

arts/entertainment

Comic dancer to perform at Nebraska Unions

By Sue Jepsen

Television is killing the almost "religious experience" of live performance, according to Matthew Child, Centennial artist-in-residence.

Today and Tuesday, Child will bring his art to both Nebraska unions. Child, a comic dancer, will perform in the East Campus Union cafeteria at 5 p.m. today.

Tuesday he will be in the Nebraska Union ballroom at 7:30 p.m. Both shows are sponsored by University Program Council and Lincoln Fine Arts Council.

"Comic dance is just what the name implies—dance that is more comic, has more clowning and is more personalized," Child said.

There are different types of mime, he said, and his involves the use of contortion, some simple props and acrobatics along with dance.

Child developed his craft while touring with the Great Salt Lake Mime Troupe, a group he formed with some friends while attending the University of Utah.

The troupe toured the western United States and Europe for eight years before the group folded in 1978. The group, originally all dancers, combined the best of dancing, acting and comedy, Child said.

The troupe started doing the basic white-face "literal mime," but used larger mime movements and did song and dance routines, he said.

The big change in the act came when the troupe went to Europe in 1975, Child said. They dropped the white faces, did more characters and added simple props, he said.

Stayed with friends

While on tour the troupe stayed in homes of people they knew or strangers who saw their show and offered to let them stay the night.

"We were all hobos for sure," Child said. The troupe made some life-long friends that way, and even broke up one marriage, he added.

During the first three years he was with the troupe, Child also took classes at the University of Utah.

"I had some of the best teachers in institutionalized dance," he said.

Before attending Utah, Child had 1½ years of ballet. Although modern dance and ballet are similar, Child said, one can easily tell when a dancer has had ballet training because of the "steel frame they have."

"It (ballet) frees up your limbs as you

develop a strong center," he said.

Child said he traveled since he was a child growing up "like an Army brat." His father was an economics professor who traveled extensively doing research for companies and universities.

His mother met his father in France during World War II while she toured in the USO. Theirs was a "classic war romance," Child said.

While he grew up, he said his mother taught him and his brothers and sisters tap dancing and told them about the USO and her family's experience in Vaudeville.

Although Child enjoys live performing most, he said he has been teaching a lot lately.

For the first half of this semester he has been the artist-in-residence for the Centennial Education Program.

Busy residency

This is the longest and most involved residency he has ever done, he said, along with teaching a centennial class, he teaches drama and self-expression to inmates at the State Penal Complex for Southeast Community College.

Through the Lincoln Action Program he teaches clowning improvisation in the Lincoln schools and he teaches a class for the Malone Center in Lincoln.

Child arranges his classes and performances. He said this comes from his days with the Salt Lake Mime Troupe when they worked without an agent.

Child said he likes to organize a year in advance if he can. He is constantly typing letters and mailing his resume to places looking for work.

After he leaves the Centennial program March 5, he hopes to go to Europe. In August he will appear in Edinburgh, Scotland, where for 3½ weeks the "whole place becomes a theater," he said.

Looking further ahead, Child said he didn't know what he would be doing, especially with the cost of traveling increasing.

"A lot depends on modern transportation. My traveling may become limited," he said.

Child said he may even get out of the entertainment business because he can't make money at what he is doing and he has no social life.

Child said he has thought of giving up and going back to school again, but he isn't sure.

"I know what I'm doing is as good as what everybody else is doing," he said. "Besides, I like to have a good time."



Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

Mathew Child will perform today and Tuesday.

One-time Muddy Waters member sings 'own' blues

By Pat Higgins

wanted to do my own songs."

His style is very fluid and slices like a razor when he cuts loose.

"It's hard when a band is first starting out but every day things are improving," he said.

There is much critical debate regarding the legitimacy of the Blues Brothers and Guitar Jr. has some interesting observations concerning them.

"Their success does make you stop and think but they are doing a good thing by keeping the blues going. I'm in the movie playing with John Lee Hooker. The Blues Brothers are bringing a lot of new people to the music and I think blues is going to come back stronger than ever," he said.

The blues audience has in recent years been white, but there have been some changes as of late.

"We used to go into places and not see one black face. Now a lot more black people are coming to see us," he said.

Guitar Jr. followed the same hallowed path of so many other blues greats leaving the Deep South for Chicago.

"I was born and raised in Greenwood, Mississippi where I had my first group which was gospel. I played acoustic guitar and we would go from church to church and play."

Some religious fundamentalists considered blues to be the devil's music, but Guitar Jr. begs to differ.

"I don't think playing blues makes you less religious. I first came to Chicago in 1962 and started playing with Otis Rush and Magic Slim and then I went with Muddy," he said.

Guitar Jr. appears to be quite content to be fronting his own band.

"I'm doing something I can feel," he said, "and I know that you can feel it too."

"My name came from the people of Chicago's West Side," said Guitar Jr., who just completed a weekend stint at the Zoo Bar.

"I never knew no Guitar Sr."

Guitar Jr. is best known as a former member of the legendary Muddy Waters band. Waters, who will be appearing at Kimball Recital Hall Thursday, is considered one of the seminal figures of urban blues and indirectly one of the godfathers of rock'n'roll. (Ask the Rolling Stones who borrowed their very name from one of his songs.)

Waters has undergone a well-deserved commercial and critical renaissance since the 1977 release of *Hard Again* on Blue Sky Records.

"I was with Muddy Waters back when we were on Chess Records." Chess was also the home of Chuck Berry and Howling Wolf, along with many other luminaries.

"When old man Chess died, the son took over but the company went broke, you understand. With Muddy, I tried to play as close as possible to what he was doing."

Guitar Jr. harbors no bitterness towards his former cohort.

"Muddy and I get along just fine, I called him up last Christmas."

Guitar Jr. is currently affiliated with Alligator Records, the company almost single-handedly responsible for releasing any new blues music, and he is currently touring the blues bar circuit.

"I fell in love with this bar the first time I came in here. The people are beautiful."

"I knew when I left Muddy that I still wanted to keep playing my guitar and I



Photo courtesy of RSO Records

Tickets go on sale today for the Eric Clapton concert scheduled for Sunday March 22 at 8 p.m. in the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Clapton, whose work has spanned such groups as Cream, Blind Faith, Derek and the Dominoes and a highly successful solo career, is widely recog-

nized as one of rock music's finest guitarists.

The Lincoln appearance is one in a four-month, 60-concert tour of the United States for Clapton, who is promoting his latest album *Another Ticket*, his first studio album in two years.

Special guest for the Eric Clapton concert is The Fabulous Thunderbirds.