

Honeydogs survive through record label mishap

With a new contract, the band looks to gain respect.

BY SEAN MCCARTHY

Although Honeydogs' Adam Levy will be on stage in Lincoln Friday night, his pager might call him back up to Minnesota at any time. Speaking from his home in St. Paul, Minn., Noah Levy, Adam's brother, said the lead singer is expecting his wife to go into labor at any time.

"He's got the pager on for this show," Levy laughed.

Tonight, Honeydogs bring their sweet sounds to the Royal Grove, 340 W. Cornhusker Highway. Tickets are \$5 for the 19-and-older show. Two bands, Mylow and Labeled, are set to open for the Honeydogs. Doors open at 8 p.m.

Noah and Adam formed Honeydogs back in 1995. Their blend of rock, alt-country and pop has attracted a growing number of fans without the help of air play on major stations. In 1997, they released "Seen a Ghost" on Mercury Records' Debris label.

The band was in the middle of the huge record label buyouts in 1998 when Mercury Records

"I hated Mercury. It was not a good place to be."

Noah Levy
Honeydogs drummer

closed the door on Debris. As Mercury was one of the record companies bought out by Seagrams, Honeydogs went ahead and recorded their latest album "Here's Luck." During the recording, the band was ignored by their label, Levy said.

"I hated Mercury," he said. "It was not a good place to be."

The band spent three months making "Here's Luck," which Levy considered an extravagant length of time. After the album was recorded, they had little support promoting it. The band asked to be let out of their contract. Mercifully, Mercury obliged.

Record label politics weren't the only obstacle affecting the Honeydogs in 1998 - within three weeks, guitarist Tommy Borscheid left the band and bassist Trent Norton lapsed into a coma after an asthma attack.

Levy said he remembered getting a call from Norton's girl-

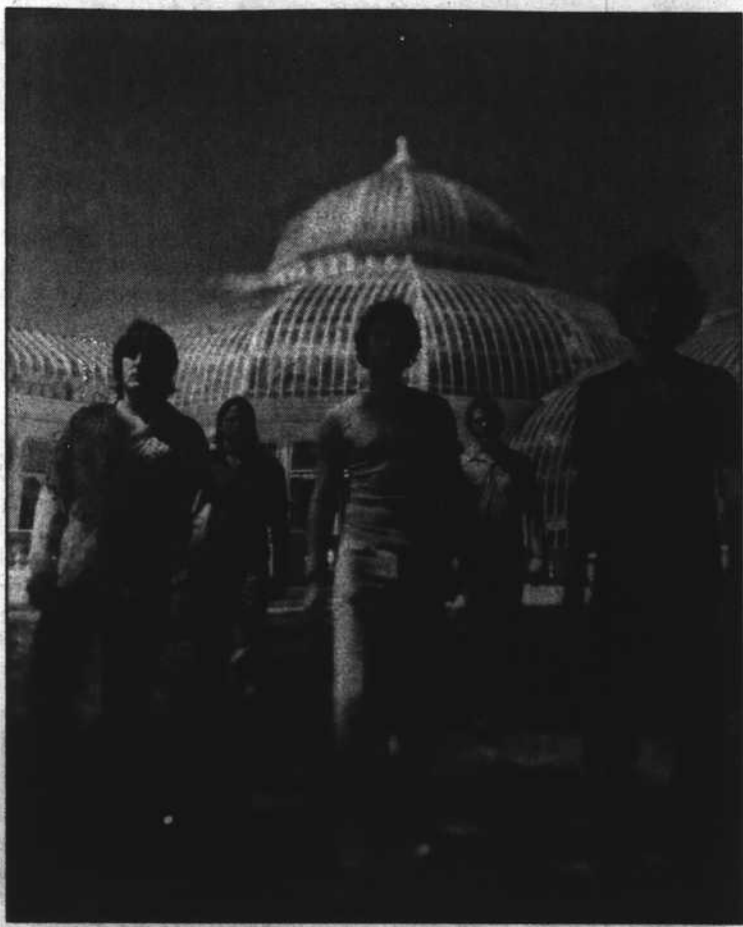
friend while he was home. Norton was watching his brother play at a bar when he collapsed. Norton was not breathing for 20 minutes before medics had to defibrillate him while he was in the parking lot, Levy said. He spent three days in a coma.

