

# Lincoln symphony notes financial success



Andy Manhart/Daily Nebraskan

By Trevor McArthur  
Staff Reporter

While symphonies in some larger cities have been struggling to keep playing, the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra has enjoyed smooth sailing.

Recently, Oklahoma City has joined the list of cities whose orchestras have been disbanded, but those involved with the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra are very positive about the future of this town's organization.

According to Marti Baumert, a spokesperson at the symphony's management office, the number of subscription season tickets sold has increased. About 1,300 out of a possible 1,500 seats were sold. She attributes the growth to the symphony's ability to keep in touch with the community's needs.

Baumert said one problem with many of symphonies that fail is an attempt to grow too fast. By raising its

expectations too high, the symphony falls short and gets into trouble.

"And they lose contact with their community," Baumert said. "They decide to expand before they've done their market research, so to speak."

Also, the symphony is not as large as some of the others which have failed. Other symphonies had problems with union demands and strikes. In contrast, the Lincoln Symphony has no full-time members and relies heavily on music teachers and students. A few more come from the Omaha Symphony Orchestra, which does employ full-time players, and the Lincoln Chamber Orchestra, but Baumert said the bulk of the orchestra are university faculty and students.

In fact, the musical director and conductor for the symphony is University of Nebraska-Lincoln professor Robert Emile. Emile is a professor of strings and music theory, as well as the conductor of the University Sym-

phony Orchestra for the UNL School of Music. He has served as a conductor and music director before coming to Nebraska for many various organi-

According to Vierk, there are three categories of symphonies: national, regional and metropolitan.

The New York Philharmonic and

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zations including orchestras and operas.

Baumert credits Emile with helping in the strong leadership which the organization has and taking time to know many people around town and keeping in touch with the needs of the community.

Richard Vierk, president of the Lincoln Symphony Association, agreed that the symphony is doing better, although he said Lincoln's success needs to be put in perspective.

the Chicago Symphony are examples of the huge national symphonies with multi-million dollar budgets. On the other end of the spectrum, the Lincoln Symphony fits into the metropolitan category without full-time players and a budget in the six-figure range. Organizations in either of these two categories tend to be doing well.

But regional symphonies sometimes get caught in the middle. They must compete with national symphonies for players, but may not have a

much larger financial base than a metropolitan symphony. According to Vierk, most symphonies which have problems are regional.

Vierk said the relationship between the UNL School of Music and the Lincoln Symphony is symbiotic. Professors are able to supplement their incomes and have an artistic release, making the UNL School of Music more attractive, while the symphony is able to get a better quality of performer than they could otherwise afford.

Vierk also said the symphony can get musicians who play for the Omaha Symphony, a larger, regional orchestra, when the players are not obligated to Omaha.

"So we're getting kind of the best of all worlds, at a very reasonable price," Vierk said. "That's one reason why we're doing well, because we're able to benefit from them."

See SYMPH on 16

# MTV to select UNL students for game show

By Mark Hain  
Staff Reporter

Music Television's manic game show parody, "Remote Control," will attempt to broaden its geographical scope 7 p.m. Monday in the City Union Ballroom.

**'The audience of the show is college kids. What better way to find contestants than go directly to the colleges'**

— Silfen

Although the show once catered primarily to college students from the east coast, University of Nebraska-Lincoln students between the ages of 18 and 24 can compete to win a spot on the show.

"The audience of the show is college kids," said Lisa Silfen, an MTV publicist. "We just want to open it (the show) up to as many people as we can. What better way to find contestants than to go directly to the colleges?"

The program, which first aired in December 1987, has quickly become a "very popular show for us," Silfen said. The popularity seems due, in part, to the high energy level and fast pace of the program.

The show combines sometimes-ridiculous questions, and even more ridiculous answers from confounded contestants, with a cast of bizarre characters, including a verbally abusive co-host who insults the contestants. The show hooks its audience by mocking the hyperactive excitement level and melodramatic outbursts of

conventional game shows.

"MTV didn't want to do just a normal game show," Silfen said. "They wanted a parody of game shows."

According to MTV, the object of the game is to "gain points and possession of the remote control box by answering questions based on television and pop-culture trivia.

"The contestant with the highest score is strapped to a Kraftmatic bed in front of a wall of nine television monitors. By identifying which mu-

sic video is playing on each of the sets, the contestant piles up prizes" such as VCRs and trips. Although many contestants do well on the trivia section, they tend to trip up on the video identification.

"It's not difficult if you know television," Silfen said. "People still have a lot of fun playing the show."

The bulk of those people "having fun" however, are students from the East Coast. Although MTV claims to have no bias against the Midwest, Silfen was nonetheless hard pressed

to recall if many Midwesterners had participated in the show.

"I do know we had a guy from Michigan once," she said.

The Midwest is finally starting to get some recognition. UNL is one of only three Midwestern colleges, along with Wisconsin and Indiana, which will be the site of these contestant recruitments. Part of the reason UNL was chosen was because MTV recently established a pilot program and internship on campus. According to Cindy Bourne, the current MTV

campus representative, this is only the first of a series of MTV-sponsored activities on campus.

