

## Lecture commemorates locomotive

BY SARAH BAKER  
Senior Reporter

To hear the sound of trains, take a walk down to the Harper-Schramm-Smith Complex.

But to hear the history of a dying piece of American culture, the steam locomotive, take a walk to the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery.

Tom Garver, guest curator at the Sheldon, will present a public lecture, "Steam Locomotives and the Good Life: The Photographs of O. Winston Link" at the Sheldon Thursday evening.

Garver comes to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in conjunction with the current exhibition at the Sheldon, entitled "Trains That Passed in the Night: The Railroad Photographs of O. Winston Link."

George Neubert, director at the Sheldon, said this speech is something special for the

gallery.

"We are very fortunate to have this talk," Neubert said. "Both because Garver is the guest curator for the show, and because he has worked with the photographer directly as an assistant."

Garver served as Link's studio assistant during the 1950s and has since documented Link's railroad photographs in two books.

"Link's photos document a section of railroad in Virginia. He really focuses on a period in the '50s and '60s when the steam engine was in service," Neubert said. "You could say Link was obsessed with the steam engine."

This exhibit is the first nationally touring exhibition of Link's Norfolk and Western Railway photos since 1983.

Neubert said Garver's talk will focus on a subject that just recently started to gather more interest.

"When (Link) first started, no one really paid attention to his work, but now that steam

engines are beginning to disappear, this part of American history has become very hot," he said. "These works are really of value now."

Neubert said Garver's talk should prove to be interesting to anyone.

"Tom can really give an aesthetic point of view on the photos as art," he said. "He is a good entertaining speaker."

"Anything that exposes an idea like this in an artistic way is relevant to both students and the public alike," Neubert said.

Garver's lecture takes place Friday at 5:30 p.m. in the Sheldon Gallery Auditorium. The lecture is free and open to the public.

"Trains That Passed in the Night: The Railroad Photographs of O. Winston Link" runs until March 22 at the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, 12th and R streets.

For more information or to arrange a tour of the exhibit, call the Sheldon at (402) 472-2461.

### Theater



## Play describes lives of Gen X

BY SARAH BAKER  
Senior Reporter

The best way to make Gen X'ers come to the theater is to make a show about their lives.

"Look Back in Anger," the first main stage show of the semester, does just that. It opens in the Howell Theatre on Friday.

Although the play was originally written in the 1950s, this production has been updated to take place in the early 1990s.

The show, which utilizes a five-person cast, tells the story of Jimmy Porter, an angry young

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# Adies night

Two drag queens vie for pageant title of Miss City Sweetheart

BY BRET SCHULTE  
Senior Reporter

Most Lincolmites don't know it, but they have a new queen.

Her name is Jeff.

Sunday night at the Q, 226 S. Ninth St., two Lincoln drag queens vied for the crown (or tiara, as the case may be) of Lincoln's longest-running pageant and talent competition: The Miss City Sweetheart contest.

This year, two queens, one tall and one short, one dressed in a black chemise and the other as a popular Disney character, jostled for the most coveted title of the city's cross-dressing community.

They go by Adore Mi and Talaya Mann, names created from a drag queen tradition of sexual innuendo and tongue-in-cheek masculinity that follows in the footsteps of Lincoln royalty like Sheza Mann and Miss Sinnomen.

Like any other beauty and talent contest, The Miss City Sweetheart of Lincoln Pageant is divided into areas of competition: presentation, evening wear, question and answer, and — most importantly — talent.

A panel of past performers judge contestants based on style, dress, movement and talent — even things like the ability to match pumps to a gown.

The contest limits itself exclusively to residents of Lincoln, an idea that pageant owner

Rick Swank believes fosters the success and popularity of the competition.

"I think because it's a city title that all the Miss City Sweethearts support each other and stand behind each other," Swank said, himself a winner in 1988. "It's almost like a bonding thing."

Past champions such as Dee Dee DeKarr, Freida Lae, Mercedes and Tasha Davor appeared Sunday night to support the two contestants and perform in-between their competitions.

With six American flags stuck in her red wig, 1994 winner Dee Dee DeKarr announced the beginning of the contest with "God Bless America," immediately followed by resounding applause as the two contestants introduced themselves.

Although Talaya Mann, bedecked in a black chemise and a Mariah Carey haircut, received a warm welcome, Adore Mi's entrance in a black evening gown set the crowd aflame.

Although not a drag queen himself, Q co-owner Jim Friedman said being successful in the pageant takes more than just wearing the right clothes.

"People have said it's easy to do it, and they get up there and realize it's hard," he said. "It's hard to act like a woman, to tilt your head the right way, to move your body like a woman and dance the right way. It's extremely challenging."

Former winner Mercedes said local pageants experienced a few low years recently

when queens didn't put much effort into their performances. That is, until Sunday night.

"A lot of people who do the pageants now just do it to hold a title," she said, "but I think the main reason is to show you do have talent and to entertain people."

Mercedes said she was impressed and happy to see how the two contestants submersed themselves in their characters.

Intermixed with crowd-pleasing and occasionally exotic performances by veteran drag queens doing popular acts like Madonna, Celine Dion and Tina Turner, ("the divas," according to Friedman) Talaya Mann and Adore Mi challenged the limits of the pageant with their talent competitions.

Mann wowed the crowd with an extremely tiny black vinyl dominatrix outfit that forced Friedman to ask the question the entire audience was thinking: "Did he just cut it off?"

It definitely seemed so as Mann freely paraded around the stage in her fishnet stockings and high-cut thong suit to a Ru-Paul song.

Swank, who emceed the evening, kept the crowd going in between the barrage of heels, sequins and vinyl with comments to members of the audience like: "Oh, I remember you. I never forget a face once I sit down on it."

And so on.

Meanwhile, audience members kept active during the three-hour show by approaching the stage to offer tokens of gratitude to the performing queens — usually in the form of \$1 bills.

The two contestants were barred from accepting tips at the risk of disqualification, but it didn't stop those who were there for the fun — like Mercedes, who easily collected \$50 in cash.

"Money," was Swank's answer when asked why he started doing drag 12 years ago.

"Drag makes money, and it's what people want to see," he said.

The Q realized this a few years ago and began having drag shows nearly every Sunday night, where a percentage of the profits from the door go to the performers along with their tips.

"Tips vary depending on how good you are," Friedman said. "(Drag queens) have walked out of here with over \$100, and that's only after doing two or three songs."

The Miss City Sweetheart goes home with \$150, but that wasn't what was on Adore Mi's mind after she won the title.

Finishing her set with a song from "The Little Mermaid," Mi's rendition of Ursula, complete with a white wig and strobe light effect, put the audience on its feet and the tiara finally on her head.

Nearly in tears as she was crowned, Mi later said, "I think the audience perceived me really well."

Mi, whose family attended the pageant, attributed her success to her mom.

"I told my mom I was going to do drag, and she said 'Let's get you a dress.'"



ADORE MI WON SUNDAY'S Miss City Sweetheart beauty pageant and talent competition at the Q, 226 S. Ninth St. The Miss City Sweetheart contest, which is open only to drag queens who are Lincoln residents, is Lincoln's longest-running beauty pageant and talent competition. MATT MILLER/DX