

Soul Coughing ready for Lincoln

SOUL COUGHING from page 12

jects and concept bands, and for months Soul Coughing — which already had its name by this time from Doughty's poem — was little more than a distraction for the musicians.

Although Steinberg liked the concept of Soul Coughing, he said Doughty was the most determined of any to keep it going.

"(He) really started the band and he sort of started as the songwriter/singer guy, the sort of guy who was actually a real poet."

The poet actually started off as a screamer in local punk bands (notice Soul Coughing's Fugazi references) and, according to Steinberg, was quite the '80s rocker before that.

When Doughty keyed into New York's omnipresent rap culture, he discovered a new

voice, which finally found a channel in Soul Coughing.

"Hip-hop showed him that you can do that sort of poetry thing in a musical way. The great thing about him is that he didn't try to be a little black white kid. He found his Caucasian self."

He also found a record contract. The band had just been bumped up from Wednesday nights to Friday nights at a popular New York club when a representative from Slash records, a Warner Bros. affiliate, walked in.

"We signed to the only guy who paid the cover to get in that club," said Steinberg.

The band cut its first album, 1994's "Ruby Vroom" before it ever landed a gig outside the city. The bebop jazz and entrancing lyrics garnered it national attention and a video on MTV's "120 Minutes," back when it truly played alterna-



tive music.

Five years later, and supporting its third album, Soul Coughing now plays arenas, Gap Kids commercials and has released a Top 40 hit, "Circles," off its poppiest album to date, "El Oso," released to rave reviews last year.

Steinberg is untroubled by success and although a self-decried cultural snob, is proud of the band's mainstream success with "El Oso."

The first single "Circles," currently rotating

on every "alternative" radio station in the country, is the band's first mainstream success. Steinberg sounded uncertain about the decision to make "El Oso" poppier than previous efforts, but believes it represents no compromises for the group.

"A more pop album was more of a natural byproduct," he said. "It was more about making the record fun."

"Circles" took only about 15 minutes to record, Steinberg said, and it was probably on the first take.

"I've been involved with songs that were conscious pop efforts before, but this wasn't that. This wasn't boring to make or play," he said.

With "Circles" spinning on Lincoln airwaves regularly, Steinberg sounded earnestly enthusiastic about his appearance in Lincoln tonight. It will be a first visit for all band members.

"We're all damn thrilled," he said. "If you ever want to get Soul Coughing out of the house, tempt them with a place they've never been."

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING GREEKS WHO MADE THE DEAN'S LISTS!



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