

## Movie captures smallest details of child's life

### Director creates dreamy reality



By Malcom Miles  
Staff Reporter

"I love the poetry of the ordinary," writer/director Terence Davies ("Distant Voices, Still Lives") says. His new film, "The Long Day Closes," visually portrays this love.

The autobiographical film diligently details Davies' childhood. Davies' life is played out through the story of Bud (Leigh McCormack in his amazing debut as an actor), an 11-year-old poor Catholic boy growing up in 1950s Liverpool.

The director passionately tries to capture the smallest details of this time in his life as he saw them as a child.

Most of the memories are from his home life, but school, church and the cinema also play heavily in the film. The story is a dreamy recollection of a life through Bud's eyes.

Davies worked closely with his director of photography, Michael Coulter ("Where Angels Fear to Tread," "Monster in a Box"), to achieve a sense of unsure emotion.

The audience is torn between a sense of happiness in the film and a sense of impending doom.

The love in Bud's life is apparent. His mother, played wonderfully by Marjorie Yates, and sisters take him to church and to the cinema. He has friends at school, and music is a constant in his life.

Contrasted with this are some less pleasant memories of strict schoolmasters and a fear-invoking religion. These are highlighted by the film's stark imagery. The film was shot to enhance shadows, and many of the scenes are extremely dark.

This is not an action movie, and there is no MTV-style editing involved. It is obvious the scenes were meticulously planned to allow for the long, beautiful stills.

Vivid colors, brilliant lighting and the slow camera movement give the audience the feeling it is looking at a series of paintings rather than a motion picture.

The almost surreal narrative involves as much singing as it does speaking. The music is not merely background or musical dialogue. The songs give a sense of the characters' psyche.

Davies also uses sound clips from various movies. Like the songs, these give a better sense of how Bud perceives the world than what actually occurs.

Davies has created a place where



Courtesy Sony Pictures Entertainment, Inc.

Leigh McCormack, center, stars as Bud in "The Long Day Closes," a Terence Davies film. To the right of McCormack is Marjorie Yates as Bud's mother; to the left, Ayse Owens as Helen.

dreams and memories are as important as reality — a place where a child's confused interpretation of the world is given validity.

Bud's confusion is ultimately understandable, considering the mixed messages he receives from church, school, films, music and adults.

"The Long Day Closes" will show Thursday through Sunday at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater from Feb. 17 to Feb. 26.

## 'Heidi' addresses issues faced by modern feminists

### theater preview



— " " —  
*It raises the question 'Can you have it all?' — the family, the child and the career.*

By Paula Lavigne  
Senior Reporter

— Miller  
director

"The Heidi Chronicles" deals with issues in feminism existing for more than 20 years, from protest rallies in the '60s to workplace issues in the '80s. The changing role of one feminist, who must juggle relationships, careers, family and children, is exemplified by art historian Heidi Holland.

Holland, the main character in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Theatre production of "The Heidi Chronicles," progresses from her high school years in the mid-1960s to her maturity in the late 1980s.

The play, written by Wendy Wasserstein, was partly based on "The Feminine Mystique" by feminist Betty Friedan.

Tice Miller, director of "The Heidi Chronicles" and professor of theater and dance at UNL, said the play closely examined women's issues while raising some important questions.

"Heidi is raising a question of personal, professional life, the women's movement and networking," he said. "It raises the question 'Can you have it all?' — the family, the child and the career."

He said although the issues pertained to feminism, the play reached beyond the female interest.

"It's certainly an issue of most men I know, too," Miller said. He said he hoped the content nature would get people to discuss the role of feminism in society.

Miller said the play, which is episodic in nature, started with Heidi's high school years in 1965 and progressed to her present-day position as an art historian at Columbia in 1989.

"It takes you through different parts of her life with Heidi and her closest friends," he said. "It's very personal."

Heidi goes through a transformation from an idealistic young girl to a mature professional woman, he said.

"She finds herself," Miller said. "It gives

a very positive statement about women and the relationships men and women need."

Heidi is played by graduate theater major Sharon Bigelow. Bigelow said Heidi was more of a humanist than a feminist.

"She doesn't subscribe to staunch feminism," Bigelow said. "She believes in equality for all people."

The Heidis of the '60s allowed women of the '90s to go out and become lawyers and doctors, she said.

"I appreciate what the women Heidi's age did for our generation," she said. "These women helped to pave the way for us."

Bigelow said Heidi was a true believer in '60s idealism. She said Heidi didn't sell out to the greed of the '80s, when women gave up on making the world a women's place and became models of men.

