

Arts & Entertainment

Sexy-voiced DJ spins French music and variety on KZUM radio show

By Scott Harrah
Arts and Entertainment Editor

"Be cultural, cosmopolitan and continental with 'The French Radio Show' . . . the only place where you can be hot, exotic and glamorous at once," Taraneh Tanavoli says on the promo of her KZUM show, as her voice oozes superlatives and sensuality. Tanavoli, a UNL French major, recently replaced Jacques DuPont as the host of "The French Radio Show." DuPont, a teaching assistant in the UNL French department, moved back to Paris in July.

The show features French music and conversation. Tanavoli spins French new-wave and pop, classical and soul music. And she introduces it with a sultry, intriguing accent that her listeners love, she said.

"People call me all the time and tell me I have the sexiest voice they've ever heard," she said.

The most remarkable thing about her voice is that she sounds like she

just stepped off a Concorde from Paris, but she's actually from Tehran, Iran.

"The French language is very popular in Iran," she said. "People are more interested in learning French than English (in Iran), so I was exposed to all aspects of French culture at a young age."

In Iran, Tanavoli attended Jandarc, a renowned private French school that taught her everything she knows about the land of wine, art and style.

She used to sit with her friend DuPont when he did the show, so she learned a great deal about its premise and purpose. When it came time for DuPont to return to Europe, he asked her to take over the show. In just a little over a month, she has managed to boost the show's popularity to a new pinnacle.

"Some people tell me that they actually like the show better now that I'm doing it," she said. "And that keeps me going because I'm new on the show and I still feel somewhat insecure."

One feature of the show is weekly guests. Tanavoli invites anyone who

wants to be on the show to come down and chat in French or English just for the fun of it.

"We've talked about everything from music to politics to local happenings like the NBC bank incident," she said. "People like the talks because they make the show seem more relaxed and informal."

She also plays requests and puts phone callers on the air, she said.

But what *really* draws the listeners in? Culture? Music? Conversation? Informality? Tanavoli said people tune in to experience the glamour that people see in the French.

"People associate anything French with fashion, style, sex, romance and class," she said. "I think that really draws people to the language and my show." She hesitated a moment, then smiled and said, "And also because *c'est super!*"

Tanavoli hosts "The French Radio Show" Thursday evenings from 9:30 to 11 p.m. on KZUM, 99.3 or 89.5 FM.



Paul Vonderlage/Daily Nebraskan

Airwave pilot Taraneh Tanavoli spins the sounds of France every Thursday on KZUM's "French Radio Show."

Despite flaws, 'Hail Mary' truthful, important look at Christian beliefs

By Chris McCubbin
Senior Reporter

And so "Hail Mary" came, and so it went. In its wake a few were left uplifted, more were left indignant, many were left bewildered and most remained indifferent.

Movie Review

Reams have been written, in these pages and others, about the controversy surrounding the movie, about the people involved in the controversy surrounding the movie and about the proper conduct of the people involved in the controversy surrounding the movie. But what about the movie?

"Hail Mary" is, of course, a contemporary retelling of the birth of Christ. It is also a deep and personal look at the spiritual consciousness of the filmmaker, Jean-Luc Godard.

It is not an easy film to appreciate, and this is quite deliberate. Godard makes films like James Joyce wrote books, or like Alexander Pope wrote poems, piling symbol upon symbol, image upon image, sound upon sound, until the film itself becomes a screening process, excluding all but the most attentive viewers from any appreciation of itself.

The film is the story of a conversion — Godard's. Godard is known as one of the chief iconoclasts of our time, a merciless destroyer of sacred cows and petty taboos. In "Hail Mary" he is facing the fact that there may be something real behind the idols and icons he has assaulted for so long.

Godard perceives something behind the universe. He is not sure what it is, but he believes it is real. It seems rather like the Christian God, but Godard is not yet willing to pin it down. It may be something else, perhaps a pagan elemental force, or even a higher order of intelligence from another world. Whatever it is, Godard perceives it and wishes to meet it.

