

MUSIC REVIEW

Reginald R. Robinson
"Sounds in Silhouette"
Delmark Records
Grade: B

If you think ragtime music is best left in the past, you should listen to Reginald R. Robinson.

"Sounds in Silhouette" might sound 50 years old, but Robinson makes sure his listeners know these songs are all his.

It's not a very common talent these days, but playing ragtime seems second nature to Robinson.

Right away, listeners are captured by the bouncy harmonies of the piano. "The Ragtime Pauper" epitomizes the ragtime feel and orients listeners to the specific rhythms.

Ragtime is not just "The Sting," however, and Robinson uses many techniques to update this old music style.

"To Mimic" uses a series of ominous steps to create a very melodramatic mood, while "Lake St." is a light and airy piece.

In a smooth tango style, "Dream Natasha" invites the listener to just imagine the lyrics, and is a contrast to the march beat of "Holly Hock March."

One of the most astounding tracks, "Swampy Lee," brings back the flavor of the old Charlie Chapman movies with a many-layered rattling.

Robinson keeps a low-key, but constant, tempo in "Little Dave Blues," a Chicago boogie-woogie style song.

A Chopin influence is evident on "Honor'e Chester," and "Lonely Marble" is as close to a ballad as ragtime gets.

Robinson's talents are truly top notch. Other performers may be able to play ragtime, but not many could create in a genre this far removed. His is a positively extraordinary talent.

—Greg Schick

Silver Jews
"Starlite Walker"
Drag City
Grade: A+

While the boys from REM zig-zag the globe, parlaying their folk roots into an electric monster, the Silver Jews are saving southern rock.

Tucked away in Eastley Recording Studio in Memphis, Tenn., "Starlite Walker" was born. Flanked by Stephen Malkmus, Bob Nastanovich and Steve West of Pavement fame, frontman and songwriter Dave Berman picks up where "Chronic Town" left off, merging it with mellow, melodic, layered indie rock.

Their well-arranged versatility is not surprising, considering the contributions of three members of Pavement, a troop known for its dynamics.

Through the wanderings of "Trains Across the Sea" and "Tide to the Oceans," the grooves left by the acoustic riffs and mild basslines are filled with the tinkle of pianos and layers of synthesizers. Perhaps one of the album's most impressive attributes, most visible in "Pan American Blues," is the drumming. That can be loosely accredited to both Nastanovich and West, who carry the rhythms with their foot-tapping beats.

While the band jangles on in a way that makes you pine for the deep forest pictured on the back of the album, Berman weaves story upon story filled with historical references and witty rhetoric. When his rich voice is excluded to make room for the album's two instrumentals, his hooks remain.

"Starlite Walker," driven by some of the most talented musicians in indie rock, doesn't need the 1980s or the city of Athens to successfully paint the "Fables of Reconstruction" a shimmering silver.

—Matt Kudlacz



America's favorite TV family hits the big screen.

Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

'Brady Bunch' a far-out flick

By Gerry Beltz
Film Critic

I liked it, so sue me. "The Brady Bunch Movie" may be yet another step on the long trail of TV shows to hit the big screen, but this one is a step in the right direction. It's fun.

The Bradys — with their bell bottoms, lava lamps and groovy, far-out vocabulary — haven't changed over the last 20 years. They are firmly stuck in the '70s, while the world around them has moved into the '90s.

The parents are as befuddled as ever. Carol (Shelley Long) is still the spritely, pouty mother that makes June Cleaver look like Heidi Fleiss, and Mike Brady (Gary Cole, "In The Line of Fire") is still a pillar of wordy wisdom who hasn't a clue what's really going on.

The kids are about the same, too. Marcia is a self-absorbed teen-ager who wears skirts that stop at the bottom of her butt. Jan is jealous of Marcia and hears inner voices. And Cindy is a tattletale with a mega-lisp.

Greg is really digging the groovy chicks at school and writes songs that make Paul Anka look like Pearl Jam. Peter is having a rough time enduring puberty. And Bobby doesn't like being a safety monitor.

The Facts

Movie: "The Brady Bunch"

Rating: PG

Grade: B

Stars: Shelley Long, Gary Cole, Michael McKean

Director: Betty Thomas

Five words: 1970s family copes with '90s.

And Alice? She's still getting regular meat deliveries from the butcher Sam (David Graf).

However, the Brady family wouldn't be complete without a crisis. Due to some mail mix-ups, a \$20,000 property tax has gone unpaid, and if the Bradys don't come up with the money within a week, the unscrupulous real-estate agent next door, Mr. Ditmeyer (Michael McKean), is going to demolish the house and build a mini mall.

