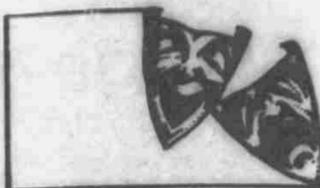


arts & entertainment



Progressive radio is alive, well—KSHE manager

By Douglas Weil

He started out in Festus, Mo. Then he went across-state to Farmingdale, Mo. His next stop was Meridian, Miss. Finally he arrived in St. Louis.

Although this may sound like the route of a wayward bus driver, it is actually the trail that led Rick Lee from status as just another radio personality to station manager of what is considered to be one of the leading progressive rock stations in the country.

That station is KSHE in St. Louis. KSHE is different than most progressive radio stations in the United States. Not only has KSHE survived when other progressive stations have died or gone to more commercial format, but it has made money and increased its listenership.

"It's not the good music that you play that builds up a listenership, it's the bad music that you don't play. Four or five tracks on every album are bad tracks. You have to take the cream and emphasize that."

The difference between a typical rock music station and a progressive rock station, Lee said, is in treatment of the listener.

One-to-one

"You have to talk to the listener on a one-to-one basis," Lee said. "We call KSHE 'Real Rock Radio.' What this means is real rock music, presented to real people by real people."

Lee said he is concerned that progressive and hard rock often are thought to be synonymous. Lee described the progressive field as an outlet for musicians who don't want to be swept away by the mainstream.

Another of Lee's concerns is the charge that progressive music has been deteriorating over the last few years.

"The music has softened, but it is not less progressive," he said.

Industry executives have claimed the progressive radio format is not profitable. In the past several years progressive stations have dwindled in number.

Lee views this theory with disdain.

"I don't agree that progressive radio is dying. Progressive music is more alive today than ever. Just take a look at this market and you'll see. Our audience has never been larger.

"It was the big corporation structure that decided the

progressive format was dead. However, this is reversing itself. It is being found that not only is this a workable format but an economically feasible format.

Lee said he is aware of ratings, but tries to ignore them in the programming at KSHE.

"We've had consistency as one of our theories," he said. "We haven't allowed fluctuating ratings to change our course. We had a conviction that progressive music could work and we didn't allow anything to get in the way of making it work."

Another idea Lee and his colleagues at KSHE said they



Photo courtesy of KSHE

KSHE station manager Rick Lee: Music softer, not less progressive.

share is that they will seek to be different.

"Most stations feel that if some other station is playing a song, then they have to play it too. We are more discriminate," he said.

The quest for "the different" is what Lee said is one of the factors that produced a need for progressive radio.

"We all grew out of the counterculture. I don't think any of us ever escape that determination not to be part of the majority," Lee said.

Name groups help

Another factor needed for a successful progressive station is sponsoring name groups in concert.

"The progressive station should do everything possible to promote a healthy concert scene. When a group is coming to town we work hard to expose that group," Lee said.

Lee said KSHE exposes these groups in several ways, the most common being on-the-air interviews with the group members. These interviews are on the afternoon of the concert—creating interest in the group, the concert and the station, he said.

Though progressive formats have existed nearly 10 years, Lee said it has been in only the last three years that advertisers have recognized the strength of the progressive market.

Lee said this has occurred for two reasons. First, there was a general recognition of the advertising value of progressive markets. Secondly, the needs of the progressive listener are the same as other listeners.

With the increase in potential advertisers, KSHE remains with the same amount of advertising it had when its advertisers were scarce, Lee said.

"We turn down more advertising on the basis of creativity than any other station in our market."

By "creativity," Lee referred to the use of imagination in commercials. KSHE also rejects commercials it believes employ high-pressure tactics or that do not otherwise fit into the "Real Rock Radio" concept, he said.

Lee said he still recognizes the importance of advertising revenue.

"We have never been anti-commercial," Lee said. "It's unrealistic to think that listeners will send money to support the station. We need money to do our thing."

Lead performances stand out in 'Stop the World'

By Carla Engstrom

A cast of shabby circus performers masked in white-face warms up on stage as the audience is seated. It is hectic and believable backstage action. One expects to hear the roar of an elephant echo in the Studio Theatre production of *Stop the World I Want to Get Off*, which premiered Friday night and runs through Oct. 16.

The plot is easy to understand. It develops into the play within a play. You are led to believe they didn't have a script or director. They have to improvise into the main plot.

Unfortunately, the circus bit drags too long. After awhile, you wonder if they really do have a script or if the play consists of two hours of mediocre mime.

Finally, one male performer sees a woman holding a

Haymarket offers chance for artists to display works

The Haymarket Art Gallery gives artists an opportunity to both show and sell their work, according to Joye Deklotz, whose works are being shown in the gallery's Nebraska Heritage display.

The "Heritage" show is the third and final part of the Haymarket's bicentennial project, which continues through Oct. 25.

The ideas for Deklotz's paintings were inspired by research at the Nebraska Historical Society and the German-Russian Society, she said.

Stan Mazden, Haymarket manager, said he is satisfied with the showing.

