

Union concerts planned

Those who like to feel the earth move under their feet while listening to the music will get two chances to indulge their preference this week.

Two free outdoor concerts will be presented in the Sheldon Sculpture Gardens on the UN-L campus at 12 and R Streets by the Nebraska Union Summer Concerts Committee.

The Bluegrass Crusade will appear Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. and on Friday at 7:30 Koko Taylor and her Blues Machine will perform.

In 1974, Bluegrass Crusade was the first place winner at Bill Monroe's Second Annual Rocky Mountain Bluegrass Festival Band concert. The local group has also played with bluegrass masters Doc Watson, Bill Monroe, Jimmy Martin and Ralph Stanley.

Members of The Bluegrass Crusade are Steve Hanson on five-string banjo, Gary Howe on mandolin, Dave Fowler on fiddle, John Ingwerson on guitar and Dave Morris on string bass.

The Bluegrass Crusade

describes their music as that originally played by and for the working people of America—farmers, coal miners and steel workers.

They feature acoustic music with fast instrumentals and two or three-part high-pitched singing.

Koko Taylor, featured at the Friday concert, began her performing career with gospel music in southern churches. She has appeared in the Montreux Jazz Festival and on the Public Broadcasting Service program *Soundstage*.

at the movies

'Mandingo' shallow

Review by Greg Lukow

Mandingo is one movie that seems to have worked hard at gaining its reputation as a perfectly awful movie.

Yet people are going to it. The film is almost worth suffering through since the sheer, overwhelming gall of it is not so much appalling as it is fascinating. *Mandingo* is two hours of bigotry in search of a plot, infested with liberal doses of sadism, incest, violence and inter-racial, soft-core porn. The characters, however, are so cartoonish and the offensiveness is so pervasive that no one can really be offended. Blacks in an audience just seem to revel in or hiss at different moments of idiocy than whites do.

The story takes place sometime before the Civil War in a decaying white man's kingdom called Falconhurst, a southern plantation that looks darker, bleaker and emptier than Tara did after the Yankees ransacked it.

The neighborhood veterinarian examines a young black, virgin and tells her she's just in heat. What she needs is "white meat."

Cantabile banjo music and slow camera movements across the lush backwoods foliage give the opening sex encounters a silly lyricism as the plantation owner's son, the resident "white meat", prepares to oblige.

The movie's most civilized performance comes from Falconhurst's rheumatic ole messah, James Mason (who has recently lost his pert, English mein and started looking like an aging Bela Lugosi). Perry King is the son, Hammond. His total activities are divided between providing stud service for black females and turning a brawny, amiable black named Mede (played by boxer Ken Norton) into a professional wrestler-killer.

Hammond fulfills some kind of southern, inter-family agreement by marrying Susan George, a petticoated nympho who never learned that southern belles were supposed to be heard and not obscene.

At George's unrequited passion rises (watch for the scene where she fondles the bedpost), the movie heads straight for her big seduction scene with Mede; another dry run under the guise of a lot of grunting and groaning. Hammond learns of the affair when the plantation's new heir turns out to be the wrong color. Shock after shock piles up and one wonders what additional, sadistic kicker the movie can come up with next. With the boiling water-pitchfork-rifle ending, in which Hammond wrecks vengeance on Mede, it finds one.

Mandingo was directed by Richard Fliescher, a B director making A pictures and the reigning Hollywood shockmeister (his last films have included *Soylent Green*, *The Don is Dead*, and *Mr. Majestyk*).

Don't film makers wince when they have to shoot some of the scenes in a movie like this? Objections to comparatively innocent stereotypes like Stepin' Fetchit or Butterfly McQueen pale beside his racial quagmire. Evidently, to somebody's way of thinking, pushing the material to this extreme legitimizes the subject and gives it some kind of convoluted, no-holds-barred, "seriousness".

Actors certainly don't have to worry about their performances in a film like *Mandingo*. They're all so grotesquely played that nobody notices. Perry King's schizoid Hammond, is the only character with any honest feelings of love (even if he doesn't recognize or admit them) yet ultimately his manical fury against Mede makes him the movie's villain. If *Mandingo*, like last year's *The Klansman*, was any kind of coherent statement to make it's that the South may have lost its old, genteel, plantation ideology, but has retained an even uglier, liberal brutality.

For once, unfortunately, a film has lived up to its exploitative advertising. Expect the Savage, the Shocking, the Sensual. But do you really expect the truth? Ugghh...

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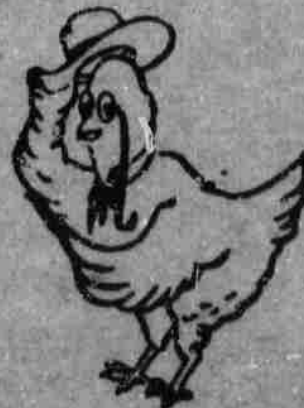
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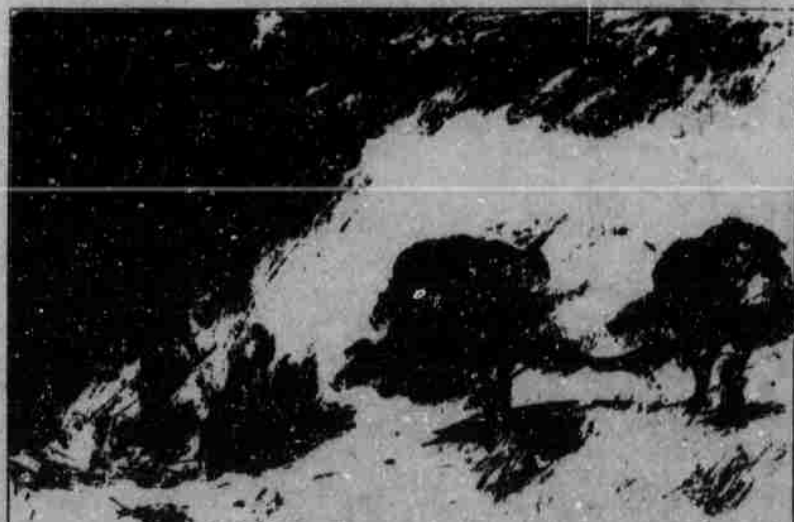
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NEBRASKA UNION
Summer Concerts Committee
Presents

FREE OUTDOOR CONCERTS

THE BLUEGRASS CRUSADE

Wednesday, June 18—7:30 p.m.

KOKO TAYLOR and her
BLUES MACHINE

Friday, June 20—7:30 p.m.

SHELDON SCULPTURE GARDENS