

Music reading for conference explores race, class barriers

By Mick Dyer
Staff Reporter

Poet June Jordan and musician Adrienne Torf will perform excerpts from their musical, "Bang Bang Uber Alles," as part of the "Literacy, Culture and the Shaping of Democracy" conference sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln department of English and the Nebraska Council of Teachers of English.

June 1986. It tells the story of a group of eight young performers, initially more concerned about paying bills than about social issues, who act against the Ku Klux Klan after the lynching of a young black man and killing of a Jewish family. Armed with song and dance, they decide to face the Klan on its turf. They discover in the process the importance of cooperation across the barriers of race, sex and class, and the necessity of heroic confrontation in the preservation of basic American values.

the gospel-style "Death to the Klan."

Jordan is a well-known poet, teacher and political activist. Her several volumes of poetry and essays include: "New Days: Poems of Exile and Return," Emerson Hall, 1973; "Things that I Do in the Dark: Selected Poetry," Random House, 1977; "Civil Wars," Beacon Press, 1981; and two children's books, including "His Own Where," nominated for the National Book Award.

Torf has composed music for a wide range of settings, from the contemporary eclecticism of "Bang Bang Uber Alles" to programs for the Brooklyn Philharmonic and music for dance troupes, films, cabarets and public radio. She also has done a solo album of music for piano and synthesizers. Torf earned a degree in political science from Smith College and Stanford University in 1979.

The music is an eclectic mixture of contemporary popular styles, moving from pop to jazz to gospel and then to waltz, reggae and funk. It is written for young performers and uses familiar styles to promote ideas and feelings not common in the media. Torf will perform the music on the synthesizer, Jordan will read lyrics for some of the songs, and a local group will sing

Concert Preview

The reading with music will be at 8 p.m. in the East Union.

The performance is open to the public; a suggested donation of \$1 will be asked of those who are not registered for the conference.

The musical premiered at Atlanta's Seven Stages Theater in

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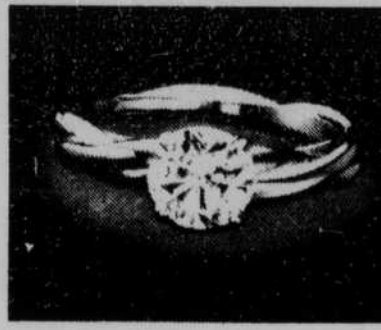
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