlee MacLeod. Admission is \$5.

Omaha Symphony joins celebration of Gershwin

BY LIZA HOLTMEIER
Staff writer

Sometimes, birthday celebrations improve after you're dead.

Take George Gershwin for example. He died in 1937, but this year, symphonies and musicians across the nation are preparing to celebrate his 100th birthday with concerts devoted to his work.

This weekend, the Omaha Symphony wants to kick in its own birthday present to one of America's greatest composers.

Following on the heels of Maureen McGovern's Gershwin concert at the Lied Center for Performing Arts and the Nebraska Brass's offering of "Mozart, Gershwin and All That Jazz," the Omaha Symphony will present "New York, New York." The concert, which runs Friday and Saturday in Omaha, features a selection of works by George Gershwin and his brother, Ira.

Adam Branting, public relations spokesman for the Omaha Symphony, said Gershwin's music has remained popular because of its originality.

"It was the first classical music made in America that was not based on European music. It's music by an

American based on American themes," Branting said.

This weekend's concert provides a cross section of some of the brothers' best known work, including "I Got Rhythm," "Nice Work If You Can Get It" and "They Can't Take That Away From Me."

While the concert is an homage to the genius of George Gershwin, Branting warns that Ira Gershwin's contribution should not be overlooked.

"You cannot have a George Gershwin without an Ira Gershwin. The one had music flowing out of his fingertips, and the other one had words and lyrics coming out of his. Together, they were magical," Branting said.

In addition to the Gershwin works, the concert features Kurt Weill's "A Threepenny Opera" and Leonard Bernstein's "Fancy Free" ballet.

Hal France, artistic director of Opera Omaha, will conduct the concert, while Sylvia McNair, a Grammy Award-winning soprano, will perform as soloist.

The Omaha Symphony will present the concert Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. at the Orpheum Theater, 409 S. 16th St. Tickets range from \$10.50 to \$34.50. For reservations, call the Omaha Symphony Box Office at (402) 342-3560.

Statistics show motorcycle enthusiasts getting older

MONTEREY, Calif. (AP) — It's a typical day at the California Superbike School.

Young racer wannabes are stuffing themselves into fluorescent leather suits, eagerly awaiting a chance to climb aboard the two-wheeled missiles that accelerate quicker than any production car and can top 150 mph.

Mixed in with the youngsters at Laguna Seca Raceway just outside this resort town on the California coast are several riders who ...

How to put this?

They're geezers. Gray hair. Or no hair. Bifocals. Guys who should be flailing at golf balls, not hugging motorcycles and dragging their knees around asphalt corners at escape velocity.

Don't tell that to Barry Ellman, a 53-year-old vascular surgeon from Scotch Plains, N.J., who's been riding for 35 years. He has seen the damage a lapse in concentration or a dozing motorist can do to a motorcyclist, but he still loves to ride.

"As a doctor, I've seen a lot of terrible things happen to people," he said while awaiting his turn on the track. "I'm going to have as much fun as I

can."

So, are bikers really getting older?

Keith Code, who runs the riding school, thinks so. In that over-50 group himself, he says the average age of students has risen from 24 in the early 1980s to 37 now.

"Baby boomers are the biggest group in the population now," he said. "The kids are gone, disposable income is up, and when they get into bikes, they want to do it right."

Bill Wood agrees. He's the managing editor of American Motorcyclist, a monthly magazine published by the American Motorcyclist Association for its 225,000-plus members.

"Yes, there's no question about it, for better or worse. Our surveys have indicated

that our membership's average age is now about 44," Wood said.

"What we have seen is not necessarily people starting out for the first time," he said. "We're seeing re-entry riders, people who had motorcycles as teens or young adults and got out."

"Now, their kids are in college or married. And they are in a position to enjoy some of the recreation they enjoyed a long time ago."

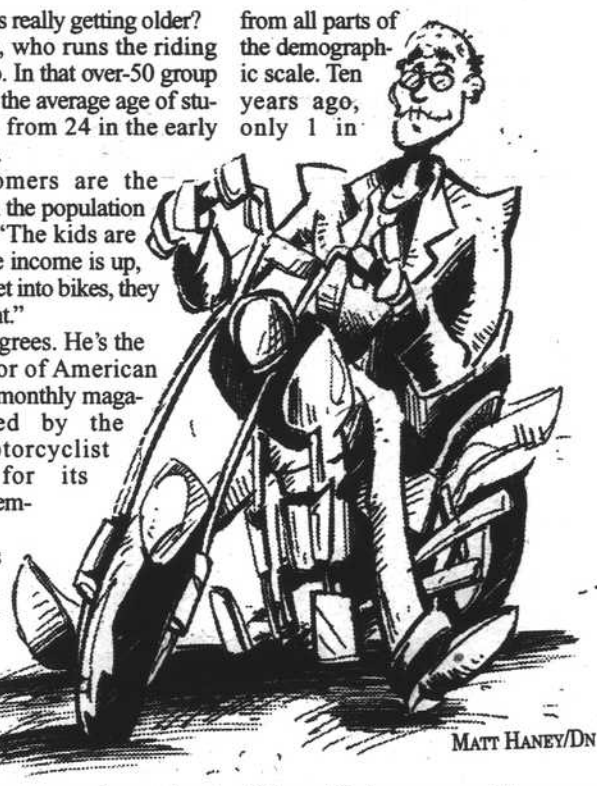
Other details of the survey: The average member is married, has attended college and has a household income of more than \$63,000. Seventy-five percent paid for their bikes in cash — no mean feat when even the most basic machine can cost \$5,000 and top-of-the-line touring bikes are pushing \$20,000. Some 91 percent are men.

The most noticeable trend: The average age of riders has gone up 5½ years in the last eight years.

Another trend: More and more women are behind the handlebars, as shown by membership rolls of the Harley Owners Group, a 15-year-old club sponsored by the Harley-Davidson Motor Co. in Milwaukee, with chapters around the world.

"Once upon a time, HOG was predominately a male-oriented group, but that has really changed," Harley spokesman Chris Romoser said. "What we are finding is members are coming

from all parts of the demographic scale. Ten years ago, only 1 in



MATT HANEY/DN

100 new Harleys were sold to women. That's up to 1 in 10 now.

"One way we look at it, our lives are so time-compressed; a motorcycle is something you can take a half-hour vacation on," he added. "That appeal of independence and freedom is universal."

Nelson Powell is another riding doctor, a head and neck surgeon at Stanford University Hospital who admits only to being in his 50s. Powell, wearing high-end leathers in orange and gray, drove to the track in a vast blue-and-tan motor home. He often uses it to take one of his more than half-dozen bikes to a track, although today he's riding one of the school's machines.

"I love to ride things that go fast," he said, "but I like to do it in the safest possible manner. I go to schools, and I learn to ride with professionals."

Powell is unusual in that he does most of his riding at schools or open track days. He owns a small fleet of exotic imports that can't be used on the highway, like the Italian Aprilia, and he uses them to test himself against race courses.

"I don't think much about crashing anymore," he said, "but I've learned never to get rid of the fear."

But he's going to keep riding. "I'm not the kind of guy to hit a golf ball and then spend an hour looking for it."

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