

Features

Teatro Hugo and Ines remarkable

Bridgette Odom
Staff Writer

Teatro Hugo and Ines puppet show "Short Story," in Lipinsky Auditorium on Oct. 10 was a beautiful example of what quality and professional entertainment should be.

They captured the audience's attention with the very first act and kept them attentive for the entire hour and 15 minutes. The only chatter in the crowd was a child exclaiming on what just happened on stage.

Several times, I could not believe the ways Hugo and Ines made the puppets. I have never thought that a foot or the mouth would make good puppets, but as Hugo and Ines proved, they do.

Hugo Suarez, born in Lima, Peru, and Ines Pasic, born in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina were the puppeteers behind the genius presentation of "Short Stories."

These two were able to make their various parts of their bodies into seemingly real characters. I laughed out loud several times at the creativity of the puppet designs.

Hugo and Ines were natural per-

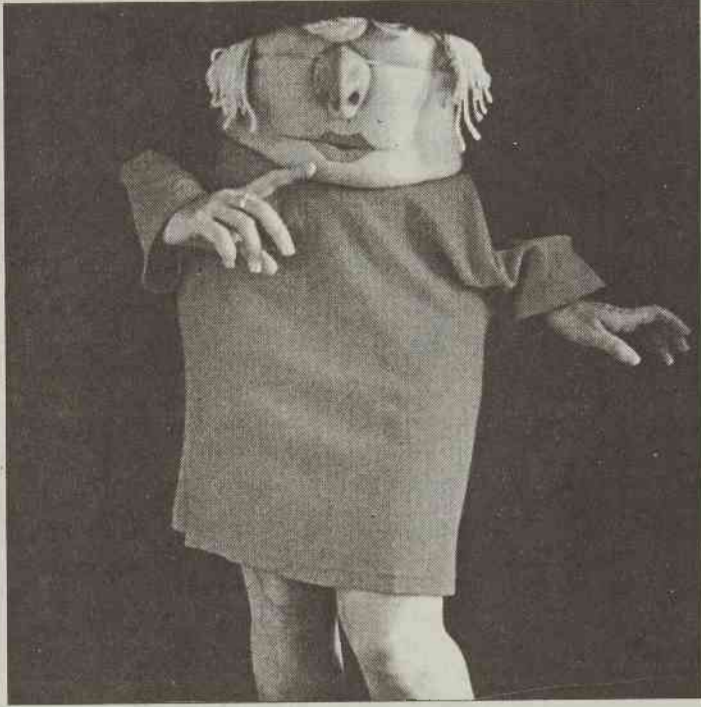


PHOTO COURTESY OF TEATRO HUGO AND INES

The puppeteers created life-like creatures out of their bodies.

formers, thus making each new puppet have a different personality. These puppets were definitely not the sock or finger puppets that first came to my mind.

"Combining mime, dance and puppetry, Hugo and Ines introduce us to a parade of memorable beings composed largely of knees, feet,

hands, elbows and a handful of

props, who, in their brief appearances on the scene, play out the poetic moments of everyday life," according to the promotional brochure.

I was bewildered at the dexterity of the puppeteers. They were able to make the most bizarre parts of their body, such as the belly button, look like a little person.

One puppet that Hugo did was a bald street musician who played a toy guitar for pennies. In actuality, it was just a red clown nose on Hugo's knee, an old men's shirt and his own two hands. This puppet was so frantic and animated that I was able to suspend reality to only see the puppet and forget that there was someone else making him move.

Another puppet that piqued my curiosity was one done by Ines. She put a baby-doll outfit on her hand and made it move around like a real person. She moved her fingers in such a way that made it look like the puppet was breathing and running. Ines gave the girl a shy personality by making her act as if the crowd scared her. The little puppet would take a few steps and then run back to hide her head behind Ines' leg, just as a real little child would do.

For one vignette, the usually all-

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Review

Review

Vincenzo's Ristorante

John Locke
Staff Writer

what the worm is to a bottle of Mezcal.

Vincenzo's has a bafflingly extensive wine list, ranging from house wines for less than \$20 to \$400 port wine. The waiter was helpful, especially after I said I had never bought wine with a cork in the bottle before. I recommend the house wines.

At first I was skeptical. The window of Vincenzo's Italian Ristorante unabashedly declares in loud neon, "piano bar" and "cigars." The atmosphere at the piano bar could be called self-consciously casual. Middle-aged post-yuppies leaned across tables at each other, nearly blinding each other as they gestured emphatically with massive cigars. There were cell phones.

Vincenzo's features an extensive menu of Northern Italian dishes. The entrees include pasta, beef, chicken, seafood and veal. The specialties of the house featured seafood and pasta, mostly. There was also a small selection of vegetarian entrees, although many of the pasta dishes not listed as such were also meatless.

