

SARAH DUEY

Valentines to some, a New Year to others

Out & about

A&E WEEKEND OUTLOOK

Can't get away with it. I won't even try. I might not be able to forgive myself.

Surely I have to say something about the upcoming holiday, although the thought of it almost makes me sick. Deep breath — OK — Valentine's Day.

Yep, that's the one. But I'm not going to yak about it for long. It's three days before V-day. Are those roses ordered? Those chocolates hidden?

Or more uniquely, are the ears prepped to hear a sweet melody?

That's right. For a sweeter Valentine's Day, "Sweetheart Serenades" will be offered by quartets of the Lincoln Chapter of Sweet Adelines International from Saturday to Monday.

Each serenade includes two love songs sung in four-part harmony, a box of chocolates and a card. All this for \$25. I must say, this gift would be

more entertaining than just roses and chocolate.

Beth Karre, project coordinator, said the Sweet Adelines had offered the serenades for six years.

Quartets will sing during the day and evening at places of business, homes, restaurants, nursing homes and hospitals. "The serenading quartets get as much joy out of singing the valentine songs as the recipients," Karre said.

"It's a great way to create a memory for someone you love." OK, enough about romance.

This weekend UNL students and faculty are celebrating the Chinese New Year. According to Chris Babb,

head resident of the International House, the Chinese celebrate their new year for a week with feasts and fireworks. In China the official New Year started on Tuesday, Babb said.

"It's kind of like a Mardi Gras," Babb said.

Three student groups have the same thing in mind. The Nebraska University Malaysian Student Organization, International House and University Program Council will put on their own show Friday night in the Nebraska Union.

Starting at 9 p.m. the public can join the celebration in the union with storytelling and dancing. A special event will take place outside of Selleck Residence Hall after 9 p.m., Babb said.

Sounds like something electrifying!! These activities are free and open to the public.

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Composer creates music from heart and mind

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

Like creating a work of art or a literary masterpiece, composing music is a project of the creative mind. This process of putting notes to paper is a talent with which Randall Snyder is very familiar.

Snyder, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln music theory and composition professor, has been composing music for almost two decades.

Several UNL faculty members and students have performed Snyder's works in the past. One of his works will be featured at the University Orchestra concert Friday.

"It's a relationship that I refer to as mutually altruistic," he said, "in that it's good for me and it's good for them."

Snyder said he felt good about being able to write for the professional university players. He said he had written for "almost everybody" in the university's music department.

He also has written for the Nebraska Brass Quintet, the Bachman Trio and the Nebraska Music Teachers Association. He has written a harp trio for a group in Redlands, California, he said.

Some of Snyder's creations have more of a personal touch to them. He wrote a piece for oboe professor William McMullen and his wife for their wedding present.

"It beats having to buy a gift," he laughed, "but on the other hand you can give something that's one of a kind."

In the past 16 years, Snyder has composed a catalog of about 150 pieces. He said his talents came from a wide variety of inspirations.

"There's not one way that I do it," he said. "One way is to sit down on a piano and start playing around and you find something. You write it down and say 'Hmm, what's the best way to use that idea?'"

Snyder said he liked to use the reverse approach to this theory.

"I think first if I want to write an orchestra piece or a sonata," he said. "I think of how long it's supposed to be. Then I draw a sketch of how it's supposed to look, and then I go to the piano."

Like a "snowball rolling down a hill" is how Snyder described these creative processes. As one composes more, it is useful to use these plans, he said.

Words inspire Snyder's notes as well. "I'm often inspired by literature, either through settings of songs to poetry or taking the form a writer uses," he said.

Although he is inspired by written works, Snyder said composing wasn't a verbal process.

"It's a process that is not easily subjected to verbal analysis," he said. "The fact that I might say one thing and the next day write a piece completely different makes it difficult to make a generalization."

Snyder also writes pieces generated from emotions. One such piece was written honoring his sister who died of cancer. He said the music was helpful for him in dealing with her death.

"Another thing about composing is that it can be very therapeutic," he said. "If you have problems or just difficulty in your life, composing sometimes helps by taking your mind off those things or by providing a vehicle by which you can expedite your problems."

He said this could be applied to any complex art form. Snyder said composing music was



James Mehling/DN

similar to writing or painting. "Painting a picture, being a novelist, they're all the same," he said. In any type of creative endeavor, Snyder said, the artistic mind can take over.

"And I suppose, as science at a higher level, Einstein could say two plus two equals five," he said.

"The theory of relativity makes little sense," he said. "And most artists are working at the same level."

Composers are different in their trade because their art is more interpretive than others. He said there was a risk in a musician interpreting a piece, while an artist could create a painting and be done with it.

Snyder uses his theories when teaching students how to compose.

"I try to provide a creative environment for students to operate," he said. "I'm not one who is particularly interested in the style of their writing as long as they believe in the work

ethic." He said composing must be done on a daily basis in order to improve.

"If you want to run in a marathon race, you train," he said. "You don't just arrive on the day of the race and run 26 miles. You won't make it. You must run every single day."

Aside from appearing in the University Orchestra concert tonight, a Snyder composition will appear as a flute solo at the Korean Music Concert on Feb. 26.