

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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Michelle Wylie practices at a "Song and Dance" dress rehearsal Wednesday night.

Jay Calderon/DN

Jitters don't shake 'Song and Dance'

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

Although it has a deceptively simple name, "Song and Dance" brings together a dazzling package of professionally polished entertainment.

The performance had a few opening-night kinks to work out Thursday night, but overall, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Fine and Performing Arts production was incredible.

Created by Andrew Lloyd Webber, "Song and Dance" opens up a whole world of creativity for directors and choreographers.

The show's two parts feature a lone singer in the first act and a large dance ensemble in the second. The live music throughout both acts energized the entire performance.

The electric guitar, keyboards, cello and other instruments added a whole new di-

mension to the performance — topped off by suave pianist/director Vincent Learned.

They opened the way for singer Michelle Wylie to create Emma, a naive English girl, who comes to soak up America, via New York and her friend Viv.

Emma slowly loses her innocence as she goes through lovers in New York, Los Angeles and even Nebraska.

All other roles are imagined and not played by real people. But State Sen. Dave Landis, who was in the audience Thursday night, had a cameo appearance as a cheery tennis player. Confused? You'll see.

Wylie knew how to work an audience with vivacity and intense, telling facial expressions, especially in "English Girls" and "Tell Me on a Sunday."

Her voice was strong, except for a few times when she dropped the initial lines of a song — a problem that could have been avoided by fixing her remote microphone.

The second act begins with a full-force ensemble of dancers. Because there were so many dancers, a few lines were out of order Thursday night, and timing was a little off. But, hey, chalk it up to opening-night nerves.

The dance department, directed by Lisa Fusillo, rarely gets a chance to shine, but did so Thursday night.

It was also nice to see a revival of tap dancing, which is always full of energy.

As the performance reached its end-zone peak, the dancers donned red Husker jerseys and did a jazzed-up dance interpretation of their National Championship counterparts.

Wylie joined the dancers and musicians for a final "Song and Dance" that put the bow on Thursday night's entertainment package.

The show will run again tonight and Saturday night at 8, Sunday at 2 p.m. and March 15-18 at 8 p.m.

Benefit concert planned

By Jeff Randall
Staff Reporter

Lincoln resident Kris Lavedas discovered six months ago that she had breast cancer.

Surgery removed Lavedas' tumors, said friend Sophia John of Lincoln, but Lavedas had been undergoing chemotherapy since September. The cancer had spread to her lymph nodes, and a bone marrow transplant was needed.

If that news wasn't bad enough, Lavedas found out her employer-provided health insurance wouldn't pay for the transplant required to save her life.

Lavedas' insurance plan considered bone marrow transplants an experimental procedure, John said. As the 32-year-old single mother of a newborn daughter, Lavedas was facing disaster.

That's when music entered the picture.

Employees of local radio station KKNB-FM (104.1, the Planet), where John works as a disc jockey, have organized fund-raising events to help Lavedas pay for the medical costs, which are estimated to be between \$60,000 and \$100,000.

The first of those events is a benefit concert, which will be Sunday night at the Hurricane, 1118 O St. The 19-and-over show will feature local bands Mercy Rule, Sideshow and Polecat. Future events are still in the planning stages, said Dave Douglas, program director for KKNB.

"We're brainstorming ideas and trying to get things together," Douglas said. "Obviously, we have a long way to go."

He said Lavedas' only previous connection to the radio station had been over the airwaves.

"She is a listener," Douglas said, "and she had been able to get to know a number of people here at the station just by listening and calling in."

"When we heard about her situation, helping out seemed like the best thanks we could possibly give her."

John attends the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation, where Lavedas is a member. She said she was eager to help after hearing of Lavedas' plight.

"I saw a flier, and the name looked

See CONCERT on 10

Billy's among bands on stage this weekend

From Staff Reports

The Billy's will offer a musical experience that erases the barriers between country and rock Saturday night at Knickerbockers, 901 O St.

The Billy's sound walks the line between country and rock, said guitarist and vocalist Eric Roberts.

"We have the Minneapolis rock sound with a Tom Petty edge," Roberts said.

Saturday's show will mix music from their previous and upcoming albums with a few cover songs, Roberts said.

Lincoln band Think will open for the Billy's Saturday at 10:30 p.m. The cover charge for this show is \$3.

Friday night, Knickerbockers

will host Omaha's Gauge and Wide.

Guzzard, As Good As Dead and Glass Pack Jack take the stage tonight at Le Cafe Shakes, 1418 O St. Saturday night, Shakes will feature God Head Silo, Ovarian Trolley and St. Nicklehead.

Peace Nation and Punkinhead will take over the Hurricane, 1118 O St., tonight. And Saturday, Stick will play a 19-and-over show. Local favorites Mercy Rule, Sideshow and Polecat will play at the Hurricane Sunday night.

At the Royal Grove, 340 W. Cornhusker Highway, Step Child will play tonight and Saturday.

And Monkey Meat will play at the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St., tonight and Saturday.

'Some things' is funny at Futz

By Jeff Randall
Theater Critic

"Some Things You Need to Know Before the World Ends (A Final Evening With the Illuminati)" at the Futz, Inc. proved the budget of a theater production doesn't necessarily determine its quality.

Corners may have been cut in the wardrobe and set construction, but the outstanding Thursday performances by Kent Kreuger and Ward Lewis were worth millions.

As the domineering and holier-than-thou Lutheran minister, Rev. Eddie, the wild-eyed Kreuger was a constantly active and emotional presence. The somewhat cramped stage area could barely contain his manic behavior. In fact, sometimes it didn't.

On several occasions, Kreuger

had to lunge forward, violating the traditionally sacred audience zone. His only weakness was his questionable Southern accent, which drew attention from his otherwise flawless acting.

Lewis was also energetic as Brother Lawrence, the hunchbacked cronic to Eddie. He provided comic relief and moronic hilarity in contrast to Kreuger's out-of-control, semi-intellectual behavior.

The two actors sunk wholeheartedly into their respective stage personalities, and then jumped into the roles of entirely different characters who highlighted the action of the main storyline.

The main storyline followed the Rev. Eddie and Brother Lawrence's preparation and delivery of a post-apocalyptic sermon that compared life and sal-

vation to a basketball game.

The sideline scenes were mostly biblical, humorous dialogues and songs by a wide-ranging gallery of characters, including a potential saint undergoing a job interview and a pair of apostles/construction workers on lunch break.

This irreverent look at religion and the earthbound ambassadors of God was a thought-provoking play that presented both dramatic and comic elements, the latter a bit more often than the former. "Some Things You Need to Know Before the World Ends (A Final Evening With the Illuminati)" is showing at the Futz, Inc., 124 S. Ninth St., tonight, Saturday and March 16-18 at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$10. Seating is limited, but reservations can be made by calling 435-6307.