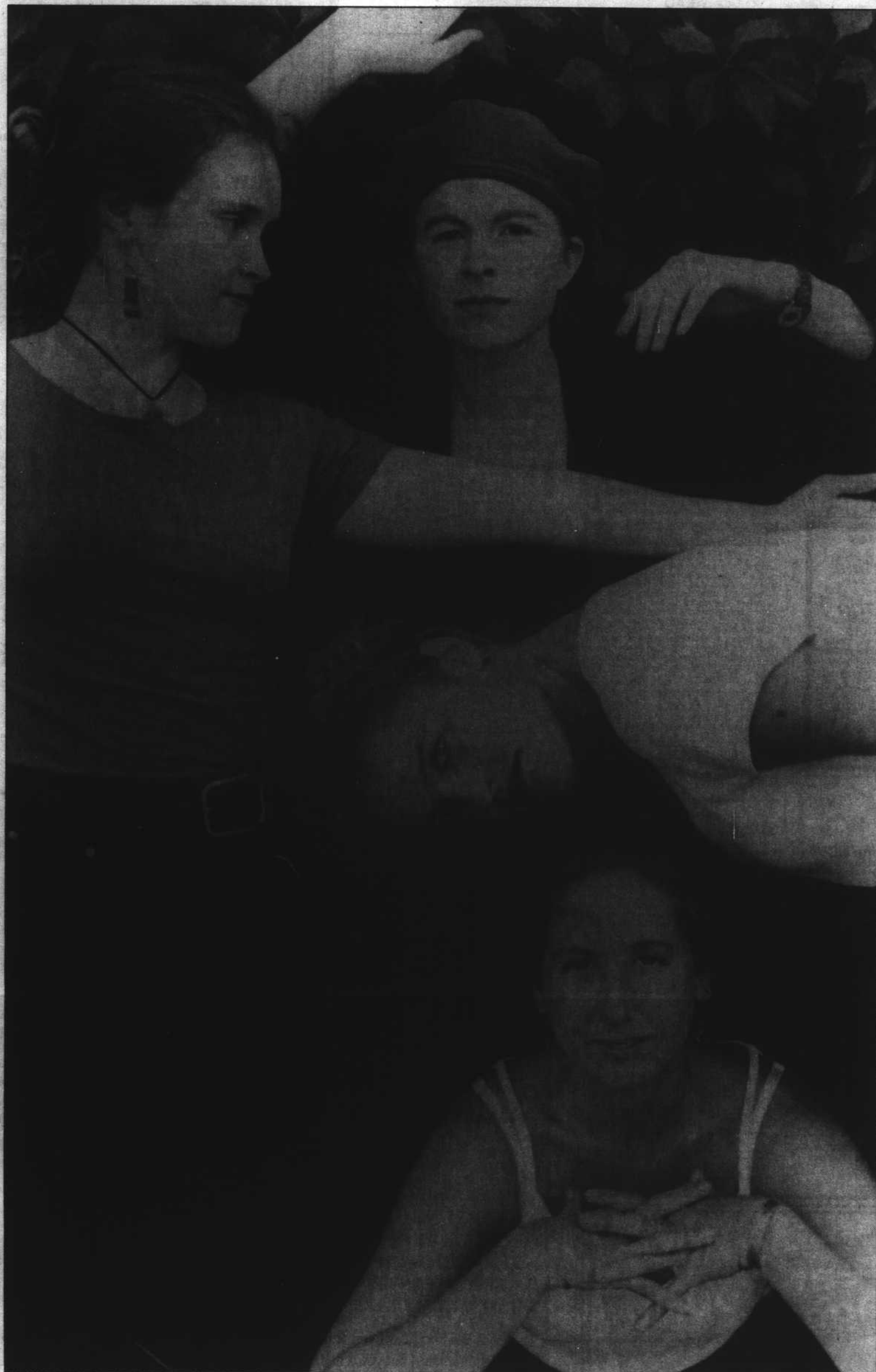


The singing group VIDA will perform for audiences tonight.



Courtesy photo

VIDA brings gutsy music to theater

BY BILLY SMUCK

When it is just the naked voice, the impact is immediate.

That's the philosophy of VIDA, the four-woman a cappella group from Bloomington, Ind., who will perform at the Johnny Carson Theater at 7:30 p.m. tonight.

Members Moira Smiley, Sarah Ferrell, Stephanie Heidemann and Jessica Pease, all graduates of Indiana University, met when they were freshmen and formed the group six years ago.

The members of VIDA come from Indiana, New England, Germany and New Zealand, a background almost as diverse as their music.

VIDA draws their music from cultures throughout the world, singing both traditional and original songs.

Stephanie Heidemann
VIDA performer

Devotional, political and story songs from parts of Europe, Africa, Argentina and the Appalachians make up the broad repertoire of music VIDA offers.

Heidemann said when the group was formed, like many college students, they were exploring issues about freedom and celebration.

"When we started, we were really into introducing the most powerful music from different countries," Heidemann said. "Over the years, we've fallen in love with the music itself and expressing the intentions behind the music."

VIDA explores voice, movement and new sounds with their spirited vocals.

Heidemann said the music they sing was gutsy and rhythmically interesting.

This captivating and diverse style has allowed VIDA to tour the United States and perform at festivals, concert halls and clubs. They have opened for Bob Dylan, Ani DiFranco and the group Peter Paul and Mary.

Heidemann said VIDA's objective was to sing fresh and powerful music that was both traditional and written by the group themselves.

People have become so accustomed to the music they hear on the radio, they are numb to it, Heidemann said.

She said they offer audiences something new that would grasp their attention and stir up emotions.

