

Arts & Entertainment

Programs cater to Public

NETV combines music, art and movies

By Ed Kaczmarek
Staff Reporter

Are you tired of depressing soaps? Sick of predictable sitcoms? Does Richard Dawson repulse you? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then NETV may be just what you're looking for.

The Nebraska Educational Television Network presents a variety of programs for inquiring viewers in Nebraska. There is literally something for everyone. NETV programs appeal to ages 3 and up.

Lincoln's educational programming is aired on KUON-TV, Channel 12. There are few commercials on Channel 12 because programs are funded by state and federal taxes, and by viewer donations.

"Educational television can be considered a combination of a concert hall, an art museum, a lecture hall, a discussion session and a movie house," said John White, NETV network program manager. "Entertainment is a primary goal of commercial television. That's fine, but some of the shows you see on NETV wouldn't survive on commercial TV."

White said commercial programs begin at "the top" and filter down to various networks. These programs must capture about 25 percent of the total viewing audience to be successful. Programs on NETV usually attract between 1 and 10 percent of the available viewers.

These shows often are developed in

Lincoln. In contrast to commercial television, educational programs are produced in many towns across the country and are distributed nationwide.

Many successful programs have been developed in Nebraska. Recently, a dramatic series about the life of Mark Twain was well-received by educational networks around the country.

Another program, called "Plowing Up a Storm," also is expected to do well. It is an historic documentary about farm protests and legal problems.

NETV cooperates with groups such as the Game and Parks Commission and UNL in the production of "Outdoor Nebraska" and "University Magazine."

"The University of Nebraska is critical to our operation," White said. "UNL holds the license to KUON-TV, Channel 12. Many of the employees producing educational programs are university staff members." The university is also a resource for many scientific, cultural and athletic programs, he said.

Many of the programs shown on KUON-TV are supplied by PBS, the Public Broadcasting System. White said shows such as "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" and "Sesame Street" are popular nationwide with children. People in their 50s and 60s are big fans of the more serious educational programs, whether culturally, athletically or scientifically oriented, he said.

What do people in their teens and 20s like to see? "You tell me," White said. Ideas and suggestions are taken seriously by the network because much financial support comes from inter-



Richard Harman, a Network Operations Engineer at NETV, monitors programming of an 11:45 "Sesame Street" show. Harman said he gets to watch the show up to three times a day.

ested viewers, he said.

"Doctor Who" and "Monty Python" seem to be very popular with this age group," said White. "Animal shows are really a fad now, too."

White said certain fads take over from time to time, similar to commer-

cial television.

White wants to let people know that the purpose of NETV is to serve its viewers. "Input, ideas, and participation are all very welcome. We provide viewing alternatives that are not available on commercial TV, he said.

So if you're tired of those gloomy soaps, look into "Matinee at the Bijou." If you find the sitcoms loathsome, check out "Monty Python's Flying Circus." And most of all, say goodbye to Richard Dawson and say hello to Jacques Cousteau.

'The Women' delights audience with one-liners

By Jim Rogers
Staff Reporter

Saturday night the business office of Omaha's Ruyard Norton Theatre made an insane asylum look like a habitation of quiet repose.

REVIEW THEATRE

In addition to the usual frantic preparations and typical controlled panic accompanying every theatre production, that night the business manager of the theatre was under a deluge of calls for tickets after a "rave" review was printed in Friday's Omaha World-Herald.

The production, presented by Norton Theatre, is Clare Boothe Luce's "The Women." The play is a witty, sarcastic commentary on high-society

women and their relationships to each other, as well as to men.

The plot centers on a group of idle rich women, almost all of whom live simply to gossip about the other women. These women have a series of encounters with marital infidelity — mainly their husbands', but sometimes their own.

However, the core of the play's concern is about one faithful, non-gossipy wife, Mrs. Stephen (Mary) Haines (Wenda Miller) who maintains a persistent love and desire for her husband, in spite of being displaced in his life by an intruder-woman (Jean Hoffman) and undergoing divorce.

The play ends on an upbeat mood, however, as the original Mrs. Haines turns the tables on the intruder, now wed to Haines.

At various points throughout the script, Clare Boothe Luce introduces "clever women" who provide the audience with a barrage of delightfully cynical one-liners played off the statements of the other characters. It was this wit, along with zings from the other characters, which the audience clearly enjoyed the most.