This is not a reverent film. Reverence is one of the last traits the convert acquires, coming only after full acceptance of the worshipped. Godard is not nearly that far down the road to faith. His position is more like the man in the nightmare: running wildly away from the inevitable as it closes in from all sides.

Not reverence, but respect. Godard

does not yet love the One he sees, but he does not hate it, and he wants to learn more about it. He must, as the scriptures say, "work out his own salvation, with fear and trembling."

The film centers on three characters: Mary, Joseph and Gabriel.

We see Mary become a goddess. She begins the film as an ordinary girl, playing basketball and helping her father at his gas station. By the end of the film she is the Queen of Heaven, the great feminine archetype, who walks clothed in mystery and majesty among lesser spirits.

Joseph undergoes no great metamorphosis; he is merely a man with a difficult decision to make. Should he become involved with a normal, fulfilling relationship with an ordinary girl? Or should he devote his life to loving the chosen one of God? In the end he chooses the higher, harder path.

Gabriel, the divine messenger, is a magnificent character. Harried and impatient, violent and implacable, Gabriel reminds us that divine love is the most potent force in the universe. God *will* love us, regardless of whether we wish to be loved. The lovely young girl who accompanies Gabriel reminds us that God's love can be beautiful and soothing but, when need be, it is harsh. Divine love is not always comforting and is *never* comfortable.

The film's much-discussed nude scenes are necessary and should offend no one. Since the whole story is founded on what is being done to Mary's body, to have never shown us her body would have been both absurd and false. Mary is, both clothed and nude, lovely, even erotic, but never, *never* a sex object.

The film's detractors, in their protests, distributed an article from a Catholic publication listing two scenes which were considered particularly offensive. Because these scenes illustrate both what's best and what's worst in the film, they merit a closer look.

In one scene when Mary is alone in her bed, she says God "is a coward and a creep, who is interested in me only because of my a-- h-- and my c--." This scene is Mary's dark night of the soul, her Gethsemane, if you will. She is afraid, she has doubts and she voices them powerfully and explicitly. But then, in a marvelously written scene, we see her move in a matter of minutes from doubt to acceptance, and beyond acceptance to a positive exaltation in her fate and in her mission. This is, when viewed objectively, the film's most uplifting, most Christian scene.

The other scene has Mary allowing the boy Jesus to crawl under her night-

gown and examine her naked body. She tells him her vagina is "a hedge," her breasts are "lamps" and her buttocks are "loaves." In addition to showing us the closeness between mother and child, this scene is intended to show us that Mary has come to identify herself with all things feminine, to see herself as a universal symbol for womanhood.

I found this scene rather offensive. I was not offended to think that the Christ-child might have displayed a normal, healthy, non-prurient interest in the bodies of the opposite sex. I am not offended to think that Mary might have understood this curiosity and used her body to teach her son. I am offended that Godard would take the theme of Mary as archetype, which he had developed subtly and thoroughly throughout the movie and, at the very end, pound it into our heads one last time in such an obvious, ungraceful fashion.

This is far from a perfect film. It's flaws are many and glaring. Among them are metaphorical overload, pretentiousness, deliberate obtuseness and a headache-inducing soundtrack which is simply annoying. But this is a worthy film. Its virtues are many, and they shine.

After seeing "Hail Mary," whatever sympathy I may have once had for the film's opponents vanished. These people say they want reverence, but what they want is reverent lies. They want to take the characters of one of the most profound myths of the human race and turn them into plastic dashboard icons. They want a Mary without breasts or genitals and, worse, without thought — a serenely smiling receptacle for divine semen. They want an emasculated Joseph who exudes dog-like devotion to his ever-virgin sweetheart. They want Gabriel, the celestial warrior and messenger of the Lord, to be a sweet-voiced, androgynous, harp-playing cartoon character. They want to take possibly the most significant event in human history and set it in some biblical never-never land with all the charm and innocence and artistic force of a Sunday-school pageant.

