



Grant fans excited for good reason

By John Fulwider
Staff Reporter

Eva Nekovar likes to go against the musical flow when she's driving in her home state of California.

"Usually people have low bass music blasting," the freshman broadcasting major said. "And here we are blasting Amy Grant."

Nekovar said she's been blasting Grant since sixth grade, when a friend gave her Grant's "Lead Me On" compact disc.

So Nekovar is pretty excited about Amy Grant's concert tonight at 8 p.m. in Pershing Auditorium.

So are a lot of other people, apparently. The concert sold out—more than 6,000 tickets—in six weeks, said Derek Anderson, Pershing spokesman.

And they have reason to be excited. Grant will be performing songs from her hugely popular "House of Love" album, which has gone platinum since its August release.

She'll also offer songs from her previous album, "Heart in Motion," which sold more than four million copies and spent 52 consecutive weeks on the Billboard Top 200 Album Chart.

Grant will perform her specialty, what she has called "basic and true" pop music, because that's what she does best.

Grant has diverse musical roots. She grew up in the 1970s listening to James Taylor, Carole King, Jethro Tull and the Beatles. In high school she discovered R&B music, listening to Aretha Franklin, the Jackson 5 and Joni Mitchell.

A key to the success of "House of Love" has been the title song. The album version features a duet with country music star Vince Gill.

But country fans may be disappointed tonight. Gill is not scheduled to make an appearance.

Drummer recovers, beats on

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

Jazz drummer T.S. Monk canceled his Lied Center performance last February because of what he thought was a simple case of mononucleosis.

Days later, he discovered that he had Bell's Palsy, a disease that paralyzed all his facial muscles.

For someone who likes to talk as much as Monk does, Bell's Palsy was a serious obstacle. But through charisma, devotion and determination, Monk overcame his disease and is talking up a storm.

"I'm back on line. I had to come back, because I like to be loved," he said in a telephone interview. "When I thought I was going to be able to come there (Lincoln) last year, I said I was going to tear the roof off the joint."

"That was no jive. How can a guy tell you all that and not show? I'm coming back to rock the house."

Monk will perform at the Lied Center with Moore by Four Saturday, and nobody could be happier about it than Monk.

After diagnosing Monk with Bell's Palsy last year, doctors kept Monk under observation for months and treated him with medication and therapy. Monk said he now has control of more than 90 percent of his facial muscles.

"Not one muscle moved in my face for four months," he said. "It was a frightening and devastating experience."

Bell's Palsy is a disease without much definition, Monk said, so he didn't know when he would recover. Monk didn't wait around to find out. He began practicing more. At age 44, he had the opportunity to practice like he practiced when he was 14.

"There was four feet of snow on the ground outside. I wasn't going anywhere," he said.

Sick of being a recluse, Monk said, he finally accepted an offer to play at Carnegie Hall in May.

"I did that gig with my face hanging down and not being able to talk," he said.

Since then, Monk has toured everywhere from Puerto Rico to Iowa City, Iowa. He was recently on the cover of Downbeat magazine and just finished a vocal competition in Washington D.C.

Just days before his Lincoln performance, Monk will be in South America on a goodwill tour sponsored by the U.S. government. "CBS Sunday Morning" is following him



Photo Courtesy of Blue Note Records

Jazz drummer T.S. Monk will appear at the Lied Center Saturday night.

around for a documentary, and he has a new compact disc coming out in March called "The Charm."

"It's been quite a busy year being a guy who was sick enough for everyone to think he wasn't going to make it," he said. "I'm stormin'."

Aside from educating people, Monk said he wanted to make his concerts fun by dancing and moving around the stage and shouting to the audience.

"I want to talk, talk, talk, play my butt off and give you a whole lot of different works," he said.

His goal is the same as it was last year, he said, but he's even more energized.

"I'm the guy that's going to move jazz," he said, emphatically.