Don't worry about the plots and subplots; it's rather obvious what the outcomes will be. Just sit back and enjoy the TV characters from our childhood, who have been uncannily remastered, trying to mingle with the people of the '90s.

Especially hilarious are scenes with Marcia dealing with an overamorous date, Jan visiting the school counselor, and Ditmeyer's wife flirting with Peter and Greg.

Several TV Brady problems are brought to the big-screen. Greg tries to be someone he's not, Jan hates her glasses, and Marcia breaks her nose.

Look for original Brady performers who pop up throughout the film. A school coach, a music producer and Grandma Brady should all look familiar. If you can't figure out who the truck driver is, you shouldn't be allowed out of the house without a leash.

Director Betty Thomas had a rather easy job, doing a movie about the bunch. We all grew up watching the show, so she just brought what she remembered to the screen. The show didn't require any acting talent, but the movie needed actors to get the behavior and subtle nuances of the original characters down to a science.

That is what is so uncanny about this film — how perfect everything is. The clothes, sets and lava lamps would all be rather simple. But mastering the manners of everyone from Mike to Cindy was tough, and it all comes across wonderfully.

"The Brady Bunch" is a bunch of fun for everyone.

Ross Theater to feature 'La Chasse'

By Jeff Hampel
Staff Reporter

After working in Chicago and New York City, former Lincoln resident Christopher Cartmill is coming home to present his new play "La Chasse" ("The Hunt").

The play's theme is the eternal struggle between love and art. It revolves around nineteenth-century artist Eugene Delacroix and his relationships with his lover Alise Morrell and his cousin Josephine de Lavallette, the baroness de Forget.

Cartmill plays the protagonist Delacroix. He is joined by another Lincoln native, Mary Mares, who plays Morrell.

The concert reading, performed by professional actors, will be Friday at 8 p.m. in the Mary Riepma Ross Theater. A champagne and

truffle reception for the cast will follow the performance.

A concert reading differs from a typical play in that it has no props other than the actors' costumes.

Instead of props, the background for the scenes will be projected slides of paintings from artists of the Romantic era. The performance will be accompanied by the music of Mendelssohn, Liszt, Mozart and Chopin.

"La Chasse" is being brought to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln because of a sponsorship from Sheldon at Six, said Kathy Piper of the Nebraska Arts Association. Further funding has come from Ellen Baldwin, a member of the NAA Board of Trustees and a friend of Cartmill.

Cartmill's name might be familiar to Lincoln residents. His

play "Light in Love" was performed last August by a professional cast at Nebraska Wesleyan University.

"The Light Before Darkness" was performed as a fall play by students at Lincoln Southeast High School.

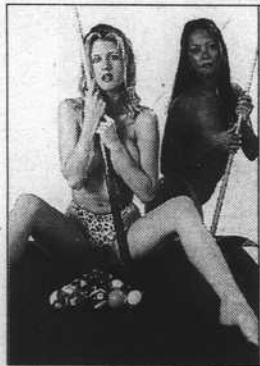
Both plays are part of a series of "Light" shows written by Cartmill. The series is named for its protagonist's surname.

"La Chasse" was written by Cartmill with a commission from the Chicago Art Institute. The play was performed there in January of this year.

"It's very experimental — very exciting," Piper said. "The play received excellent, excellent reviews."

After its performance at UNL, "La Chasse" will be performed in New York City and Virginia.

Tickets are \$10 for NAA members and \$12.50 for non-members.



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Camelot

Continued from Page 9

ters' energy.

However, whenever an extra or chorus member had an individual line, the audience could hardly hear it, even in the first few rows.

The main characters all had microphones, so they were never forced to project much. This seemed a bit bizarre, almost like an easy way out. In the good ol' days, everyone had to project and actually act without the luxuries of modern technology.

Nowhere was this onstage mumbling more evident than in the crowd

scene, "Guenevere," where King Arthur decided to burn his wife at the stake. There was so much going on that it was impossible to follow the action, even if you had memorized the script.

Costumes, however, were nothing short of spectacular. Each character had four or five changes of clothing, and the realm of medieval splendor was great. The women, of course, wore the best garb: gold lamé dresses, capes and hats. The men wore tights, laced boots and tunics with flared sleeves. Couples matched, and everything seemed carefully planned.

The vocal score was performed well, but only by certain characters. Lancelot (Narducci) had the best bass, which boomed through the rafters, with or without a microphone.

Constance Curtis, who played the role of Guenevere, did an acceptable job. Her trilling soprano was just there, not really memorable.

But she performed her part well, and her romance with Lancelot seemed genuine.

Despite a few downfalls, the cast performed a difficult, long script well, admirably finding the mystical and magical niches.