

Berry presents message at Lied

Lecturer speaks about problem of racism with humorist twist

By Ingrid Youngquist
Staff Reporter

At the conclusion of her three-day stay in Lincoln, Nebraska "ya wanna come detassel some corn," Bertice Berry gave a side-splitting performance to an audience of more than 2,000 young people and adults at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.



Berry

Berry's message was filled with power-packed punches at people who make fun of the differences in others.

She opened her performance with pokes at Lincoln and the ratio of white people to black people in the city.

"When they came to get me at the airport, they asked me 'Excuse me are you Dr. Berry?'"

"I said 'How many other black women do you see in this here airport.'"

Then she moved on to attacking vanity and accusations about appearances.

Berry said she spends less money worrying about how she looks so she can spend "money on changing people's attitudes so people can think like me for free."

From beauty she went on to more delicate and less talked about subjects — like menstruation.

After discussing the trials and tribu-

lations of "the monthly burden," she likened periods to airplane food.

"You don't want it, but if it doesn't come, then you ask, 'Where's mine,'" Berry said.

Berry also poked fun at people who smoke and drink. She explained that she didn't do either with this witty comment:

"I'm a black woman from the land

— "The more diverse the environment, the better the products that come from it."

Berry
comedian

of the free and the home of the brave. I don't need any more illusions."

Her comedy was fast-paced and her transitions were incredibly smooth.

One of the messages that ran throughout her performance was that education is important.

At one point she asked for volunteers from the audience. After discovering that one of the volunteers was a teacher, she made the comment:

"We live in a society where we give more to our doctors and lawyers than to our teachers. If it weren't for our teachers, there'd be no doctors and lawyers."

Toward the end of her message she spoke strongly about the importance of understanding, appreciating and accepting people's differences as necessary to "make this world work."

"The more diverse the environment the better the products that come from it," Berry said.

"All of us are different no matter

what your difference is, be that because you're not going to be anything different. I'm a black woman and I'm going to be a black woman when I die, praise the lord."

Berry discredited the theory of America as a big melting pot and instead likened it to a salad bowl "all of our differences are what make the bowl nice."

Gwen Nugent, administrative director of the Nebraska Educational Television Council for Higher Education, said Berry was asked to come to Lincoln after Nugent received feedback from administrators at various Nebraska state colleges.

The administrators suggested that there was a need for more educational material dealing with multi-cultural issues, she said.

Nugent said that Mark Kelley, who is producing the program for Nebraska Public Television, had seen Berry at Concordia College and thought she was wonderful.

Kelley suggested that they get Berry to come and address these multi-cultural issues, she said.

Nugent said NETV officials began talking to Berry's manager in January.

Wednesday night's performance is the third component of what will become a television special on NETV. The special is planned to air this fall.

Nugent said the special is directed at college students.

On Monday, Berry arrived in Lincoln and gave a lecture on racism on college campuses to a group of students from several University of Nebraska-Lincoln classes, Nugent said.

On Tuesday, she said, Berry had a question and answer session with seven minority students who attend UNL.

Former Commodore returns to stardom

By Jill O'Brien
Staff reporter

Lionel Richie, known for his soulful singing and rhythm and blues song writing, is back after five years away from the music scene and public eye.

music PREVIEW

Richie, who joined forces with The Commodores in 1968, embarked on a solo career in 1982 with the success of "Truly" under his Motown belt.

His latest release, "Back to Front," is actually a compilation of his musical history, yet includes three new songs, "Do it to Me," "My Destiny" and "Love, Oh Love."

He opens with "Do it to Me," a rhythmic, gentle-rocking song about — you guessed it — making love, slow and easy.

"Do it to Me" was listed on Billboard's "Hot 100 Singles" in June as number 28 and is climbing, which isn't unusual for a song of Richie's.

Eleven of the 14 songs on his new release were at one time No. 1 hits, including "Endless Love,"

"Say You, Say Me" and "All Night Long."

"All Night Long," with its snappy Calypso beat, shows off Richie's diverse song writing ability. Not only can Richie croon sweet love songs, but he can rock as well.