In spite of the play's display of Clare Boothe Luce's biting wit, the treatment of the play's characters left me somewhat disturbed. Marital unfaithfulness is treated with an incredible lack of concern among the "wise" characters. For example, at one point, Mrs. Haines' mother excuses Haines' infidelity to her daughter by comparing adultery on the part of men, to a woman getting a new hairstyle.

The lesson of the play seems to boil down to several propositions: (1) Men are animals; (2) women don't understand (1) and thus are ripped off by men; (3) women don't understand (2) and thus are ripped off by themselves, and; (4) the few women who do understand (3) are never listened to.

The difficulty with the script is that it raises these profound and angry themes and then relegates them to only the periphery of the focus of the story. Even though the good-guy woman won at the end, Luce inadequately resolved the serious and quite interesting issues underlying the plot.

The cast of "The Women" is strong. Of special note are Kay Weinstein who excellently portrayed

Nancy Blake, the most self-consciously "clever woman" of the play, and the performance of sixth-grader Emily Kean as "Little Mary," daughter of Mrs. Haines. Kean mercifully avoided treating her character both as the trite "little pouting girl" and also the "darling little perfect girl" and thus maintained the interest — and concern — of the audience.

The supporting cast was outstanding. Especially brilliant was Oinah Hites-Smith who brought unique life to several different and interesting characters in the production.

The most disappointing performance of the evening was by Wenda Miller as Mary Haines. She never seemed to move comfortably in the role of Mary and consequently consistently moved beyond a two dimensional "now exploited; now wise-beyond-her-years; now successfully vengeful" portrayal of Mrs. Haines.

In all fairness, however, two points must be noted respecting Miller's performance. First, it was "the most disappointing" of the evening because her performance was "only" good and was among actresses who performed superbly.

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Dishwasher gets 'spaced out' when he cooks

Stationed at a reputable family steakhouse, I toiled for years as a dishwasher, breaking as few dishes as I could while doing constant battle with grease and baked-on foods.

Mark Holt

But as time wore on, the travel and romance associated with my position began to wear thin. I thought that my talents were being misapplied and that I could best express myself through meat and potatoes. Cooking was where the real action was. I spoke up and was reassigned.

I'll remember that fateful Sunday afternoon as long as I live. Arriving promptly at noon, I donned a paper hat and grabbed a pair of tongs, my crown and scepter, and strode confidently

into my new cooking career.

My spine tingled as the full magnitude of the situation dawned on me. I was in the driver's seat, the command module, the very nerve center of the whole establishment. The shimmering heat of the grill, the contrasting chill of the meat keeper, and the bustle of the waitresses multiplied each other's effects to make the atmosphere happily intoxicating.

But a strange sensation soon started to grow in me as I barked out orders. A hazy film fell over my field of vision and I felt faint. When my mind cleared, the faces and bodies moving around me looked vaguely familiar, but I was no longer in the kitchen of the steakhouse I had come to love. I was on the bridge of the U.S. S. Food Service.

"Chef's log, steakdate 1304.6. We have received a large shipment of apple pies and are currently offering a free piece with every cattleman fillet.

A sizeable order of potatoes has arrived from the moon orbiting Idaho 6, and at Steakfleet Command's request, we'll be mashing those for Tuesday's special. I have ordered the remaining quadriritycheali sprouts pulled from the salad bar due to a recent Klingon raid on the walk-in which has left us in short supply. Chef out."

"Status report, Mr. Spock," I said.

"If we continue at our present rate, sir, taking into account the average lunchtime curve, we will run out of cattleman fillets at approximately 1:53 p.m.," he responded.

"Mr. Chekov, do we still have a waiting line?"

"Yes, Captain, sensors indicate large numbers of elderly citizens and rural families coming directly here from all the major churches in this quadrant."

"Scotty! We need salad plates and we need them now!" I yelled over the intercom to

Dishwashing.

"I'ma doin' the best I can, Cap'n. The detergent pads canna take much more of this," Scotty said through the tinny speaker.

"Mr. Chekov, lock onto the coordinates you've received and set the microwave for broil. Bones, doctor up that brown lettuce. Mr. Sulu, bring us about at three six mark two, I want..."

The rest is a blur. I awoke in the restroom with the crew standing over me fanning air into my face. They had carried me back there when I began ranting about hostile barbecued kebabs attempting to board the dining area.

I was ashamed. To have such absolute control, inferiors to do my every bidding, to wield such unlimited culinary power without check or balance was too much for me to handle. I relinquished my command and went back to scouring pots.