

Arts & Entertainment

NETV wraps up festival

The final day of Festival '87 joins with dramatizations on two continuing series to highlight this week's programming over all stations on the Nebraska ETV Network.

Beginning at 6 p.m., "Pavarotti in Vienna" follows opera star Luciano Pavarotti's preparations for the grand opening of "Aida" at the Vienna State Opera in 1984, the 300th production at the opera house since its reopening after World War II. The 60-minute program focuses on the mounting of the production through opening night and is a highly personal account of Pavarotti preparing for a major role.

At 7 p.m. is "A Musical Toast: The Stars Shine on Public Television," an entertainment gala featuring a stellar cast of singers and musicians presenting the best of Broadway, popular and classical music. Opera stars Robert Peters and Marilyn Horne, actress-singer Bernadette Peters, conductor Leonard Bernstein, the Modern Jazz Quartet, and the American Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Mauceri

are part of this exciting special. Closing out the evening at 10 p.m. is "Island of the Bounty," which follows an international expedition of 15 men and women who set sail in a square-rigged ship to trace the route of the H.M.S. Bounty, whose crew mutinied in the South Pacific almost 200 years ago.

"Silas Marner," George Eliot's classic story about a reclusive 19th-century linen weaver in a remote English village whose faith is restored by a small child, airs on "Masterpiece Theatre," Monday at 7 p.m. The two-hour "Masterpiece Theatre" program is telecast with closed captions for hearing-impaired viewers.

The novel is considered Eliot's masterpiece, and the author, whose real name was Mary Ann Evans, is regarded — along with Charles Dickens — as the best Victorian novelist. Literary critics have described "Silas Marner" as an allegory about how natural human influences such as love and kindness can heal a damaged personality.

Starring in the title role is Academy Award-winning actor Ben Kingsley.



The Dig Mandrakes

Courtesy of The Dig Mandrakes

Band gets new lease on life

Mandrakes to rock'n'roll Lincoln with reckless abandon

By Charles Lieurance
Senior Reporter

Even if the Dig Mandrakes turn out not to have a future, they've certainly accumulated a history. Two of the Mandrakes, Tommy Meyer and Brad Jones, are refugees from the old Boys with Toys, an Iowa City-based guitar-pop combo that came as close to national success as any band from that neck of the woods. Boys with Toys disbanded in June 1986 after recording an independent LP, opening for major bands like the Alarm and establishing invaluable contacts in the recording industry.

But there was still a lack of confidence within Boys with Toys. When the band was no more, Meyer and Jones went their separate ways, accumulating experience, ideas and new leases on life. With these inspirations in tow, the two got back together in St. Paul, Minn., recruited

roots-rock bass player Kip Powell, who had played bass for Velvi Elvi and Bo Ramsey and the Sliders, and began searching for another guitarist.

Concert Preview

Two guitarists were essential for the sound Meyer and Jones had in mind. The sound would implement two very different sounding guitars twanging and thrashing for a thick, varied rock'n'roll sound.

For the second guitar sound they pulled Bufonse Gear, alias Al Schares, away from KUNI-FM, Iowa's premier alternative music station. Schares/Gear had played twangy guitar for the Non-Stop and the Dust Devils.

The four then proceeded to conjure up the Mandrake magic. Mandrake, the magic root that grows

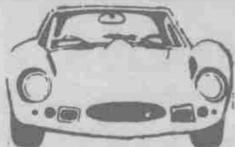
beneath the scaffolds where criminals are hung, according to myth and legend, has a long history of exchanged uses. Hopefully the same can be said of the Dig Mandrakes.

The band has a love affair with the guitar that harkens back to the days of Boys with Toys, but that's where the Mandrakes' similarities with the old band ends. The Boys' sound was clean and tidy with an emphasis on musical precision. The Mandrakes' emphasis is on rock'n'roll in all its rough abandon, a twanging, swampy, slimey homage to music that isn't slickly produced in a multimillion-dollar studio in L.A.

The Dig Mandrakes will be hoeing in your backyard Friday and Saturday night at the Drumstick. As the Cramps say, "If you can't dig this, you need a new shovel."

Shows start at 9 p.m. and the cover is \$3.

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Fun in Omaha: Spring events and concerts

The Greater Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau recently published a brochure detailing events and activities in the Omaha area from March through May.

The 1987 Home Show, the Midwest's largest consumer home showcase with decorated rooms, flower and garden displays, and live entertainment, is scheduled for Tuesday through March 29 at the Civic Auditorium. "Up with People" and jazz musician David Amram will perform April 4. The Boys Choir of Harlem will perform April 7.

April highlights include the April 1 opening day of the Henry Doorly Zoo, the April 17 season opener of the Omaha Royals AAA Baseball Club, the Shrine circus and parade April 22 through 26, and the opening day of Ak-Sar-Ben, a Top Ten thoroughbred racetrack on April 29.

A Mystery Weekend, April 24 and 25, will have hotel guests racing to figure out "whodunit" after a mock murder occurs at the Best Western Omaha Inn, 108th and L streets.

Omaha-area interior designers decorate a landmark Omaha home at 5209 Burt St. as a benefit for the Omaha Symphony. The Designer Showhouse is scheduled for April 25 through May 17.