And, of course, you can't have a Lionel Richie retrospective without his tenderest tunes, "Three Times a Lady" and "Easy."

Richie said "Three Times a Lady" was inspired by his parents' wedding anniversary during a speech his father made. For Richie fans, the song still evokes a sentimental catch-in-the-throat emotion, just like it did 15 years ago.

"Easy," another classic hit on "Back to Front," brings back the pain and memories of yesterday.

With "Sail On," Richie's velvety-smooth voice takes precedence over the strings and horns, as he sings slowly and hesitantly, "I'm looking for a good time, good time..." and crescendos into the unforgettable chorus, "Whoa, sail on, honey. Good times never felt so good."

Richie says he's excited again about singing and touring. So... sail on, Richie. Old songs never felt so good.

Butterfly to flutter into Howell Theatre

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska Repertory Theatre will open its 25th season today at the Howell Theatre with "M. Butterfly," a drama that has won numerous critical and artistic awards.

The plot is based on the true-life story of a French diplomat who has a

20-year love affair with Song Liling, a Chinese opera singer.

Interwoven within the plot are scenes of Chinese opera, diplomatic life in China during the Vietnam era and themes dealing with the meeting of eastern and western cultures as well as men's and women's perceptions of each other.

Martin shines

Goldie Hawn's old tricks are appealing in 'Housesitter'

"Housesitter"



By Gerry Beltz
Staff Reporter

Although sadly predictable in many points, "Housesitter" still has moments that sizzle, thanks to the chemistry between Steve Martin and Goldie Hawn.

The third cinematic teaming between Martin and director Frank Oz (the first two being "Little Shop of Horrors" and "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels") weaves the tale of Newton Davis (Martin), and the house he de-

signed and built as an engagement present to his longtime love, Becky (Dana Delaney).

Unfortunately for Davis, she rejects him and the house is left to gather dust.

Three months later, Davis is still depressed over Becky and tries to forget her via a one-night stand with a waitress named Gwen (Hawn), who intrigues him.

She is a master of deception, word games and knows how to read between the lines. In short, she's a con-artist.

After their tryst, Gwen uses what she learned about Davis from the night before to establish herself as Davis' wife in his hometown of Dobbs' Mill, which is also the location of his palatial house.

She starts at the grocery store, but ends up picking up dishes, furniture and a well-earned blessing from Davis' parents (Donald Moffat and Julie Harris).

movie PREVIEW

Gwen then begins establishing herself as the original "small-town housewife" with the local townsfolk, and she takes to the hoax like a fish to water.

Davis eventually returns home with the intent to sell the house in an attempt to pay his debts, only to find it filled with artwork, furniture and so on.

It is from here that the chemistry between Hawn and Martin really starts.

She is an experienced con-artist and liar, which he learns quickly.

Although there are not many surprises in "Housesitter," the work that Martin and Hawn put forward is wonderful.

Hawn's portrayal of Gwen starts off with a lot of promise, giving depth and intelligence to her character. This is a far cry from some of her earlier roles in "Foul Play" and "Protocol."

But eventually Hawn's portrayal of Gwen falls into a stereotypical "quasi-bimbo" characterization, as well.

Martin's depiction of Davis as a man swept into a situation where nothing is as it should be, is very good, but his portrayal did not start off as well as Hawn's.

Oz has an interesting premise to work with, but he drags it out far too

long. The jokes and situations wear themselves thin about two-thirds of the way through the picture.

The film does have its moments, however.

Particularly worth noting is the marriage counseling scene with the town minister, as well as Davis' heart-rendered version of Bing Crosby's "Tura Lura Lura" during a reception for Davis and Gwen.

Also, the scenes where Davis attempts to seduce his true love, Becky, are somewhat amusing.

Filmed in various locations of Massachusetts, the scenery throughout the film is absolutely wonderful; the town of Dobbs' Mill itself is something that would make Norman Rockwell jealous.

"Housesitter" is now showing at the Cinema Twin on 13th and P Streets.