

# Puente lends spice to UNL Jazz Festival

## Professor uses weekend as recruiting tool

By **BARB CHURCHILL**  
Assignment Reporter

Fourteen all-star high school jazz performers from four states have been invited to perform in this weekend's University of Nebraska-Lincoln Jazz Festival.

Rusty White, assistant professor of double bass and jazz performance, said there were at least 25 performers — from as far away as Alabama and as near as Nebraska — who auditioned to be included in the jazz festival.

Only high school juniors and seniors are allowed to try out, and more auditioned for the festival this year than last, White said. This is the second year for the jazz festival in this format.

"What the students will experience is playing with a group of other students that are at their own ability level," he said. "Whenever you have

an all-star group, the students are going to play better."

Before last year, the UNL Jazz Festival had been a competitive event featuring many area high school jazz ensembles and had been run by Dave Sharp, director of UNL's jazz program. White had nothing but praise for Sharp's efforts, but said he thought the festival needed to go in a different direction in order to work as a recruitment tool for the UNL School of Music.

White was looking forward to the students working with famous Latin percussionist Tito Puente.

"For the last couple years, we've tried to couple one of the jazz artists appearing at the Lied Center with a stipulation that said artist would perform a master class with our jazz students," White said.

Last year's master class was held by bassist Christian McBride and tenor saxophonist Joe Lovano.

Puente's master class will start at 5 p.m. on Saturday in 119 Westbrook Music Building with his concert immediately following at 8 p.m. in the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

White has been working hard to put the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Jazz Festival Band and affiliated Small Group concert together this weekend.

White, explaining how important the small group concept is, said: "One of the essential ingredients of jazz is improvisation, and that just happens more in a small group setting."

"Improvisational sections are few in most big bands, so fewer musicians get a chance to improvise when they play with a big band. Whereas, in a small group, not improvising is almost unheard of."

The Jazz Festival band concert is Sunday at 3 p.m. in Kimball Recital Hall. Admission is free.

## World-class percussionist featured in Lied concert

From Staff Reports

Lied Center

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Jazz Festival would go on without Tito Puente, but it wouldn't be nearly as good.

The same can be said for the world of jazz.

For more than 50 years, Latin jazz percussionist Puente has been pounding the skins for adoring audiences, and Saturday night he will do the same at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

Along with his Latin Jazz Ensemble, Puente performs a fiery form of jazz that has been dubbed "salsa" — although Puente dislikes the term — around the world.

Puente has more than 100 recording credits, and his original compositions are as revered in jazz circles as his energetic performances.

Puente and his Latin Jazz Ensemble will take the Lied Center stage at 8 p.m. Tickets for the performance are \$24, \$20 and \$16, half-price for students.

David Sharp, director of UNL's jazz program, will give two pre-performance talks in the Lied Center's Steinhart Room. The talks will take place 55 minutes and 30 minutes prior to curtain.



Concert pianist  
knows music  
like nobody's  
business

By **ANDREW WASHBURN**  
Staff Reporter

Things move pretty fast in New York, especially if you're a businessman, CEO, speaker and musician all rolled into one.

On a five-week tour of the Midwest, New York-based concert pianist Justin Kolb will be in Lincoln this weekend in association with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's School of Music and Lincoln's Home Concert Association.

Kolb will perform a free recital tonight at 8 in 119 Westbrook Music Building. Selections

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## Concert Preview



COURTESY PHOTO  
**REVEREND HORTON HEAT** (center) is backed onstage by his trusty sidekicks, drummer **Scott Churilla** (left) and bassist **Jimbo Wallace** (right).

## Ranch Bowl braces for atypical reverend's arrival

By **JIM ZAVODNY**  
Music Critic

A well-known reverend will make an appearance in the area on Sunday to preach about booze, drugs and women.

His sermons don't concern traditional religious topics, and he is certainly not in the league of Jimmy Swaggart or Billy Graham.

He is the Reverend Horton Heat, and those planning on attending his show at the Ranch Bowl in Omaha better wear their dancing shoes because this guy can wail on the guitar. Tickets for the 21-and-over show are \$12.50 in advance and \$14 the day of the show.

Just as talented are his band mates, stand-up bassist Jimbo Wallace and drummer Scott Churilla, who help the Reverend craft a unique mix of rockabilly, rock and country, or "psychobilly" as they like to refer to it.

Joining the reverend at the Ranch Bowl will be ska artist Let's Go Bowling, who will play six shows in seven days in February with the Reverend at venues in Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas. LGB's last performance in Omaha came in the summer of 1997, when they played for a crowd of boisterous skankers at the Cog Factory.

This will be the Reverend's fourth trip to the area in a little more than a year, with the last two shows played at the Westfair Amphitheater in Council Bluffs and Lincoln's Royal Grove.

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