"Our blend is really raw and in your face," Heidemann said. "It's not necessarily intrusive, but it is engaging."

Jake's 'Greased' album not a slick punk cover

BY ANDREW SHAW

Less Than Jake, punk/ska marauders and Pez enthusiasts, take their own shot at hits from the musical "Grease" on their latest EP "Greased."

The result is pure gimmick and leaves little more than a sour smile across the listener's face.

With over 70 releases since their conception in 1993, Less Than Jake is used to cranking out low-budget punk as fast as Orlando pumps out boy bands. The band stays true to its roots and continues to make pure punk music, with little skill employed on its respective instruments and in the vocals. But punk music is about energy, pace and a tight connection between the band and fans.

Each of the eight tracks on "Greased" are well-executed as a punk-style cover of one of the world's most over-done, over-rated musicals. Had Less Than Jake slipped "Greased Lightning" on an album of originals or in a live show, it would have made high marks. But as a collection, the novelty gets pushed too far, creating an album which loses its merit after the initial listen.

The tunes, originally from "Grease," are very similar to each other: all written with the inspiration of the early rock/doo-wop collaboration. When set to the

Less Than Jake
★★★★★

standard punk drum beat, they become even more one-dimensional, all marking the same tempo and most experiencing a mid-song change from punk to ska to punk.

The best moments on "Greased" come as the various vocalists exchange dialogue that advances the "plot" of "Grease" along. On "Summer Nights," the questioning is executed with expertise and excitement, actually taking the song to a new level where skill is employed to get all of the syllables out in a somewhat intelligible way.

But Less Than Jake seems to have had fun recording "Greased," which can go far with pointless music like this. On the album's closer, "We Go Together," a tune filled with scat-like gibberish, an important question is asked: "Changitty chang shoo bop? What the hell does that mean?" This interchange gives more of a spontaneous, live feel to the tune.

But just like live albums, the witty mannerisms of these punkers lose their shine after the first time you experience them, and "Greased" may end up on the shelf before you realize where your 13 bucks went.

Less Than Jake "Greased" No Idea Records

Gallery opens with exhibition

Richards Hall will honor former students in its first showing since it's renovation.

BY CRYSTAL K. WIEBE

The adaptation is over for Richards Hall, which has housed the art college for 20 years, and the first show honors some of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln alumni who have been a part of it.

The show will take place in the Eisentrager/Howard Gallery in Richards Hall. The exhibits will be featured throughout the gallery's season, starting with "Seven Nebraskans."

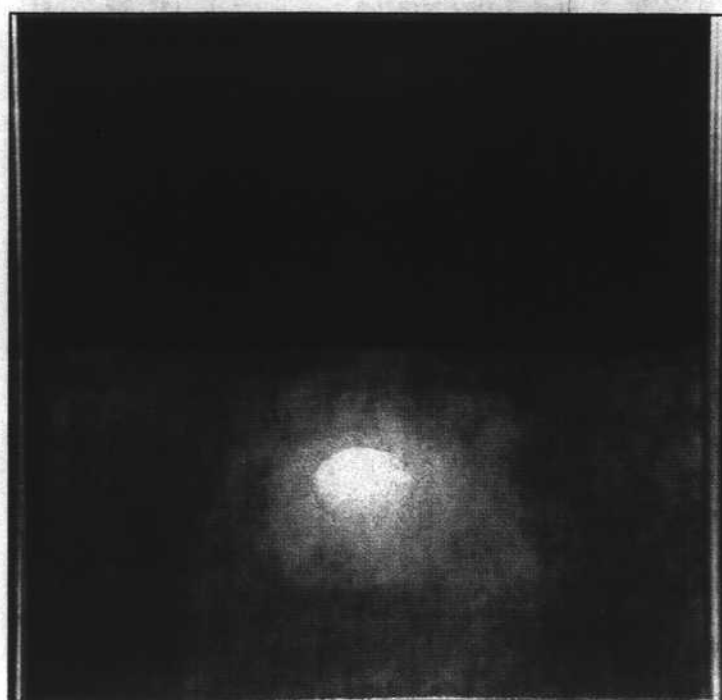
"We as a faculty decided to highlight our alumni during the first full season," said Joseph M. Ruffo, chairman of the art and art history department.

"Seven Nebraskans" features the works of alumni artists still living and working in Nebraska.

"These seven represent a lot of different media and approaches to creating images," Ruffo said. An opening reception for the exhibition took place on Feb. 5, sponsored by the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Alumni Board of Directors.

Ruffo said up to 300 people attended.

"Seven Nebraskans" runs through February. Eisentrager/Howard Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.



Courtesy art

Both John Spence's "Change of Art 2000" and Judith Burton's "Pink Egg" are part of an exhibition at Richards Hall.



John Frusciante
"To Record Only Water for Ten Days"

Solo album from the Red Hot Chili Peppers' lead guitarist. Frusciante was booted from the band for drug use, but was invited back after rehab save what little was left of his decaying body. The lyrics are said to have been inspired by the spirits manifested during his inner battles.

Run-D.M.C.
"Crown Royal"

One of rap's trailblazing groups releases a much-delayed collection featuring collaborations with Kid Rock, Fred Durst and Everlast. It worked for Santana, why not Run-D.M.C.?

Tantric
"Tantric"

Acoustic-based metal with a touch of anger. Heavy on the effects, light on the inspiration. Debut album from this flashpan rock act.

"Down to Earth Soundtrack"

Ginuwine, Cam'Ron and Ruff Endz are featured on the soundtrack to the remake of "Heaven Can Wait."

Compiled by Andrew Shaw.