

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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## Sculptor makes ice art, and then it melts



**By Paula Lavigne**  
Senior Reporter

Kathy Mayfield wields her whirling chain saw and plunges it into a solid block of glimmering ice. She wiggles it around as ice shards spit into the air.

No, Mayfield is not building an igloo; she's working on a sculpture.

While most sculptors use clay, wood or plaster, Mayfield uses her Sears Craftsman 275 and a 4-foot-high chunk of ice.

As she alternates sawing with chiseling, the block of ice transforms into a flamingo.

Mayfield creates her sculptures at Valley Ice Co. at 601 J St. Originally

from New Jersey, Mayfield has been sculpting ice for more than 18 years. It's a side project from her full-time job as a stand-up comedian.

Ice sculptures are more popular in large cities such as New York and Los Angeles than they are in Nebraska, she said.

"Nebraskans are kind of practical," she said. "If you can't eat it, they don't want it. They say, 'What do you mean, spend \$125 on a puddle of water?'"

Since the demand is higher in large cities, she said she could charge more than \$400 per sculpture. In Lincoln, she charges about \$130 for an average sculpture.

Mayfield's interest in ice sculptures began when she and her first husband were in the catering business. She said people would ask about getting ice sculptures for their events.

Without any training or instruction, Mayfield decided to make her own.

"I just started trying and screwing up, and I just kept doing it until I got it down," she said.

Restaurants, weddings, graduations and bar mitzvahs often use ice sculptures, she said. The most

popular designs requested are two doves on top of a heart and a flamingo, for weddings.

"Ice sculptures at weddings give people the illusion you spent more money," she said. "It's just more elegant."

The most unusual design, she said, was an obscene sculpture for a local man's party.

"Let's just say women don't have one," she said, laughing.

Mayfield said she always was an artistic child, so she could create designs with ease. She said she could create any design people requested by making minor alternations.

She has created an 8-foot-tall Statue of Liberty and a 12-foot-long dragon, and she made an entire Christmas scene for the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

For an average sculpture, Mayfield starts out with a 300-pound block of ice. She scratches in the design with a chisel and she cuts it out with the chain saw. She makes the final touch-ups with Mayfield starts out with a 300-pound block of ice. She scratches

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**Photos by**  
**Jeff Haller/DN**

**Left: Kathy Mayfield chips away at the neck and head of a flamingo ice sculpture at Valley Ice Co. at 601 J St. Below: Mayfield makes ice fly with her chain saw when she creates ice sculptures. Eventually, they melt.**



### ABBA members making new show

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP)—Two members of ABBA are ready to take a chance on the theater again.

Benny Andersson and Bjorn Ulvaeus are looking for actors to star in "Kristina from Duvemala," a musical based on the epic book "The Emigrants" by Swedish author Wilhelm Moberg. It is expected to open in Sweden next year, Swedish media said Tuesday.

Andersson and Ulvaeus and their wives, Anni-Frid Lyngstad and Agneta Faltskog, formed ABBA in 1971. The pop group's hits included "Waterloo," "Dancing Queen" and "Take a Chance on Me."

The marriages, then the group, broke up in the 1980s, and Andersson and Ulvaeus produced the Broadway musical "Chess." Its music won praise, but the story, about the Cold War through the eyes of U.S. and Soviet chess players, got poor reviews.

### Low ticket sales cancel ballet show

Official points to Omaha productions and other shows

**By Paula Lavigne**  
Senior Reporter

Ballet Omaha canceled its Lied Center performance of "Anne Frank," originally scheduled for Friday, because of extremely low ticket sales, a ballet official said.

Kathryn Rouch, director of marketing for Ballet Omaha, said the company's Oct. 7 and 8 Omaha performances drew 3,200 people.

"They were not as good as we had hoped, yet not horrible," she said.

Rouch said the Joffrey Ballet's performances on Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 and 2 at the Lied Center may have pulled people away

from Ballet Omaha's audience.

Ballet has a difficult time competing for the entertainment dollar, Rouch said. She said ballet in Nebraska had a small yet devoted audience.

"Our goal is to get more people to experience and develop an appreciation for the art form," she said.

Rouch said Ballet Omaha tried to increase interest by expanding its education outreach program and offering student tickets at a discount.

Marketing Ballet Omaha productions in Lincoln meets another challenge.

"I think there's one school of thought that there is competition between Lincoln and Omaha communities," she said. "I'd like to think the greater part of the community doesn't feel that way and would like to have their state ballet company performing in their area."

The Lied Center provides a valuable venue for Ballet Omaha, Rouch said. She said the Lied Center offered Ballet Omaha the chance to fulfill its outreach mission in Lincoln.

Print, television, radio and direct mail advertisements for "Anne Frank" were distributed in the Lincoln area, Rouch said, but limited funding constrained the company's marketing efforts.

Norah George, director of marketing for the Lied Center, said when the Lied offered ballet performances, it drew large crowds.

George commended Ballet Omaha's marketing strategies in Omaha and surrounding areas, but she said she thought people were traveling to Omaha to see the performance instead of waiting until it came to Lincoln.

Ballet Omaha staged "Dracula" at the Lied Center last October. The company will bring "Romeo and Juliet" to Lincoln on Feb. 25.