

Poet challenges youth to make country great

By Joel Strauch
Senior Reporter

Esteemed poet and author Maya Angelou gave a rousing performance to a diverse audience last night at Pershing Auditorium.

The crowd consisted of students, teachers and lovers of Angelou's work from every background. They listened attentively and appreciatively to her stunning presentation.

Angelou used speech, poetry and song to address those in attendance. She opened with a 19th century slave song, demonstrating her majestic voice.

She aimed her message to the students in the crowd. She told them that they weren't at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to just get a piece of paper and then get a middle-class job and live a normal life.

She told them that they were here to be given a chance to make this country as great as it can be.

She told the young that they had been left to solve the world's problems from earlier generations.

And she said that the only way to do this was to go to the library and read, to get an education while it is paid for.

She used her own experiences of overcoming adversity as a demonstra-

tion to the new generation.

She talked of her rape at a young age by her mother's boyfriend (and his subsequent murder by her uncles), and how this incident resulted in her thinking that her voice was capable of murder. She didn't speak for years, but she read every chance she got.

She talked of her crippled Uncle Willy and how he was an inspiration to her and others. She told the audience that each person had their own "Uncle Willy" that they could use to stimulate their determination.

And she spoke of the importance of laughter in our lives. She showed how our laughter could invigorate our hope and take us through the trials of life.

She used her appreciation of humor often in her performance. She joked about an auditorium the size of Pershing not being her usual venue. She said that it was "for rock and roll bands ... and big Gospel choirs."

She also talked of the timelessness of an 1892 folk song that could have been written for a rapper "like Queen Latifah, Hammer or L.L. Cool and the Gang."

Throughout her performance, whether she joked or instructed, her powerful voice echoed her message throughout the stadium.

Lied to be site for 'Jazz Jam'

From Staff Reports

Inspired by voices of the past, three up-and-coming jazz artists will bring their "New Voices" to the Lied Center for Performing Arts this weekend.

The Columbia Jazz Jam — vocalist Nnenna Freelon, guitarist Russell Malone and organist Joey DeFrancesco — will perform individually and then join together for a unique "Jazz Jam."

The concert is part of the Lied Center's "New Voices" series that is committed to bringing promising new artists into the community.

One artist may not qualify for up-and-coming, though. Freelon, although not a jazz legend, already has established her notoriety in the jazz world.

Freelon has a score of albums, awards and experience to her name.

Her recent release, "Listen," came on the heel of her two previous releases, "Heritage" and "Nnenna Freelon."

She is also a recipient of the Billie Holiday Award from France's Academie Du Jazz and the Eubie Blake Award from New York's Cultural Crossroads.

The Columbia Jazz Jam artists will perform at 8 p.m. on Friday. Regular tickets are \$18, \$14 and \$10, and student tickets are half price.

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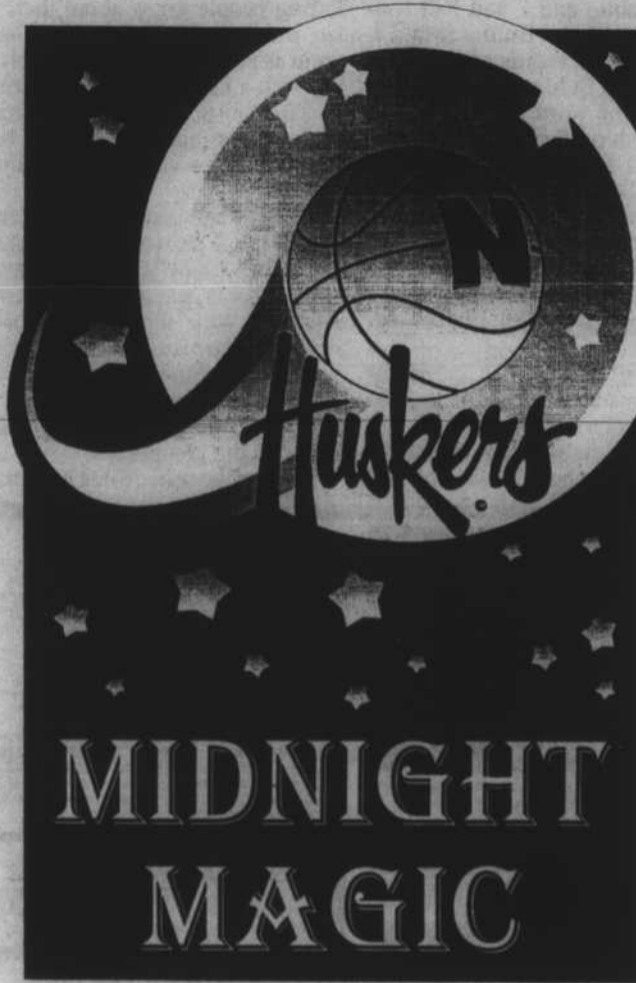
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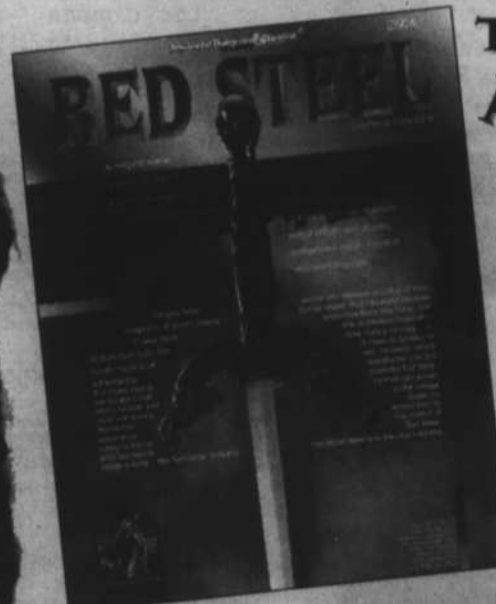


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