Monk said he wanted to sell and market jazz, and the way to do that was to "talk the media's ear off."

He doesn't want to just make jazz popular on the charts, he said; he has a higher goal.

Monk's trip to South America illustrates his message.

"A lot of cats know the deal, but they can't explain it without bitterness and jealousy," he said. "... Jazz is the musical, artistic embodiment of democracy and freedom."

"Jazz is more American than rock and roll," he said. "Jazz and country western and hip hop are as American as apple pie."

Jazz has been too boring in the past, he said.

"It's like a guy standing there with a straight face, and his old lady's kissing him, and he's still standing there with a straight face," he said. "After a while, she stops kissing."

Monk said he wanted to change that image by making people laugh, cry and think during his concerts.

"You will leave my concert with a smile on your face. You had a good time, and you had fun," he said. "This is not about a lesson in history. This is not a lesson in musical theory. It's me doing something that you wish you could do."

Monk will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are \$22, \$18 and \$14, and are half-price for students.

Musicians together equal more

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

Take four vocalists and five instrumentalists and mix in a sampling of gospel, jazz, pop and theater, and the result is a little bit more.

Moore by Four, that is.

This Minneapolis-based jazz group, composed of vocalists Steve Faison, Yolanda Bruce, Ginger Commodore and Connie Evingson and directed by pianist Sanford Moore, will perform in Lincoln this weekend.

Instrumentalists Jay Young and Robert Commodore will also accompany the group.

Evingson, at home after a short tour in Italy, said Moore by Four may have four separate voices, but the group worked as a unit.

"Ensemble singing, by its very nature, requires a certain amount of sensitivity to each other in terms of dynamics and blend," she said. "You have to listen to each other

"The friendships just grow deeper. We've been together for a long time, and we're pretty attached."

CONNIE EVINGSON
Moore by Four vocalist

and create the best sound you can with four voices."

A certain chemistry makes the group come alive, she said.

"The friendships just grow deeper," she said. "We've been together for a long time, and we're pretty attached."

As the years go by, Evingson said, the group members try to challenge themselves with new material. All four singers have theatrical backgrounds, she said, and want to try more musical theater and possibly a jazz version of an opera.

Jazzing things up is one of Moore by Four's specialties.

The group is often compared to the jazz styles of the '30s and '40s and Manhattan Transfer, but Evingson said the similarity ends where the performance begins.

Moore by Four modernizes its style by using lighting and other special effects both on and offstage, she said.

Moore by Four will perform at the Lied Center Saturday at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$22, \$18 and \$14, and are half-price for students.

Echoing Green's free show one option for live music

From Staff Reports

Lincoln band Echoing Green will give a free show at Knickerbockers, 901 O St., Saturday night.

Vocalist Andrew Snook described the band's music as "harder or heavier alternative, guitar-oriented, yet still melodic."

Echoing Green is composed of Snook, guitarist Clint Lawrence, bassist Nathan Woodhams and drummer Andy Scheerger.

The band has no recordings available, he said, but has recorded some songs in Los Angeles to send out to clubs and record companies.

When band members booked Saturday's show, they requested not to have a cover charge.

"We play there (Knickerbockers) pretty frequently, and I think people turn

away from the \$3 cover," Snook said. "I would rather play for more people than make money from the show."

Knickerbockers also will host Think and Red Max on Friday. Grimace will open for Echoing Green Saturday.

Le Cafe Shakes, 1418 O St., will have Rascal Basket and Blaster Friday and Omaha's Mousetrap and Fisher Saturday.

This weekend at the Hurricane, 1118 O St., Sinister Dane will play Friday, and Punkinhead will play Saturday. Blaster will play Sunday with One Shot Wonder in a free 19 and over show.

Lie Awake will give free shows at P.O. Pears, 322 S. Ninth St., Friday and Saturday nights.

And at the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St., Little Mike and the Tornados will play Friday and Saturday nights.