"The university agreed to participate in this program basically because they felt it would bring a lot in the way of publicity," Bourne said.

Bourne said the contest is limited to the first 100 students who arrive. The first part of the audition will be a written trivia quiz, followed by a personal interview in which "you have one minute to impress the judges," Silfen said. The contestants who make it past the first cut will play a mock round of the game. The winners of the final rounds will be on the show.

"I was told that there would be four people from here that could be on the show," Bourne said, "but it could change."

According to Silfen, once MTV confirms its taping schedule around mid-November, the qualifying contestants will be flown to New York City for a shot at the big time.

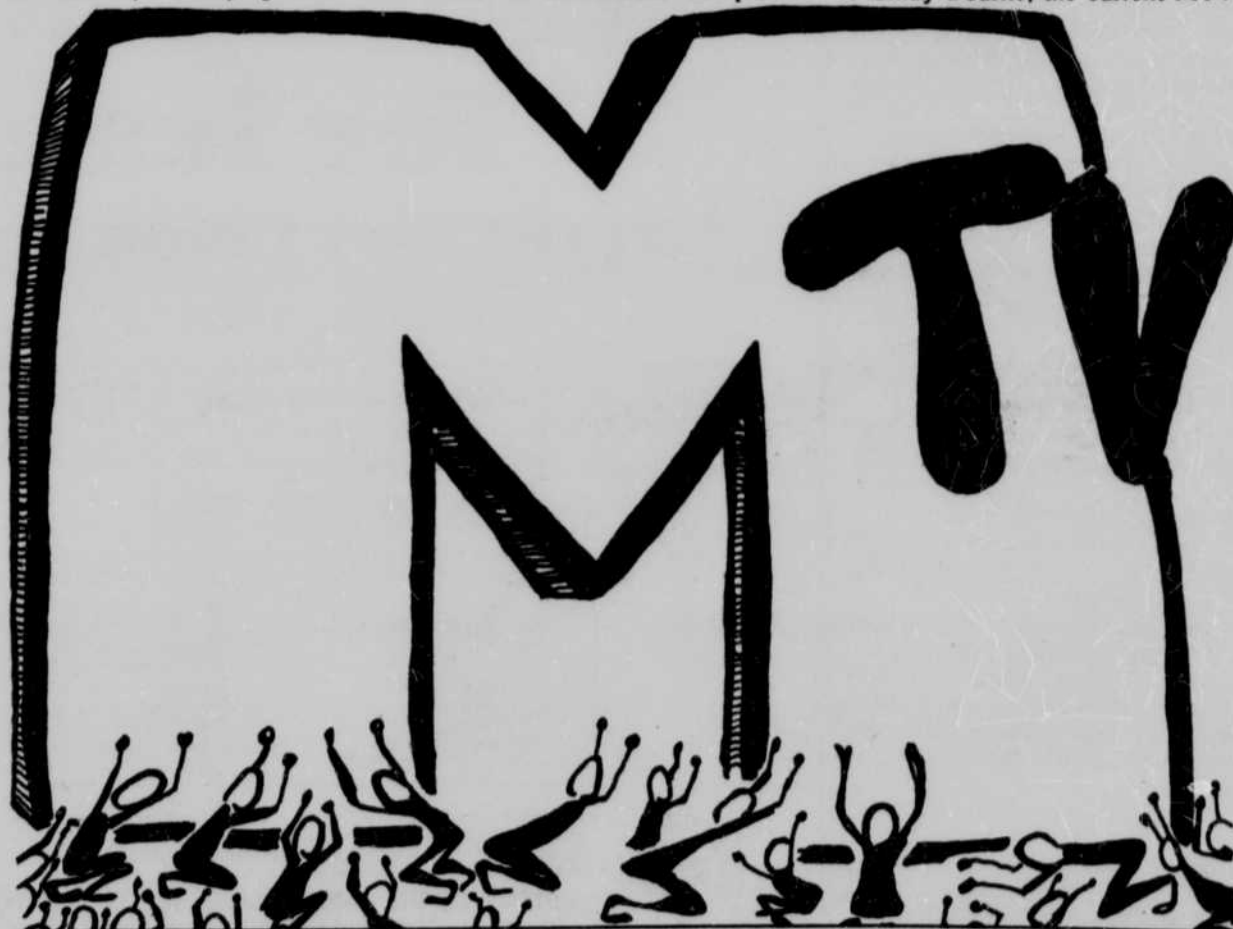
Frequent viewers of "Remote Control" may be under the impression that all contestants must be a certain type; namely, the type who dance in their chairs, act really obnoxious and scream "Yeah!" a lot. Not so, according to Silfen and Bourne.

"They're not looking for a certain type," Bourne said. "It's not just looks or anything — you've got to have some brains behind it."

"We just want fun, cool people, just someone who has a good attitude," Silfen said.

Even if prospective contestants are unsure of their coolness quotient or their attitude, both Bourne and Silfen gave advice for those students hoping to be among the ones strapped into a bed and insulted in front of millions of their peers.

"Just be yourselves — just be wacky," Silfen said.



John Bruce/Daily Nebraskan