"She felt stranded. Women were going to make the world a better place with art, music and no war. What happened?" she said.

Bigelow said Heidi was ahead of her time, because many of her ideals fit into '90s feminism. She said Heidi was someone she would strive to become.

"I admire her tenacity," Bigelow said. "It has been an honor for me to try to figure out how this woman thinks and what she goes through."

Bigelow said much of Heidi's personality was a reflection of her friends. Heidi's friends include Julie Fitzgerald as Susan Johnston, Patrick Tuttle as Peter Patrone and Jonas Cohen as Scoop Rosenbaum.

"The Heidi Chronicles" will begin tonight at 8 p.m. in Howell Theatre. It will continue on Friday and Saturday and then will run from Feb. 24 to Feb. 26 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$6 for students.

## Once-silenced blues performer uses talent to sing, write books

### Concert preview

By Jill O'Brien  
Staff Reporter

After being warned never to sing again, Keri Leigh appears at the Zoo Bar Friday and Saturday nights in possession of two voices — one compelling her to sing the blues, the other driving her to write about them.

Her singing and writing is something she has to do, she said during an interview.

"If I didn't, I'd probably go crazy," she said. Her four-octave range has bound her to blues ever since the age of 13, she said, when she began singing in bars.

"I would cake on a bunch of makeup and try to sneak in the back door," she said. "Then, I normally was not asking if I could sit in with musicians, but it wasn't long, maybe six months later, that I was up on that stage, and I was singing."

She sang for three years until a doctor informed her that nodes had developed on her vocal chords, she said. After the surgery came the warning never to sing again.

"It was really, really scary," she said, "and that shut me up for four years. That's how long it took for my voice to recuperate."

During the recovery years, Leigh kept busy working as a reporter and disc jockey simultaneously. She also formed the Oklahoma Blues Society, an organization boasting 500 members.

Her resolve weakened by her work with the society, Leigh hit the stage again, singing her vocal chords out. This time she was backed by the Brownston Blues, a 12-piece band, she said.

"I started warming up my chops again with those guys, and then I met my husband, Mark Lyon, around that time. And he, of course, was known as the hottest guitar player in town."

The two pooled talents and started a band called the Headhunters, which later led to the formation of the Blue Devils, Leigh said.

The band relocated after a friend, Stevie Ray Vaughn, encouraged them to move to Austin, Texas.

"Stevie Ray said that if you want to make music and you want to play the blues, then Austin is where you should be. So we took his advice, shoved everything into a blue 1978 Ford

van and started driving."

The same six-passenger van, with 175,000 miles, still accommodates Lyon and Leigh, plus rhythm guitarist Dave Horton, bass player Robert Ramos and drummer Dick Gagle.

Last summer, Keri Leigh & The Blue Devils toured extensively, promoting the debut album "Blue Devil Blues" on Amazing Records. Now the album is completely sold out, Leigh said.

With the release of the second album, "No Beginner," the band is booked solid for the next few months, she said.

With so many singing engagements ahead of and behind her, she has to take extra good care of her vocal chords, she said.

"I'm keeping my fingers crossed and putting it in my hands to act responsible and in God's hands to see how long I can use this gift," she said.

A talent for writing is another gift Leigh knows how to use.

When she's not staring out the window of the van, penning a song in her head, she might be writing an article for a magazine. During those rare days at home, Leigh said, she is likely to be working on a book.

"Highway 49: A Story of the Blues" was Leigh's first published book, and a book about Elvis is in the making, she said.

Her latest contribution to the blues is a biography about Stevie Ray Vaughn. "Stevie Ray — Soul to Soul" was released by Taylor Publishing last November.

"Stevie and I met in 1986 when I interviewed him for the Daily Oklahoman. We had everything in common," she said.

Four years later, she asked him if she could write his biography. His response was, "Well, I ain't dead yet," she said.

That was three months before he died, she said.

"We had no idea it was coming, of course. He was healthy. He was clean and sober, and we didn't expect him to OD or anything. We thought he had all the time in the world."

They began work on the book, but Vaughn approached it as a joke, Leigh said. He questioned why anybody would read his biography.

"I said, 'Trust me, Stevie, they will. There's a lot of fans out there — people like myself, recovering from drug and alcohol addiction. Your story is extremely inspiring.' Then one day I got this telephone call that he died in a helicopter crash."

The news of his death temporarily silenced her writing voice, she said.

"But then I figured out I had his blessing on this project. I was stuck to finish the book without him ... that was the hardest thing to do."