

Arts & Entertainment

Lucky Lady wears high-tech jewels

Analysis By Toger Swanson
Daily Nebraskan Staff Writer

Glitzy, glossy and glamorous. The Lucky Lady—Lincoln's newest nightspot—strives for all these impressions.

A dress code, slick video and audio equipment and shiny brass and polished floors make the Lucky Lady a place for people to dance, drink and be someone else. The constant videos allow people to transform themselves into any of their rock idols on the multi-screened dance floor. It is a plastic pre-programmed paradise, of neon tubes, lighting strobes and spinning spotlights. It is a space-age adult Disneyland with Star Wars lighting, dotting waitresses and gregarious bartenders.

The Lucky Lady is at the upper end of local spots in drink prices, but it is also at the upper end in the diversity of entertainment. Pool, video games, special contests, backgammon and dancing are available. Bartenders and waitresses carry whistles "to get people rowdy," as one waitress said. The after-game crowd Saturday didn't need any encouragement to get rowdy; they were intoxicated enough by either the Huskers' victory, ice cream drinks or draft beer to put the pounding sound system and fully lit dance floors to use.

A pleasant surprise was the hot dogs, some of the best in town, certainly better than the

aluminum covered missiles that fly through Memorial Stadium. The popcorn was salty, as is usual with any place that is trying to sell drinks, but the bar didn't skimp. Drinks were strong and generous. Everything was top quality and geared to the masses of people who filled the lower level of Gold's Galleria.

For warmth and intimacy, the Lucky Lady is far from ideal. It is a place to be awed by the sound, screens and sheer size. It's a "neat" place, probably the place to be this fall for the college crowd. Its large size lends some diversity, but it also tends to break up any gathering of friends. One could spend an hour just trying to find them.

The men's room is classy; there is even an attendant, whose job is not exactly clear. Maybe it's to make you think he's important enough for you to leave a tip. Piped-in music and telephones keep you in touch with the outside world in this white-tiled restroom.

The Lucky Lady radiates a striking, action-filled image; something is going on all the time and everyone is doing something. There are no dark corners to recede into. Patrons seem to like being on display as much as the high-tech videos. Fast paced and splashy, the Lucky Lady is a place where laid-back and quiet are nearly unknown and almost feared.



Daily Nebraskan Staff Photo
Mark Sullivan and Anne Buntain enjoy themselves at the Lucky Lady Lounge.

Lack of freshness, principles doom new shows

Would you like the good news or bad news first? Suit yourselves. I always prefer the good stuff first, myself.

Sunday I scanned the TV Guide for some hot series premieres. I noticed that "Punky Brewster" was showing on NBC, opposite "60 Minutes."

Mark Holt

Seen "Silver Spoons?" How about "Different Strokes?" "Webster?" Good. Then you probably know what principle "Punky Brewster" is acting on. First find a kid

with dimples, and stunted growth who is a minority member or a feisty girl. Then construct a show around it by hiring a couple of grown-ups to set up one-liners for them. It's kind of like the macho man detective show where the leading guy has the obligatory mustache and a name that sounds like hardware, firearms or a large metropolis.

I admire the producers of this series. To hire a miserable, unfunny, little girl who couldn't act her way out of soggy tissue paper and use a script that sounds as if the cast made it up as they went along in an effort to make a quality show, is an ambitious undertaking.

Gutsy as it may be, "Punky Brewster" is drab, silly, and gives the hard-core couch potato a welcome half-hour to visit the

refrigerator.

The evening wasn't all doom and gloom though. I did manage to catch "E. R." I guess this is what you'd call the good news. Relatively speaking, I'm afraid.

Elliot Gould and Marcia Strassman are the only name-brand stars in this latest nutty-folks-in-habit-hospital-comedy/drama. (E. R. stands for emergency room, by the way.) Not since the days of "M*A*S*H" have viewers been treated to such a combination of keen humor and gripping drama. I'm lying. "E. R." has provided itself with the very flexible backdrop of an emergency room, but fails to deliver any more than what every other show in the genre already has done.

The plot involves a few neat characters and some good lines, but it's conceptually

plagiaristic and lacks the freshness of its charismatic predecessors. Gould even resembles the glib doctor he played in the original "M*A*S*H."

While good writing can potentially disguise all these aforementioned shortcomings, the producers of "E. R." still went with "the public likes what it's seen before" idea. The result is a semifunny series with no identity of its own.

Now, no one's a bigger fan of humor than me. I still laugh when Tom and Jerry beat each other and I watch "Monty Python" religiously. But in the hands of writers who don't know exactly where they're going or what they're doing, the yuks can be laughable. "Punky Brewster" and maybe "E. R." are just such shows. Their days are numbered.

Music of '80s reflects spirit of optimism, diversity

Seven out of 10 Lincoln commercial radio stations play some variation of contemporary rock music—the music many Lincoln listeners prefer over all others. And the variety offered in the rock of the '80s may be the reason for their choice.

Joanne Young

Elvis Presley's records dominated radio in the '50s. In the '60s, the Beatles had 36 records in the top 20. But Elvis wasn't far behind with 30.

The '70s still had the British sound in the limelight with Elton John coming up with 17 records in the top 20 of the decade, and Elvis Presley and members of the Beatles still hanging in there on the list of the top 10 artists.

But in the '80s, Elvis and the Beatles have finally surrendered their dominance of the past 30 years—but to whom?

Michael Jackson hit his stride in the past couple of years, culminating with his *Thriller* album. But KFRX Program Director Tracy Johnson doesn't credit Jackson with the staying power of Elvis and the Beatles.

"Michael Jackson has been incredibly popular," Johnson said, "but now is getting a little burned out. You can't keep topping things like *Thriller*."

KFRX, the station that draws the largest audience, plays a contemporary hit radio format that Johnson said is based on variety.

Music today is more diverse, he said, with dance, new wave, traditional and slower music reflecting the different age groups.

Many of the popular artists have been around for awhile—Chicago, Elton John, Michael Jackson and brothers, Hall and Oates, the Pointer Sisters and the Cars.

Stations playing the contemporary hit records can expect to

draw an audience ranging in age from 10 to 50.

"People in their 30s and 40s grew up with top 40 radio, so they can identify with that type of music," Johnson said.

If the music of the '80s can be characterized, most people say it's upbeat and driving—matching the more upbeat attitude of the people.

Drugs, war and the women's movement were laced through the music of the late '60s and the

'70s—not exactly a party atmosphere.

Twenty years ago, in September 1964, the number one song was "The House of the Rising Sun" by the Animals. In the same month of 1974, "I Shot the Sheriff" by Eric Clapton was number one.

The Beatles, Beach Boys and Supremes were among the hotter groups in the '60s. That decade also brought us such meaningful songs as: "Do Wah Diddy Diddy," "Fun, Fun, Fun," "Gone, Gone, Gone," and "Run, Run, Run."

In the '70s, it was Elton John, Chicago and the Carpenters topping the charts most often. The Beatles were still on the charts—but not as a group. Frank Sinatra made it to the top 100, as did Frank Zappa.

But in the '80s, there's more of a spirit of optimism—along with the variety. The Sept. 15 Billboard Top 10 reflects the diversity with John Waite, Cyndi Lauper, Prince, Lionel Richie and Huey Lewis and the News in the top five slots.

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed

