

Liliput CD shows off 'Pop Thing'

BY NEAL OBERMEYER

Rumor has it that the purpose of punk music was to get back to the basics of rock 'n' roll.

Everyone insisted that at the core of it all, punk artists were stripping away the pomposity that drove 70s guitar gods and prog rock. But stripping down to what?

Answer me this: What do Rick Astley, Tom Jones, the Sex Pistols and the Backstreet Boys have in common?

In spite of their uncanny sex appeal, all four understand the

importance of the secret Pop Thing — that beast

that can transform any song into a gem of a timeless ditty, that basic element of rock and roll.

Anyone who knows me has undoubtedly heard a sermon on the importance and elusive nature of the Pop Thing, but that understanding is what divides bands into legends and losers.

Swiss punks Liliput had a firm grasp on the Pop Thing. That grasp made them eligible to be one of the punk legends, but their accompanying creative spirit is what solidified it.

Emerging in Switzerland under the name Kleenex (a lawsuit changed that) in the late 70s, the legend tells that they didn't even know how to tune their guitars.

Sporting an all-female lineup, they laid the blueprint for the "riot grrrl" scene — a scene that took about 10 years to develop in their wake.

I know that when I was a kid, I didn't understand punk music. Unless you hate your parents or have the right cool friends, I think it's pretty common to grow up with the attitude of "If you can't sing or play your instrument well, you're not very good."

As you get exposed to more and more music and see how elaborate people's efforts are to build the perfect radio hit, you become amazed that people still waste the effort of making a 2-minute atonal chalkboard-scratch of a song.

Often, you will say, "This is crap. I could do this in my sleep."

But as you listen to these 2-minute atonal chalkboard-scratches more and more, you realize that they burrow into your brain, inspire some sort of primal, dirty passion in you and secretly make you want to listen to them again and again.

On Liliput's new double-disc "Complete Recordings" compilation, you get a heaping collection of just that — some of the most infectious post-punk music ever made.

Think of the grating guitar and bass-driven energy of Gang of Four but without the politics. Mix that with the pop genius and dissonant chords of Wire but without the occasional over-attentiveness.

That's Liliput. Only they have girls singing. In other languages.

Not all of the songs are post-punk perfection. Some, like the one that sounds like sawing and the one with the weird whoop-whoops, are kind of annoying. But you know you've got a classic on your hands when you're charmed by the annoying ones, too.

This music seizes you in the lower abdomen, and depending upon your disposition, inspires you to get up and dance stupidly and without coordination or grab a guitar and some friends and rock steady.

But you can't do this in your sleep. To make this kind of music, you have to be wide awake in full sensory capacity and soaking with the kind of creative psychosis that makes you twitch and annoy your friends because you can't shut up or sit down.

Listening to this makes you enjoy sounds. Listening to this makes you proud that somebody made this music.

Listening to this makes you annoyed with most of the post-punk bands out there who have had 18 years since the demise of Liliput and still refuse to be this inventive with their raw rock power.

That makes me madder than a real punk.

Liliput "Complete Recordings" Kill Rock Stars



The crowd dances the night away from 8 p.m. - 1 a.m., Thursday through Saturday. The club has a different theme every night.

Jerome Montalto/DN

Club's atmosphere appeals to many

■ Alexandria 2112 continues to bring wide range of clientele despite not being directly on O street.

BY CASEY JOHNSON

With dance music conquering the world again and everyone in town throwing some form of a night club together, one might think that Alexandria 2112 is just another juke joint that slapped an address on the back of their name.

Not so. The club that sports this particular address has forged ahead with a demographic that no other bar in town has — anybody.

"We are trying to offer a nice safe environment for older clientele and younger clientele to come and dance and party in the downtown area," said Charles Phillips, co-owner of Alexandria 2112.

The staff of Alexandria 2112 prides itself on being a no-nonsense kind of club where people can come and have a good time without being hassled.

"They can come down and party and dance, and they know that there is nobody who is going to say anything about them or try to mess with them," he said.

"That is one thing we try to offer as far as dancing that other bars don't seem to be able to keep control of."

With a casual and fun atmosphere like that, it is no wonder that Alexandria 2112 can bring in good crowds despite being so

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Charles Phillips
co-owner

far away from the glitter of the main O Street scene, which is a location that Phillips said may help more than hurt them.

"It's kind of funny because we are off the beaten path, but that's why we like to call ourselves a destination bar because when people come out to our bar they generally come out for the whole night."

With a capacity of 400 to 450 people, that means a whole lot of folks can dance the night away in the basement of the Golds Galleria Building where Alexandria 2112 is located.

When the club is full, it could be because of the wide variety of music that is played, something that club goer and Lincolnite Amy Lorenz definitely agrees with.

