

UNL dance department still kicking

By LIZA HOLTMEIER
Staff writer

A little more than a year ago, University of Nebraska-Lincoln dance majors faced rumors involving the possible dissolution of their program.

Now, after a year of speculation and changes, the program's faculty members and students feel

“Right now, everything is starting to click.”

KELLY HOLCOMBE
dance instructor

they are on more solid ground.

With the introduction of two new faculty members to the program, dance majors say they feel a new energy and vitality.

“We have two ladies working for us who are really strong-willed and ready to take

charge,” said Brandy Miller, a senior dance major. “I see a lot of potential in the program right now.”

The two new faculty members, Kelly Holcombe and Julie Kane, were hired to replace visiting Professor Ann Shea and former Dance Director Charlotte Adams. Shea returned to her home state of Tennessee this summer, while Adams took a job as assistant professor of dance at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.

While students have missed Adams and Shea, most have responded positively to the new instructors.

Lisa Fusillo, a UNL dance professor, said the two women have challenged the students with



MONYA DEBOER, left, Sarah Harris and Kevin Gibbs pose with their legs in attitude during barre exercises for Ballet IV class in the Johnny Carson Theatre on Monday morning.

SANDY SUMMERS/DN

Please see DANCE on 10

Lied Center

Pianist Lorie Line, orchestra to take stage at Lied on Sunday

By PATRICK MINER
Staff writer

When some people hear the word piano, they think of one other word: recital.

But for Lorie Line, from Minneapolis, the word isn't even in her vocabulary.

Her assortment of colorful costumes and eclectic sounds will return to Lincoln as Line, along with her 14-piece Pop Chamber Orchestra, appears at the Lied Center for Performing Arts, 301 N. 12th St, Sunday for an annual holiday performance.

The Lied Center performance will be only the second on a 40-day tour that Line expects to be simply “magical.”

A gifted pianist and entertainer, Line and her accompanying orchestra incorporate widely diverse instrumentation such as a fiddle, harmonica, mandolin and saxophone. Even a gospel vocalist gets thrown into the mix, which is entirely arranged solely by Line.

“The music is like spices when cooking,” Line said. “If you know how much to put in the dish, it's fabulous and becomes a gourmet meal.”

If playing a veritable buffet of instruments on stage weren't enough, the crowd always gets a chance to offer its own talents—or at least their voices.

The tour's theme of “Be There With Bells On!” is Line's way of notifying attendees of their duty on five of the songs to be played. According to Line, the audience should be ready from the get-go: The second song of the set demands crowd participation.



COURTESY PHOTO
MUSICIAN LORIE LINE will bring some Christmas cheer and her usual good spirits to the Lied Center on Sunday.

Of course, Line still steals the show. She spent all year planning costumes, with each garment worn by a performer acting as a reminder of the instrument's time of origin, and each costume fitting the show's color scheme of cobalt blue, turquoise and silver.

Line's accomplished recording career spans 15 albums, including her latest effort, “The Heritage Collection II,” which debuted on the Billboard New Age album chart at No. 7.

The album is a collection of personal interpretations of peaceful, traditional tracks that she finds inspirational. Some will be especially suited for a November concert.

“Those songs have a good tiding, mankind and universal feeling,” Line said. “I don't want to be too Christmasy too early.”

Directly contrasting “The Heritage Collection II” is the more upbeat “Sharing the Season III,” which features holiday favorites such as “Carol of the Bells,” “The Little Drummer Boy” and “Frosty the Snowman.” They are all part of the newly released three-album gift set, “The Lorie Line Holiday Collection.”

In addition to the scheduled music from her albums, Line's show always includes a few spontaneous songs suggested by the crowd. Since last year's Pershing Auditorium show, the pianist has even learned to play “There Is No Place Like Nebraska.”

Line plans for the show to last just over two hours. Tickets for the 7:30 p.m. performance are \$30, \$26 and \$22 and are half-price for students. Call the Lied Center box office for more information at (402) 472-4747.

New Releases



Beck
“Mutations”
DGC
Grade: B+

Having established “Where It's At,” Beck is back from another musical journey to places no other musician could ever find: islands with Latin beach parties on one end and sleepy campfire get-togethers at the other. This new musical venture is as fresh and relaxing as a resort stay in the Caribbean.

Considering the overwhelming success of his 1996 release, “Odelay,” and the numerous artist-of-the-year awards he accumulated, it's no wonder Beck made an album like “Mutations.”

It marks a break from the hip-hop craziness and over-the-top, vocals of “Odelay” hits like “Where it's At,” “Devil's Haircut” and “New Pollution.”

As a whole, “Mutations” is a collective good morning and good night all wrapped up in 11 tracks. The prevailing mood throughout the album is as comforting as a cup of coffee in the morning and as therapeutic as being tucked in after a long night.

For probably the first time in Beck's career, his record keeps the same initial feel from beginning to end. It is predominately mellow, soft and soothing with a few sparks of honky-tonk kookiness here and there.

The songs sound familiar after hearing them just once, and the mixture of country acoustic basics with echoed and spacey string arrangements creates a tranquilizing,

half-drunk and glazed-over feel that tastes as sweet as a Shirley Temple.

“Cold Brains,” the album's opener and a definite standout, is a slow and surreal lament that combines Beck's signature monotone vocals over basic acoustic guitar strumming. The washed over wah-wah notes keep the song moving, and a steady snare beat and harmonica tune give the song a genuine bluesy feel.

The album was made in two weeks following Beck's extremely successful “Odelay” tour, a time frame Beck usually doesn't work in. The entire album was played by Beck's touring band and that, coupled with the short time in which it was recorded, helps in the album's progressing vibe.

To the press, Beck said the idea behind the album was to show the more delicate side of music, which he feels is highly ignored and underrated.

Songs like “We Live Again,” a sleepy ballad with a waltz beat and phased-out guitar picking, reinforce Beck's focus on musical intricacies. So does “Sing It Again,” a weary old drinking song with a country feel and a polka beat mixed in with a reverberating slide guitar sound.

The album's strongest remnant of “Odelay” comes in the form of an unnamed, hidden song found a few minutes after “Static,” the album's last tune. This mystery song combines the '60s garage surf-style guitar, drum and bass remnants of “New Pollution” with feedback and laser sounds for a pretty groovin' rock tune.

“Mutations” as a whole sounds considerably less low-fi than Beck's previous works, and producer Nigel Godrich's (Radiohead) influence is very present and pleasant. The songs sound smoother and more synthetic than both “Mellow Gold” and “Odelay,” and Beck's vocals are much more prevalent.

Despite the fact that “Mutations” is considerably less exciting than “Odelay,” it's still enjoyable in its own right. While “Odelay” serves to get the party started, “Mutations” helps with the cleanup and inevitable recuperation.

It is definitely worth checking out for any Beck fan, and it adds a lot to Beck's already impressive repertoire.

—Jason Hardy