

# arts and entertainment

## Dancer turns harsh rock into gentle melancholy wave

Up in the back, seldom on the floor, and almost never near the stage—it's just the way things have ended up.

After attending an eternity of concerts—at one time or another occupying every position that an audience usually does—I've slowly gravitated to the rear. It's been a natural progression. From a perch high in the stands at the back of an auditorium, you can stare through the smoke like you are looking through the clouds at the shaky world.

The rock 'n' roll show has been such an intimate part of my growing up that it's hard not to get just a little reflective sometimes.

Not long ago I fell into a rock concert—that is I found myself at a show I had not planned on going to. The ticket was free, and so was the evening.

It wasn't the type of concert I would normally go to. Somewhere in the back of my head though, was the nagging reminder that live rock 'n' roll always made me feel clean. It was something to do with the

atmosphere—the lights and the smoke, and the ability to lose yourself in something larger and louder than the static in your head.

### Single unit

Looking down on this particular evening I watched the crowd bunch up in the front of the auditorium. They moved as a single unit, almost as a body of water—rippling and flowing with whatever current was moving them that evening. There is something frightening and powerful about a crowd, and on that particular night there was a feeling of an impending explosion.

## michael zangari

I decided that I should leave. It was a move made out of the realization that rock 'n' roll wasn't working for me, at least not that night, and that I didn't want to be around when things turned nasty.

As I reached for my coat something at

the back of the crowd caught my eye. A woman had separated herself from the back where the crowd had begun to thin out. She was visible only because she was silhouetted by the exit light.

She held herself perfectly still in the light. Without any indication that she was going to do so, she very naturally slid off into some incredibly gentle interpretive ballet. She used the entire space at the rear of the auditorium. Very few people could see the motion, and there was very little doubt that she was dancing for herself.

### Intangible mood

Moved by some intangible mood, she was taking the harshest rock 'n' roll imaginable, and turning it into a gentle wave. At one point it would be incredibly melancholy, at another she would spin it away only to come up small and crumbled in another space.

I was transfixed.

It was a crystal moment—one of those moments where the clarity of sight—emotional and physical melted into one motion. She seemed to capture all that was

essential, and for a moment she provided what a long series of concerts had failed to do. I was caught for a split second in the power and the warmth of her personal statement. The music was real to me.

There were just a few of us at the rear of the auditorium. Most of those in back had their eyes locked on the stage. For whatever reason this woman had managed to be totally alone in that crowd.

I didn't want to disturb that, and yet a part of me wanted to tell her about the few seconds she gave me.

It was out of my hands. In the moment it took for me to put on my coat she had melted back into the crowd, once again just a wave ebbing and flowing against the stage.

My stomach sank when I realized what had happened. Without anything to say I walked quietly out into the street. I could hear the echoes of the music from within the halls, distant and ghost-like. It echoed for the remainder of my night.

Somewhere in this city the dream of the dancer is very much alive, and because of it, so is the music.

## Wild Willie Nelson on stage in Lincoln

Willie Nelson, The "Red Haired Stranger" will be in Lincoln tomorrow night at Pershing Auditorium.

It often has been said of Nelson that his music is before his time. But the 44-year-old Texan has just recently come into his own, gaining international acclaim.

When Willie Nelson climbed on stage at the 1976 Annual Country Music Association Awards Show and accepted his three awards, it marked the climax of one of the most impressive success stories in country music. It had only been a few years ago that Willie was still singing in the clubs and honky-tonks around Austin, Texas.

His three Country Music Awards (won jointly with Waylon Jennings) included Country Duo Of The Year; Album of the Year—*Wanted: The Outlaws*; and Song Of The Year—"Good Hearted Woman" which ironically, was written during a brief pause in a poker game.

Almost as distinctive as Nelson's physical appearance, which usually includes tennis shoes, sweatband, and on-and-off again beard; is his voice. At one time, musical advisers told Nelson to not concentrate on singing because his voice was "different."

He provide them wrong, explaining: "Actually the way I sing isn't all that hard . . . it's phrasing . . . Sinatra's been phrasing for years, a lot of pop singers have . . . It's just that nobody in country music in those days was doing it. But I couldn't imitate anybody else."

Tickets still are available for Willie Nelson, and special guests Pure Prairie League and Ray Wylie Hubbard. Reserved seats are \$6.50 and \$7.50. The show starts at 8:00 p.m.