Instead, Godard gives them truth. Not The Truth, perhaps, in a cosmic sense, but *his* truth. His beliefs and convictions. His fully developed theories and speculations. His fears and doubts.

And before one man's truth, the cherished lies are threatened. They tremble and totter and those whom they master strike out blindly, viciously, like cowards.

Devoted Howard the Duck reader enjoys movie, but bored by special effects

By Charles Lieurance
Diversions Editor

Aside from his other heroic duties, Howard the Duck managed to get me through junior high school. I mean the adventures of a duck ripped from his time and place on Duck World by some cosmic accident, who talked like Humphrey Bogart in "The Big Heat," and who was forced quite reluctantly to deal with the hopelessly inferior morons of earth, is every adolescent, gawky schoolboy's dream. It was like Holden Caulfield or Billy Pilgrim with a bill, an ugly duckling who refused to be cute, who took pesky earthlings by their hairless throats and shook them til they wised up. . .

Movie Review

Steve Gerber's Marvel comic book was . . . well, a marvel. Howard was a wise-ass like Daffy Duck but he never really lost. He was as attractive as Donald Duck but without the silly vocal noises. Howard was the supreme duck, a duck that men really could look up to.

Somehow this cult duck made it to the big screen. I mean, there hasn't even been a Spiderman movie yet, or a Shadow movie. But here's Howard, a rather obscure off-kilter comic book that has gone through about as much abridgement, format changes and crises of commerce as the comic book world has to offer, as a major summer release. And, overall, the movie's a gem.

Okay, Willard Huyk's Howard is a little too endearing, less the Bogart and more, say, Montgomery Cliff or a watered-down Cary Grant. His responses to the world are a bit too heavy on *really* awful puns and the last hour of the movie replaces the first hour's fun with a special effects extravaganza that, for an old Howard fan, is unnecessary. After all, Howard never really battled anything as terrible and ominous as the crab troll demon thing that he's faced with at the end of the movie. Howard battled nerdy sleepwalkers and giant space turnips.

But, not every issue of a comic book is quintessential. If you love

the character enough you forgive crab/troll/demon things and cherish the overall effect. Huyk's Howard and his cartoonish entourage are priceless.

Jeffrey Jones as the compassionate doctor responsible for sucking Howard out of his living room on Duck World and through the cosmos to earth, is as hilarious a cartoon character as you're likely to meet in a live action flick. Once he gets possessed by the crab/troll/demon creature and demolishes a Cajun sushi joint with telekinesis, he becomes the funniest thing I've seen in a movie all summer, a parody of all the demon-possession movies of the '70s.

Tim Robbins as the museum janitor studying to be a scientist is straight out of Gerber's comic book, with oversized glasses and baggy clothes. He's the prototypical human moron in Howard's hostile perceptions.

Huyk populates the whole affair with Gerberesque caricatures from all walks of life: musicians, waitresses, truck drivers, cowboys and policemen. For a Howard fan this first hour is duck heaven.

What Huyk and more filmmakers than I can name here forget is that special effects are toys and toys are mostly fun to those who get to play with them. I'm sure the battle with the crab thing is as miraculous as a moon landing to special effects whiz kids who recreate the surfaces of other worlds and the chimeras that populate those worlds on a daily basis, but to the viewer they are mostly as they appear on the screen, a crab creature blowing things to smithereens. The "wow, cool" reaction only lasts a few minutes and then the hundreds of green slimy appendages and blown up laboratory equipment all look the same.

If you can say "wow, cool" a lot more than your average duck then even this hour of crashing police cars and abominable crab creatures will send you into fits of glee.

Since I'm one of those people who can't stand movies that sell themselves on the "for the kid in all of us" slogan, I prefer the Gerberian satire of part one.

All things considered, fowl is fair and fair is . . .

Sorry.