"It's upbeat. It's not a lot of the Top 40 teeny bopper music; it's some hip hop,



Jerome Montalto/DN

Mitch Sallinger (far right), a.k.a. DJ Steele, (left to right) co-owner and master of ceremonies Rusty Frazier and Don Sanders, a.k.a. Dr. Pulse, excite the crowd for the final set of the night. Alexandria 2112 is located in the lower level of Gold's Galleria, 1033 O St.

but it's more dance music, and they do play rock, which I like," she said.

Although the dance floor appeals to a mixed crowd, most of the staff is the same age, which University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduate Amanda Holland, a bartender at the club, said makes it easy and fun to work at Alexandria 2112.

"I've worked here since it opened, and the employees hang out together and are about the same age, and so even though we are working every weekend, it's kinda like you are having fun at the same time," she said.

Alexandria 2112 is open Thursday through Saturday from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Business partner blames media stigma for Guitars & Cadillacs' demise, closing

BY CRYSTAL K. WIEBE

Jack Hanrahan said he hopes a media-induced stigma doesn't hamper the success of a new night club set to open in the old Guitars & Cadillacs location.

Hanrahan, a business partner in the Guitars & Cadillacs chain, said two groups are currently interested in reopening the 5400 O St. club that closed last November after a parking lot shooting.

He blames the media for the demise of the club that opened in October 1993.

In the few months following last fall's shooting, Hanrahan said Guitars & Cadillacs' revenues dropped 60 to 65 percent.

He attributed the drop-off to "huge ... articles in the paper about violence in various night clubs throughout the country."

"Mass media is such after a shooting that it can destroy a business. That's what happened to us," Hanrahan said.

Although no one was injured in the shooting and

the club had no history of similar incidents, Hanrahan said "people got nervous."

Hanrahan said the club's popular teen nights particularly suffered. Parents became overly concerned about their children's safety, and increased police presence turned away college students who found it "no fun to pull into a parking lot" with patrol cars, he said.

Having traveled to night clubs around the country, Hanrahan said he is convinced that "shootings can happen anywhere," no matter how tight the security.

"Random acts of violence in parking lots are just becoming part of life," he said.

Guitars & Cadillacs had security guards inside and outside the club, but Hanrahan said the incident could not have been prevented.

"It's easier to hide a gun in a car," he said.

If the location reopens, Hanrahan said it will no longer be affiliated with the Guitars & Cadillacs chain,

"Mass media is such after a shooting that it can destroy a business."

Jack Hanrahan
business partner

and may be open within the next two months.

The new club will have a different name and format, Hanrahan said, straying even farther from Guitars & Cadillacs' original country-music theme.

"We weren't really country the last couple of years," he said.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln freshman Sarah Kolymago said she went to Guitars & Cadillacs about twice a month because "there was nowhere else" she knew of to dance at, and downtown's Studio 14 was not yet open.

The political science major said she hopes the new club will be like Studio 14.

System hurts more than art

■ The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery's HVAC system may be preventing other museums from loaning exhibits.

BY MAUREEN GALLAGHER

While the NU Board of Regents gave the green light for the installation of a \$2 million heating, ventilation and air conditioning system for the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery this summer, it might be too late to reverse damage done to individual art pieces.

Sheldon Director Jan Driesbach said the current HVAC system was malfunctioning well before her arrival in September; staff estimates put the problems at "a couple of years."

"The climate in a gallery or museum needs to remain stable, and right now our HVAC doesn't function adequately," Driesbach said.

If it were, the ideal museum conditions of 70 degrees with about 50 percent humidity would remain the same regardless of the temperature outside. But recent years have shown dangerous fluctuations in both — especially in humidity, which causes the artwork to expand and contract unnaturally.

"If the heat and humidity change, there is a potential for damage," Driesbach said. "The humidity can also encourage the growth of molds."

There have also been problems with extreme heat, such as "when the

sun shines in on our windows in the summer."

Sheldon Curator Dan Siedell said he has seen the damage to paintings, the most noticeable of which is Edward Hopper's "Room in New York."

"I have witnessed buckling in the canvas that changes on a daily basis with the climate outside," he said.

Siedell said that paintings on canvas and paper are the most susceptible to damage. Whatever damage occurs is irreversible, but with a stable environment, damage can be minimized.

Driesbach said that she can see the effects of the Sheldon's inadequate HVAC system in other ways.

"When we contract exhibits from other museums, we are asked for information about our HVAC system," Driesbach said. "Currently, we run the risk of losing some exhibitions because of that."

"Project HVAC," as it is referred to by Sheldon staff, will begin sometime late this summer and will take between 12 and 18 months to complete.

Before the project can begin, though, a considerable amount of planning must be done. It is the Sheldon's intent to reduce disruption caused by the project.

"We might have to close galleries for short periods of time, but we will try to minimize the impact," Driesbach said. "This won't be a terribly destructive project."