Photo courtesy Feyline Productions  
Outlaw Willie Nelson will spill country tunes at Pershing Auditorium tomorrow along with the Pure Prairie League.

## Jazz orchestra returns from abroad for new season

By Kent Warneke

Billed as "Nebraska's Internationally Acclaimed Jazz Orchestra," the Neoclassic Jazz Orchestra will open its 1978-79 season Tuesday at O'Donnell Auditorium on the Nebraska Wesleyan campus.

The jazz orchestra recently returned from a three-week tour of England and Scotland where they were the 1978 United States representatives in the International Festival of Arts.

The festival was non-competitive and international. The Neoclassic Jazz Orchestra performed at the Crystal Palace Bowl in London and the Aberdeen Music Hall in Aberdeen, Scotland, where its performance was broadcast live by the BBC.

Founder, business manager, and trumpet player for the group, John Tavlin, said its music is similar in structure and sound to that of the *Tonight Show* orchestra.

"The music we play follows traditional instrumentation of the 'big band,' but it's contemporary, meaning songs from the last 10 years a far cry from the 'golden oldies,'" Tavlin said.

"The name of the group, Neoclassic Jazz Orchestra, typifies the type of music and configuration of the group," Tavlin said. "We are a new type of classic or

standard types of music in the big band era."

The current jazz orchestra is the second in existence. The original Neoclassic Jazz Orchestra, formed in the fall of 1975, lasted for six months.

In summer 1976, Tavlin, Bart Bartholomew and Dr. Randall Snyder, UNL music professor, reorganized and formed the second Neoclassic Jazz Orchestra.

"We looked into why the first band wasn't successful and we realized that we needed a different kind of approach," Tavlin said.

Tavlin financed the second orchestra from its beginning, purchasing and promoting, as Tavlin said, "We can have real concerts, real ticket sales, real guest artists and be the jazz equivalent to the Omaha Symphony Orchestra."

The performance and the quality of the band is something Tavlin said they can be proud of.

"We practice every week and rehearse more than any professional music group in Nebraska and consequently, we will have 56 tunes ready for performance this year, which will allow a different repertoire for every show," he said.

Bill Watrous, 1977 *Downbeat* magazine's trombonist of the year, has been

quoted as saying, "The Neoclassic Jazz Orchestra is as good as the North Texas State Jazz Band, the premiere college jazz band in the country."

Tavlin said, "When we sound good, we really sound good. We never expected to be able to go to Europe for the International Festival, but we now have applied to the U.S. Department of State for a tour of the Middle East."

The orchestra includes 20 members for Tuesday night's concert, but the number can fluctuate, according to Tavlin.

Ed Love, Barry McVinnay, Walter Wamsholz, Bob Reigle and Orville "Scad" Voss perform on saxophones with Steve Henderson, Loy Hetrick, Terry Rush, Jeff James, and Dave "Doglips" Wampler on trombones.

Mike Brownson, Tavlin, Dean Heist, Brian Grasmick and Steve Erickson play trumpet. Rex Cadwallader plays keyboards, Dennis "Putz" Stearns on guitar, Jim Lawson on bass guitar, Jeff Johnson on percussion and Tod Barnard on the trap set.

All members of the orchestra have taken college level music except Tavlin, and all but two are in the music field as either professional musicians or music educators.

Tuesday night's concert will feature guest artist Don Menza on saxophone and

flute.

Menza, who has performed with Stan Kenton, Woody Herman, Maynard Ferguson and Henry Mancini, has excelled as a studio musician and according to Tavlin, "very proficient in technique."

The concert will start at 8:00 p.m. and includes a United States premier of original arrangements, but mostly tunes made popular by other recording artists.

"We really get a mixed audience-high school aged to the 45 to 55 age group—and right now we're trying to appeal to the symphony crowd," Tavlin said.

"One wish we do have is that we could have bigger crowds, although our attendance has increased with every performance."

The concert tour is a subscription series with season tickets available. After Tuesday night's performance, the orchestra will perform the following night at the Joslyn-Witherspoon Concert Hall in Omaha.

The tour will continue to consist of alternating consecutive dates between Omaha and Lincoln through the end of April.

Tickets for the concert can be purchased at Dirt Cheap and the Brandeis Book Offices for \$4 in advance or \$4.50 at the door.