orts/entertainment

Comedy Exchange humors Lincoln area

By Mary Kay Wayman

"Our material is based on pop culture," said one member of The Comedy troupe. "There are three topics— death, bodily functions and sex."

They are "raunchy and divine," said Dr. William Morgan, UNL Theater Department. "Our humor is rather biting," said

bystander's leg to prove the point.

This off-the-wall group of guys is funny and they're out to show that comedy can

another member, gnawing on an innocent

work in Lincoln.
Theater majors Jim Anderson, Kirby
Henderson, Willie Wood, Larry Peterson
and Steve Brown are The Comedy Exchange. And don't get them wrong. These
five are serious about their comedy.

"We are professional comedians,"
Henderson said.

Since another regional comedy group, Ogden Edsel, moved to Los Angeles, The Comedy Exchange is the only such group in eastern Nebraska, Anderson said. He hesitated to include all of Nebraska he said because there might be some farmers out in Lexington pitching hay in a barn who are really funny.

Listening to even three-fifths of this group is an exercise in hyperactivity.

"OUR MATERIAL is all original," Henderson said.

"Except for the stuff we steal," Wood added, drawing cries of "No, not true!" from the others.

Anderson said The Comedy Exchange style is not based on any other comedy. The group works like Second City or Saturday Night Live, doing individual sketches and routines, he said.

"We can do different types of humor, tailor it to the audience," Henderson said. "We're not all bathroom humor."

Their act includes a variety of talents everything from singing, to monologues and a lot of satire, Anderson said.

"We're evolving into a higher form of life," Wood said. "Irish folk music."

Anderson and Henderson are the only remaining charter members of the group, having worked together for two years. They trace their performing roots to a local eating establishment, "The Taco Inn Club,

where the elite meet to eat," Anderson said.

SINCE THE EARLY days members have come and gone and the group has moved on professionally—playing such places as the Omaha Country Club and The New York Times, and Omaha nightclubs.

The Comedy Exchange also is available for private parties, Henderson said, and if given enough time can write material to fit the occasion.

But it is at O.G. Kelly's that the group has found a Lincoln base for their talents.

"The response was so great that Kelly decided to do a night devoted to comedy," Anderson said.

And so the Open Stage has been opened twice so far to comedy acts and jugglers, Henderson said, adding that both nights were "big smashes."

The next comedy night will be Halloween, Anderson said. The Comedy Exchange has no performances until then, due to Theater Department commitments, he said.

He said The Comedy Exchange has developed a cult following of fans at O.G. Kelley's.

What's it like to make people laugh professionally?

"It's almost a sexual experience, performing your own material and getting an immediate response," Anderson said.

"WHEN THINGS GET going," Henderson said, "There are times a look to the audience can get a laugh."

The members said they have no plans to move on soon.

"People always say crap to us like 'You should be in New York,' "Henderson said. But minor things "like school" have to be cleared up first, he said.

Anderson said the Comedy Exchange has remained what they wanted it to be, "an experimental group and training ground for material."

"We wanted something to give us a background," he said.

"Groups in Los Angeles, New York, the centers for comedy, are really no better than we are," Henderson said. "It's just that the opportunities are there."

The best material comes to them spontaneously, when they are just talking somewhere, he said, but it doesn't work as well when they all get together and say "Let's do some comedy."

The sketches are never completely figured out, word for word, Anderson said. Instead, the troupe works out a basic premise and are free with the adlibs in between punch lines.

While Anderson said the group was looking to branch out into other mediums,

as long as people keep coming to see them, The Comedy Exchange will keep working. "We have fun with it and that's why we

"We have fun do it," he said.



Photo by Rhoda Hahn

Lyons' frenzy

Johnny Lyons, lead vocalist for Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes, gives a frenzied performance to an appreciative audience. The eleven-member, New York-based band played at the Music Box in Omaha Tuesday night. After the band was called back for three encores, Lyons showed his appreciation by spraying the enthusiastic crowd and band members with beer.

Scenery, young actress highlight 'Days of Heaven'

By Pete Schmitz

We are not reminded often enough that merely standing the trials of everyday life in this chaotic world is a great accomplishment for many people.

One perceptive film-maker who celebrates the survival of the not so fit is Robert Altman. His best works, M*A*S*H, McCabe and Mrs. Miller, Thieves Like Us, Nashville and Three Women, are brilliant portrayals of people who fight an unconscious battle against certain historical processes which dictate the course of their fate.

movie review

Another film-maker who is good at dealing with the concerns dominating Altman's themes is Terrence Malick.

His second film, Days of Heaven, which he both directed and wrote, may well establish his reputation as one of the finest talents in cinema to emerge within the past

The success of this movie lies in its power to involve the audience in art and sociology from a historical and humanistic perspective that details the downfall of the exploiters and the strength and survival of the exploited.

When viewing this spectacle, one gets the feeling of being in a museum and getting a glimpse of what it was like to be drifting through rural and urban America shortly before World War I.

AUDIENCES MAY FEEL compelled to see this film more than once just to enjoy the effects of Nestor Almendros' cinematography. Yet the poignant narration of Linda, who is played with a keen sense of innocence and compassion by Linda Manz, may merit another visit to the theater. This young actress nearly steals the show from the golden wheatfields and expansive horizons of the Texas Panhandle.

The visual beauty of this picture, which has won world-wide acclaim for the cinematographer, has made Malick vulnerable to many attacks.

According to some critics, the lush photography either distracts from the story and the people in it, or it makes up for a pointless plot with shallow characterization.

At first glance, these arguments appear valid; however, they do not hold when considering the director's intentions.

First of all, Malick wants to show us a small yet important part of America's past from a child's point of view.

The narrative is constructed from young Linda's conversation with her friend and tells of the tragic intermingling of three adults.

Given the girl's age, which is nine, and considering that she is speaking to someone who has already shared a part of her life, things about the story and its participants are naturally going to be fuzzy to the audience.

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Dancing, games, bike repair to be offered at Celebration

Are you ready to celebrate?

Open Harvest, a non-profit natural foods-cooperative, has scheduled its Third Annual Celebration, from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday, in the park at 27th and Randolph streets.

Two dancers will perform and music, games and booths featuring local organizations are planned. A free bicycle clinic will offer instruction in bike repair. A workshop in Tai Chi, a form of meditation intended to relax mind and body through dance-like forms of exercise, is planned tentatively.

Organizations with booths at the celebration are: La Leche League, Nebraskans for Peace, Lincoln Action Program, and the Lincoln Lancaster Commission on the

Status of Women.

The book cooperative associated with Open Harvest will have a sidewalk sale. Food will be served by the Open Harvest Natural Foods Cafe, which prepares entrees such as whole wheat pizza.

Open Harvest sells items in bulk, runs a whole wheat bakery and offers nutrition information.

Since opening in July 1975, the cooper-

ative's membership has grown from 25 to more than 200. Members who work at the co-op a minimum of three hours a month are eligible to buy food at lower prices and ratify decisions of the store's elected board of directors.