"All the works here were done by residents of Nebraska except some jewelry done by Angie Owens, who was in-residence at the time she made them," he said.

Different mediums have been used to express the heritage of Nebraska, including rug hooking, painting, batik, photographs and an unusual macrame and jute wrapping that intertwines with a cow's skull and bones.

There also is a display of American Indian jewelry, including a scrimshaw set in a bracelet. Scrimshaw, an art seldom practiced today, is a method of carving pictures in walrus tusk, ivory or whalebone.

Another unusual work at the display is an oil painting on a dried Indian fig leaf done by Uma Gupta. Gupta is a commercial artist by profession but recently has committed her time to working on projects for her own enjoyment and for display at the Haymarket.

She said she is impressed with the gallery because it gives artists a good outlet to display and sell their work.

baby. He gets the idea to mime a baby growing into a man. The process goes fairly fast. The chorus sings an obnoxious version of the ABC's in child-like voices to symbolize his childhood. They repeat the song in mock-opera form to represent his graduation from high school.

Action fuzzy

The action is fuzzy until he grabs one circus girl and she resists. He starts to take on a definite character when he says in a perfect working-class English voice, "The funny thing about women is: The ones you can get, you don't want to know, and the ones you can't get . . ."

The circus girl dubs him LittleChap (Jay Perry) and she becomes Evie (Kathleen Morrow). Evie is a "real posh bird," according to LittleChap. She speaks in the Queen's English and does a convincing job of characterizing a girl from finishing school.

LittleChap decides the only way to get a girl like Evie is to get rich. But ultimately he doesn't get her by being rich. They end up married because LittleChap doesn't follow the advice of his mother.

In the song, *I Wanna Be Rich*, he sings, "Mother said I should never play with the girls in the woods or they'd end up in the family way." Mother was right.

The costumes of all the players are leotards and tights, modified with a rag skirt or pantaloons.

The stage in Studio Theatre consists of dark and blond wood panels and three curtained entrances that lead to a downhill platform. The set is designed by graduate student Sandy Moeller.

Rex McGraw, Theatre Dept. chairman, said, "This design represents the first creative masters of fine arts thesis in the newly established Department of Theatre Arts." All four Studio productions will be performed within the new set design this season.

LittleChap has two daughters, Susan (Dawn Beins) and Jane (Debbie Miller). He proves to be a totally self-centered man who ignores both his daughters and his wife.

He concentrates on his business. He moves from teaboy to executive. He travels and finds lovers around the world.

Lovers played by Morrow

All his lovers are played by Morrow. He uses the same line on each of them.

"I love you and it's as though we were fated for each other."

The casting of Morrow in all the lovers' roles illustrates that in all LittleChap's searching, he's looking for the same thing.

Morrow has a talent for accents. She portrays a convincing Russian and German girl. The way she interprets her musical numbers are amusing and enjoyable. Yet, at times she doesn't seem to be playing to LittleChap. She just gives him a set, painted doll stare.

Perry's characterization of LittleChap carries the show. His stage presence can be classified as professional. And he makes the show well worth seeing.

The chorus appears unprofessional compared to LittleChap. They detract from the main focus of the plot. They have an obnoxious way of reminding you that they are there.

Chorus shines in one number

Yet, they do come off well in the number, *Nag, Nag, Nag*. They interject three words, "nag, nag, nag," while LittleChap and Evie are fighting and the daughters are singing, "There's no place like home." The tension and noise build until you wish they would stop the world.

At intervals, LittleChap yells, "Stop the World." Action freezes and he steps aside like a Shakespearean character to talk to the audience. It gives the audience a chance to examine just how *stupid* his life is.

After conquering the *stupid* world, LittleChap goes into politics and ends up Lord LittleChap of Sludgepool. By material standards, he's got it made. But the tragic part in his life is understood too late.

He discovers he has never been in love with anyone but himself. He has isolated himself from true human emotion, and he's ready to die an alienated and lonely man.

Jean Kerr's play of college comedy set for weekend

College life becomes situation comedy in the play *Finishing Touches* at 8 p.m. Friday through Sunday at the Lincoln Community Playhouse.

The comedy was written by Jean Kerr, author of *Mary, Mary* and *Poor Richard*.

The plot focuses around college Prof. Jeff Cooper, his wife Katy, and their three sons (one a Harvard senior). The love light has dimmed on the Cooper marriage and Jeff finds himself admiring a female student in his poetry seminar.

Katy finds herself susceptible to the attentions of a bachelor professor who rents the Cooper's garage apartment.

The plot thickens as their Harvard son arrives home for the weekend with a house guest in tow. The guest happens to be a luscious actress.

With that plot, the stage is fertile for comedy. Fortunately, the resulting crises are resolved with all the skill, taste and perceptive humor that have become the trademarks of Kerr's comic talents.

The playhouse cast includes UNL student Amy Thelander, with Rod McCullough, Sharon Gearin, Chris Van Groningen, Alan Fenn, Jack Wenstrand, Bruce Blocher and Robin Bates.