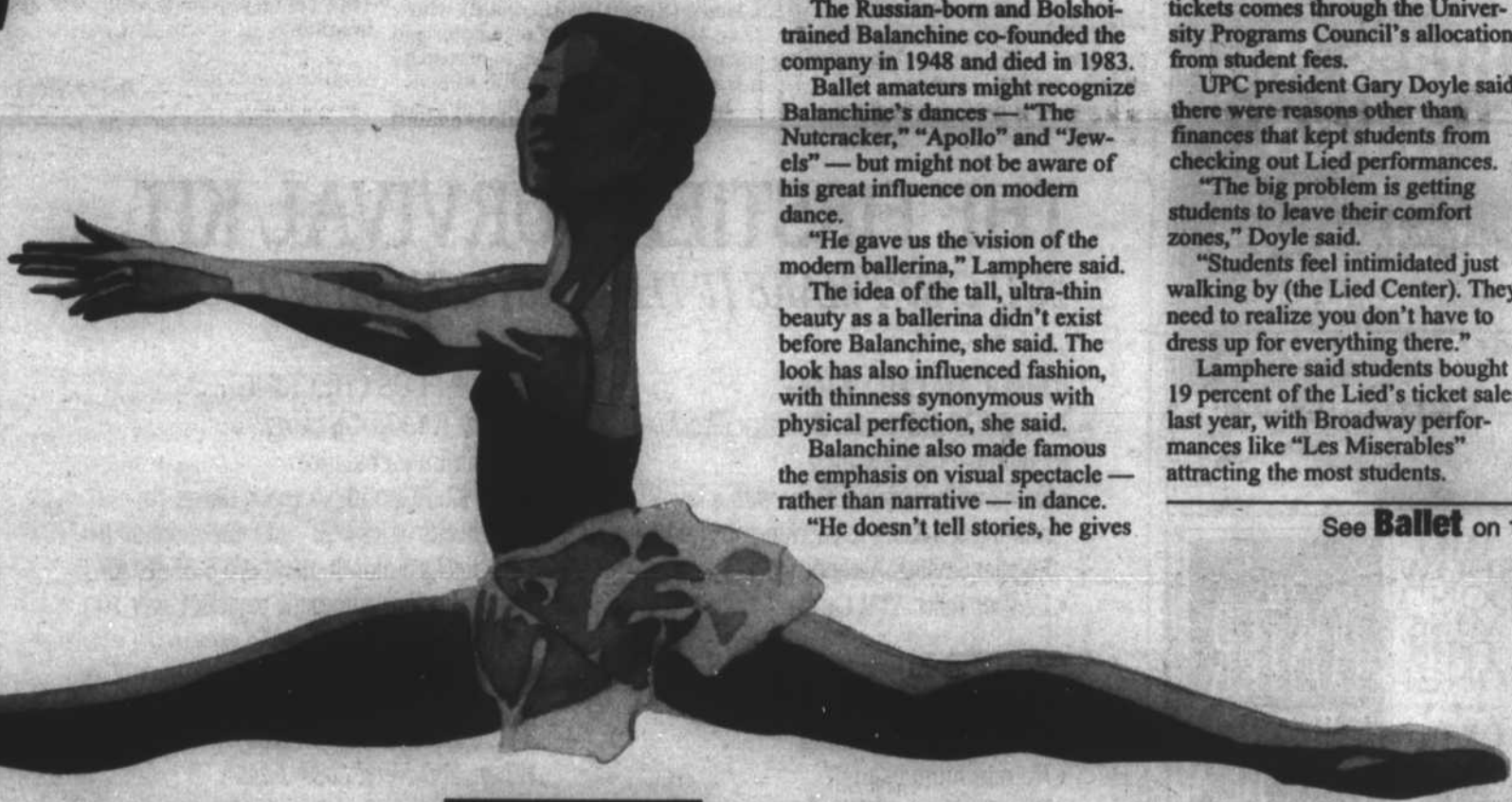


Out

A&E WEEKEND LOOK

about



TOM MAINELLI

In the lead

New York City Ballet opens extraordinary Lied Center season

By Andrea Kaser
Senior Editor

Viewers can expect a "stunning, gorgeous" performance by the New York City Ballet tonight, said Amy Lamphere, public relations director for the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

The performance kicks off the Lied's 1993-1994 season with a tribute to one of the company's founders, George Balanchine. It will mix both traditional and modern techniques, Lamphere said, but with a style that is purely American.

Because the entire NYC Ballet is too large to hit the road, this is not an official tour, Lamphere said.

Rather, it is 17 of the company's principal and solo dancers, touring during the off season.

