

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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Dancers savor rare opportunity

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

When Hollywood movie producers arrived in Loma for the filming of "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar," they were looking for extra dancers.

Three UNL dance students literally leaped at the opportunity and used their fancy footwork to wedge a "foot in the door."

Tami Wilburn, Jennifer Clyne and Angela Robidoux agreed the movie was "the opportunity of a lifetime."

They danced with choreographer Kenny Ortega (Dirty Dancing) and actors Patrick Swayze, Wesley Snipes and John Leguizamo. The students said the filming was a fun and valuable experience.

Clyne and Robidoux said the movie would look good on their résumés, and the contacts they established could help them land future dancing jobs.

"Kenny (Ortega) gave us his card and address and said if we ever come out to L.A., he'd set us up," Clyne said. "He's choreographing the Olympics and said he might give us a call."

Casting directors were always looking for a new star, Robidoux said.

"I had a casting director ask me what kind of toothpaste I use because he was looking for someone for a toothpaste commercial," she said.

Robidoux, who is also a dance teacher at Shari Shell-True Dance Academy, said working one-on-one with Ortega highlighted her experience.

"He gave me some Latin steps. He did everything, and he was a lot of fun to work with," she said.

Ortega's dancing awed Wilburn.

"He's wonderful," she said, sighing. "I just loved to sit there and watch him dance. He moves so smooth."

Wilburn, a UNL senior broadcasting major and dance minor, said the experience would help her in a different way.

"For me, as a broadcasting major, it was a chance to see how they shot film as opposed to news stories," she said.

Wilburn said the trio also discovered how actors acted in real life.

"They were fun to work with. It wasn't like they were up on a pedestal or anything," she said. "They talked and joked."

In the movie, Swayze, Snipes and Leguizamo, arc drag queens making a cross-country trip to New



Damon Lee/DN

Jennifer Clyne, right, and Angela Robidoux are two of three UNL student dancers who performed in the movie "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar." The third student is Tami Wilburn.

York when their car breaks down in the Midwest.

Wilburn danced with Snipes on top of a table during one scene.

"He was like, 'Girlfriend! Come on you girls!' and he was all dressed in drag and acting like a drag queen," she said.

Robidoux said Snipes was "really neat and friendly and very professional."

"(Snipes) asked us what we were doing, and he had a lot of knowledge about dance. He knew

a lot about dance interests and asked us some questions we didn't even know," Robidoux said.

Snipes started his career in dance-musical theater, and Swayze danced with the Joffrey Ballet before going into acting, which gave her hope, she said.

Robidoux said all the actors and cast members treated them well.

"They really liked us. We knew what was going on in Lincoln and what was exciting in Lincoln and after they found out, they had fun,"

she said. "They never said we were hicks from Nebraska."

The dancers got to spend a lot of time with the film crews. For four days, they were rehearsing from 7 a.m. to as late as 11 p.m.

Their schedules were mixed up for awhile, but each of them said her professors were cooperative.

Clyne said her professors in the dance department told her about the movie and encouraged students to audition.

"They understood this was a chance of a lifetime."



Courtesy of Castle Rock Entertainment

Morgan Freeman, left, and Tim Robbins star as Red and Andy in "The Shawshank Redemption," a movie based on a Stephen King novella.

Prison film is triumph of hope

By Joel Strauch
Senior Reporter

"The Shawshank Redemption" is a compelling drama, a masterpiece of stupendous acting and cinematography and is also based on a novella by Stephen King.

Yes, that's right. The best-selling author whose books are reproduced as cheesy "B" movies.

(However, once in a while a gem like "Misery" makes it through OK.)

This time King's creative genius is transferred to the film by writer/director Frank Darabont.

Darabont, in his first directing effort for the big screen, presents a majestic story about the indestructible nature of the human spirit.

Mild-mannered banker Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins, "The Player") is dubiously imprisoned for the brutal murders of his wife and her lover. He is given two back-to-back life sentences in Shawshank State Prison, Maine's toughest maximum-security penitentiary.

Ignored by most of the inmates (except the "sisters" of the prison) because of his quiet nature, Andy

eventually befriends a fellow lifer, Red (Morgan Freeman, "Unforgiven").

Red is the Yellow Pages of the pen. For a few bucks or a few cigarettes, he can get other inmates whatever they need. Andy uses Red's connections to keep some semblance of his outside life going.

Andy's profound banking skills allow him to better his position. He aids the sadistic Captain Hadley (Clancy Brown, "Highlander") and later Warden Norton (Bob Gunton,

See SHAWSHANK on 10

Bread and Book Fair offers sumptuous spread

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

Nebraska literary and art associations will offer Lincoln residents a chance to "feed their minds" today during the Bread and Book Fair at the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery.

The event, sponsored by the Nebraska Art Association, Nebraska Literary Association and Friends of the Libraries-UNL, combines the value of books, bread and art.

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., breads and gourmet edibles will be on sale in the gallery, along with new and used books and specialty books on food and art.

Nebraska poets and authors will give free readings in the gallery's board room throughout the day. Ted Kooser, Hilda Raz, Marly Swick and John Janovy are some of the featured artists.

Kathy Paper, NAA executive director, said the event was also an opportunity to attract new patrons for the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery.

"Sometimes people think the gallery is a little daunting," she said, "so if we can get them in with other things they enjoy, such as bread and books — the things that feed us — then we can get them to

See FAIR on 10

New Freddy film should be put out of its misery

By Gerry Beltz
Staff Reporter

"Wes Craven's New Nightmare" has a great premise, but the execution is way off.

Even compared to the crappy, three-dimensional sixth "Elm Street" flick, this one is the bottom of the proverbial barrel. If horror films were food, this would be roadkill.

However, "New Nightmare" shouldn't be considered to be one of the typical "Elm Street" films because it goes past the premise of those films.

In "New Nightmare," Freddy is now attempting to come into the real world but has to get past Heather Langenkamp (playing herself, supposedly) to do it.

Wes Craven (himself) is working on a script for a new "Nightmare" film in which Freddy is trying to get into the real world, and Heather finds out that everything that is happening in the script is happening to her.

Get it? The movie is her life, which is a movie. Pay attention! There will be a quiz later.

See NIGHTMARE on 10