

Live!

WHO: Brave and Phideaux
WHEN: 7 p.m. Saturday
WHERE: Jammin' Java, Vienna

» The Society of Art Rock, a Washington area organization of progressive rock artists and aficionados, defines "art rock" on its Web site as "music with ambition. The focus is on musical content and expression rather than adherence to traditional rock formulas."

The definition suits Brave and Phideaux, two bands the society has booked to play Jammin' Java on Saturday. Neither band shows an inclination toward traditional rock sounds, and each takes very different approaches in crafting its music.

Brave is perhaps the more introspective of the two bands. Brave's songs focus on capturing the essence of a moment, often manifesting hopeful meditations on the fine art of self-discovery. Phideaux's works often look outside the artists to explore big ideas and themes. The band's newest album constitutes Act 2 of a three-CD conceptual trilogy.

A six-piece ensemble from Dale City, Brave recalls Led Zeppelin in its refusal to be pinned down to one mode of musical expression. Folk, heavy metal and pop are all part of the group's melodic mix, though it is the progressive-metal influences of artists such as Fates Warning and Queensryche that are most apparent.

The band's best songs are its most dynamic, when the brother-and-sister team of Scott and Michelle Loose create counterpoints between his deft heavy rock guitar and her soaring vocals and ethereal keyboard work. The two find musical light and shadow with their band mates, drummer Trevor Schrotz, violinist Suvo Sur, bass guitarist Ben Kelly and new guitarist Matt Kozar.



BY ROD REYNOLDS

Phideaux is composed of musicians who live across the country and rarely come together to perform. The group shares the stage Saturday with Brave.

Brave plans to make its set on Saturday a listening party for new music from the forthcoming CD, "Monuments."

Phideaux is a loose collective of dozens of musicians whose members spend most of their time spread across the country, coming together occasionally to record and very rarely to perform. The band is the creation of talented Los Angeles-based singer and multi-instrumentalist Phideaux Xavier. Together with drummer Rich Hutchins, Xavier composes some of the grandest rock music going.

Influenced by great art rockers such as Pink Floyd, David Bowie and Jethro Tull, Phideaux's newest sonic tapestry, "Doomsday Afternoon," is the second part of a larger work

that began with last year's "The Great Leap." The recordings make up the first two-thirds of an impressionistic fable, set in the near future when human complacency has led to political and environmental disaster.

Phideaux's performance at Jammin' Java will feature 10 of the musicians who played on the new album and is one of only two live dates the band has scheduled to support the CD.

— C. WOODROW IRVIN

Jammin' Java is at 227 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. Tickets are \$10. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com. For more information, visit dc-soar.org.



BY JASON GRAY

Brave will perform music from its forthcoming CD "Monuments" during Saturday's show.