"It would be like an all-star team," Lamphere said. "It's a way for dancers to make money in their off season."

The dancers are among the world's finest, she said, because of their Balanchine training.

The Russian-born and Bolshoi-trained Balanchine co-founded the company in 1948 and died in 1983.

Ballet amateurs might recognize Balanchine's dances — "The Nutcracker," "Apollo" and "Jewels" — but might not be aware of his great influence on modern dance.

"He gave us the vision of the modern ballerina," Lamphere said.

The idea of the tall, ultra-thin beauty as a ballerina didn't exist before Balanchine, she said. The look has also influenced fashion, with thinness synonymous with physical perfection, she said.

Balanchine also made famous the emphasis on visual spectacle — rather than narrative — in dance.

"He doesn't tell stories, he gives

abstract pictures. He relies on images ...," Lamphere said.

Tonight's and tomorrow's performances begin at 8 p.m. Student tickets cost \$12, \$14 and \$16.

Most students do not know that their fees subsidize student ticket discounts for all Lied Center performances, Lamphere said.

In most cases, student tickets are half the regular price.

"That is really extraordinary," she said.

Most college performing arts centers offer student discounts just before shows begin, but University of Nebraska students get that benefit at all times.

"Most students don't know that they can get (tickets) for as little as \$6," she said.

Student ticket prices range from as low as \$5 to as high as \$27, depending on the performance and the seat. "The Sound of Music," with Marie Osmond in the lead, has the priciest tickets with the lowest student discount, \$27, down from the regular price of \$32.

The \$81,500 subsidy for student tickets comes through the University Programs Council's allocation from student fees.

UPC president Gary Doyle said there were reasons other than finances that kept students from checking out Lied performances.

"The big problem is getting students to leave their comfort zones," Doyle said.

"Students feel intimidated just walking by (the Lied Center). They need to realize you don't have to dress up for everything there."

Lamphere said students bought 19 percent of the Lied's ticket sales last year, with Broadway performances like "Les Miserables" attracting the most students.

See **Ballet** on 10

Comin' from Kansas City

Zoo Bar opens stage to let 'walking history book' spin musical tales

The Zoo Bar will bring a little bit of musical history to Lincoln this weekend.



The legendary Claude "Fiddler" Williams will be in town Friday and Saturday nights to perform his own brand of Kansas City-style blues and jazz, said Russ Dantzler, Williams' manager.

The 85-year-old fiddle player is a "walking history book," Dantzler said.

"He is one of the last links to the old black string bands — someone

from the past. He has so many stories. ..."

Williams played with Eddie and Nat "King" Cole's band in the early 1930s. Then in 1936 he joined Count Basie's first big band, where he played guitar. He rose to national fame during his stint with Basie, and he was voted "Best Guitarist of the Year" in a national magazine's reader poll.

But guitar wasn't Williams' love. The fiddle was, and he left Basie's band after the first set of recordings.

"If I had stayed with the Count, I would have been playing that 'ching ching' rhythm guitar for 40 years," Williams reportedly said.

In the following years Williams played with a large number of different artists — everybody from

the Four Shades of Rhythm in Chicago to Austin Powell's Quintet in New York.

But he always returned to his beloved Kansas City, Dantzler said.

There was simply too much happening in Kansas City for Williams to miss it.

"K.C. was the musical capital of the world in the '40s, and he was there — he was a part of it," Dantzler said.

Williams' role in the music scene was influential enough to warrant space in the history books, he said.

"Jazz history classes study his work," Dantzler said.

Williams has never really stopped playing, and to this day he continues to play often. Age has done little to slow him down, he said.

"He can't stand still on stage; he is really animated," Dantzler said. "It is just the music coming out — it really gives you hope for when you grow old."

Williams will be backed this weekend by Steve Hanson on guitar, Jim Cidilik on the piano and vocals, Dave Morris on bass and Joe Gourlay on drums. The shows begin at 9 p.m. and there is a \$4 cover charge.

Briefly — If you are in the mood for a road trip to Omaha this weekend, check out The Magic Theater's presentation of "The People vs. Ranchman" at the 325 S. 16th St. facility.

The play deals with a number of social issues — sexual attitudes, special interest groups, the media,

the death penalty and sexual abuse, to name the most prominent.

Sunday's matinee will be followed by a discussion sponsored by the Nebraska Civil Liberties Union.

Trekkers — I'm sure I don't have to remind the hard-core fans, but The Next Generation's season premiere is Saturday night.

Local heroes The Millions will play a 16-and-over show at The Edge on Saturday night. Admission is \$5 if you also donate a can of food.

Mainelli is a senior news-editorial major and Daily Nebraskan Arts and Entertainment Editor.