Miraculously, Norton did not suffer any brain damage and was alert when he came to.

"He was joking with us right away," Levy said.

With Norton healthy, a new contract with Palm Records and two additional musicians, Brian Halverson and Jeff Victor, Honeydogs are set to embark on a lengthy tour for 2001. Levy hoped the Honeydogs gain more respect this year from critics, fans and peers. He had no illusions of seeing "Here's Luck" as a top-10 hit.

"I just want (the record) to age well and make people happy," Levy said.



The Honeydogs battled with record labels while recording their newest CD "Here's Luck." Courtesy Art

Opera is actually a sitcom

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Bybee said "Die Fledermaus" is "very accessible" because it is performed in English and is an operetta, or light opera.

"Since there's a lot of dialogue, it's just a play with music," she said.

"Die Fledermaus" is only billed as an opera, Bybee said, because the musical is an American creation.

Friday's gala performance will include six special guests performing at a party in the opera's second act. Tickets are available at the Lied box office, 472-4747. They are \$8 for students for the gala performance and \$7 for the matinee.

Bybee said the UNL marching band is one of the special guests, but the other five are surprises.

Bybee will also be a visible part of the Friday performance, playing the part of an "eccentric Russian prince."

A champagne reception will follow the show.

Bybee said the day between performances is typical of operas because of the "muscularly taxing" nature of opera singing.

"Since you're dealing with little tiny muscles in the throat, it's important that singers have time to rest," Bybee said.

Hughes set to perform

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ing workshop she conducted at the Union on Wednesday afternoon.

The words of outspoken conservative Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina, who labeled Hughes "a garbage artist," have stayed with Hughes since her hearing at the U.S. Senate a decade ago.

"Sometimes I think, 'If I were a really good artist, I could make Jesse Helms sprout a circulatory system,'" she says.

Hughes says she thinks Helms is "indecent" because he supports policies that bar teaching students about safe sex practices "while he watches people die of STDs. I think it's indecent that in some states you can't buy a vibrator, but you can buy guns."

It is this kind of free-associative thought that makes Hughes' performance an unpredictable emotional see-saw, causing ripples of uncontrollable laughter to bounce around the room at one moment, then facing the gut-wrenching realities of life the next.

Hughes finds pride in her shows that have little recognizable plot. She says that writing a logical story line is a concept that escapes her talents, and personal connections are more important in her work than logic.

"Who wants to be mainstream?" she quips. "It's shallow and slow moving."

Hughes was born and raised in Michigan, or "the mitten state" as she calls it, and says that the few times she performs in the Midwest each year are like a vacation to her childhood home.

"I really respond to the landscape," Hughes says. She likes the time of relief from the "stereotypically rude New Yorkers," and the audiences in the Midwest are open and friendly, "though sometimes I wonder what's going on underneath."

Hughes describes Midwesterners as generally "polite" and "shy," and she's right. With a Midwestern, non-confrontational frame of mind, it is difficult to understand why she continues to push the envelope and risk her self through her art, especially after the hard blow the Supreme Court delivered three years ago.

Hughes has used performance art, specifically the performance of "Preaching to the Perverted," as a way of coping with her past encounter with institutional conservatism.

"Instead of the NEA having me in a box, I now have it in a box," Hughes says.

Yet she is not a blind idealist; she understands that deep wounds are hard to mend. Hughes says that turning your defeats into art "doesn't mean you will be miraculously healed ... but it means it doesn't own you in quite the same way."



Cinderella trades her slipper for an ice skate this weekend at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

Courtesy Art

Cinderella skates into the Lied Center

BY BILLY SMUCK

Cinderella will be losing her ice skate instead of a glass slipper in the St. Petersburg State Ice Ballet's version of the beloved fairy tale this weekend at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

Scheduled shows are at 7:30 tonight and Saturday along with an afternoon performance at 2 p.m. tomorrow. Tickets are \$36, \$32 and \$28. University of Nebraska students' tickets are half price.

"Cinderella," a familiar fairy tale, will be transformed into a performance of a different sort. Not only is the performance taken out of the theater format, but it

isn't a traditional ballet performance either.

A winter-wonderland atmosphere is created by the ice-covered Lied Center along with 35 world-class Russian skaters under the artistic direction of Konstantin Rassadin, a former principle dancer and choreographer of the Kirov Ballet.

A full opera-house set and 100 costumes are featured in the production. The story portrays a young girl who is treated like a servant by her stepmother and two stepsisters and is later united in love with the prince, thanks to the magical touch of her fairy godmother.

Performing their sixth North

American tour, the St. Petersburg State Ballet on Ice will feature music by Sergei Prokofiev, in addition to the fine choreography and skating.

Founded in 1967 and based in St. Petersburg, Russia, the company has performed in productions such as "Swan Lake," "Sleeping Beauty," "Romeo and Juliet" and "The Nutcracker."

The company has presented over 5,000 performances internationally during the last 10 years. Many of those are inspired by the Russian Kirov Ballet, which is well known for artistic freedom and classical elegance.

Thirty minutes prior to the show a preperformance talk will be held in the Lied's Steinhart Room as part of the Lied Center's education program.

Urge wrong band for UPC

UPC from page 5

not try to appeal to a different demographic?

There are numerous other high-profile artists out there that cost much less than the stars of MTV, appeal to probably just as many and could change the perception of UNL as a music center.

If UPC were to bring a band like Guided By Voices, Sonic Youth, Jurassic 5, Built to Spill, the Flaming Lips or Public Enemy, not only would there be a comparable amount of students pleased by the show, but people would come from hundreds of miles around to see it - and UPC could charge those people.

I looked through the little catalog that UPC uses to scout out the bands it recruits, and all of those bands I mentioned are available and all of them cost \$25,000 or less to bring in.

Pile up four of five of the best local bands before them, and you've got an incredible rock show.

Ironically, there was a project like this in the works. April 20 was supposed to be the date for a big outdoor festival with hopes of recruiting local bands like Drumfounded, the Black Dahlias and Her Flyaway Manner to the

lineup. Cursive, a local-based band with national and international success, had even been contacted to headline.

But UPC has decided to swipe that date for the Urge show. And to make that Urge show even less enticing for the typical UNL student than it already is, the plan is to hold the show on East Campus. The outdoor local festival would then be moved earlier in the year.

I would like to say that this is the type of mistake that only monkeys would make, but that would be harsh and unfair.

Monkeys would not make a mistake like this.

It would even be more forgivable if UPC's music committee were an actual committee because at least then we could credit this to the flaws of a democracy. But where once 10 committee members served, there are now only four serving the will of a few and deciding how to spend thousands of dollars.

So I ask you, UPC Music Committee, look at the resources you have and rethink your attitude. Instead of aiming for the top and settling for the middle, just turn a few degrees to your left. You can aim and hit the top there and make your university a little less mediocre in the process.

Nena to present 'Jump'

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"Jump" is Nena's autobiographical account of mental illness. The purpose of "Jump" is to present mental illness in a way that people can understand.

"I feel an obligation to tell my story because there are a lot of people who can't talk about their mental illnesses," Nena said. "I can put people inside the situation and present the information in a way that is effective."

After her performance, Nena will answer the audience's questions.

Nena is coming to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln as part of the Artist Diversity Residency Program, which brings artists to campus who represent ethnic minorities. Nena has spent the week visiting classes at both UNL and Southeast Community College in Lincoln, who is also sponsoring her visit.

Melissa Burkland, a senior English and pre-law major, had Nena visit her agricultural leadership class. Nena kept the students in the dark about her mental illness.

"I would have had no idea that she was mentally ill,"

Burkland said. "She primarily talked about her interracial marriage and about being a woman and an artist. She did say that she was bipolar, but she touched upon it lightly."

Many of Nena's talks focus on her mental illness, though, a fact which caused the Community Mental Health Center of Lancaster County to sponsor her visit.

Dean Settle, executive director of the Community Mental Health Center, said that he met with representatives from UNL and SCC and decided that this was a worthwhile project.

"So much stigma surrounds mental illness, but today more and more people are saying, 'This is a part of my life, a part of the human experience,'" Settle said. "It is important for people to hear that perspective."

Nena says that the acts of writing and performing are not done as therapy for herself. She prefers drawing and sculpting in that regard, but her performances, particularly "Jump," serve a different purpose.

"When I perform I feel like I am attacking the monster of the mythology that surrounds mental illness," she said.

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