I opted for the gnocci with gorgonzola. This pasta dish was excellent, although the leftovers were virtually indistinguishable from instant macaroni and cheese. I suppose this shows there's something to finely prepared, delicately flavored pasta that is impossible to recover.

I was accompanied by a friend who had the grilled salmon, which appeared to also be tasty. I am unable to report on it first hand, though, as she ate it all before I could grab a bite.

"The salmon was splendiferous," said Myra Lawson, an undecided sophomore, "It makes me glad I'm not vegan anymore."

One minor issue I had with the meal was the fact that they give you this massive entree - they suggested we move from our original table to a larger one because the food wouldn't fit on the former - but no side dishes. No matter how good pasta is, you want something to cut it with after a while. The bread was excellent, although bread and a dish of oil is to a nice Italian restaurant

As for the entertainment, it grew on me. I initially wrote off the pianist and her grand piano as just another part of the creepy lounge-lizard atmosphere. This was reinforced when she introduced "another great one by Elton John."

Like most other things about the place, though, the music grew on me. The singing pianist was very friendly and solicited requests, although she didn't know any Leonard Cohen or Tom Waits.

Speaking of Tom Waits, the piano bar reminded me of an upscale version of the lounge in "Bad Liver and a Broken Heart," the kind of place where businessmen drink dry martinis, talk to their cell phones more than to each other, and tell lies about their sex lives.

The Mountain Xpress Dining Guide recommends "nice casual" dress, which is about right. Loosen your tie, but try to have one. It's the sort of place where the customers have internalized so much new-money pretentiousness that rather than seeming stuffy, it's quite laid-back.

I would recommend Vincenzo's to anyone who likes flavorful, diverse Italian food. The prices are not inexpensive, generally falling between \$15 and \$25. However, where else in Asheville can you accompany uncommonly fine food with a cigar larger than your neck?

Vincenzo's Italian Ristorante, located downtown on N. Market St, is open for dinner seven days a week. The downstairs Bistro is a smoking zone, predominantly cigars, while the upstairs is non-smoking. Reservations are recommended at all times, and required on weekends.

Jag Star plays Barley's to rave review



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAG STAR

Jag Star, an eclectic new band, blends pop vocals and folk harmonies for a unique sound.

Kristina Elliott
Staff Writer

Barley's Taproom & Pizzeria really scored in booking Knoxville-based Jag Star to perform on Oct. 5. The show was free, but I doubt that you will catch this band without a cover charge once word gets out about their amazing talent.

Jag Star is quickly gaining notoriety in the Southeast. Their popularity has crossed state lines into North and South Carolina, and down into Atlanta as well. They were finalists in the 1999 Lilith Fair Talent Search in both Nashville and Charlotte.

The Jag Star performance was one of the few times that I have seen the crowd at Barley's really focused on the music. Every chair was turned to the stage, and conversation was minimal. The small audience appeared to be captivated by this extremely talented band and its smooth pop vocals.

The five-member band features Sarah Lewis on lead vocals and the mandolin, Erin Tipton on the violin and viola, J. Lewis on acoustic and electric guitar, Kenner Rawdon

on bass and Seamus Tierney on drums.

Their musical style is hard to categorize. I would say that they have one foot in sophisticated pop and the other in folk. They have a unique sound that provides a fantastic harmony that stays with you.

"We describe ourselves as an eclectic rock band, meaning that we mesh lots of styles together. People describe our sound in many different ways, which is cool because we know that it's not a monotonous sound," said Sarah Lewis.

Their rock-pop sounds interspersed with folksy rhythms create music that can either lull you into a dream filled sleep or make you listen attentively. Their performance showcased one excellent melody after another.

Sarah Lewis' enchanting voice seemed to float through the air at Barley's. She displayed an impressive range in her vocals. The haunting chords of the violin and viola add a splendid touch to the overall listenability of their songs, and allows them to explore many different types of music.

Jag Star's sound would attract almost any music lover. I dislike most pop music and I usually do not

listen to bands with female lead vocalists, but somehow I became a big fan of this band. I already own their CD, and I will definitely catch their next performance in Asheville.

"Our shows appeal to a wide range of people, including people who are into heavy rock, pop, female vocals, violins and strings and even people who are into world music," said Sarah Lewis.

The tight interaction with the instruments would lead you to believe that this band has been playing together for many years, but they have only been together since May 1999. Tierney has only been with the band for about a month. Things did not work out with their old drummer, and they were lucky enough to snag Tierney.

Tierney had previously performed with Jewel, Letters to Cleo, Tori Amos and Phil Driscoll. He hails from Boston, and his world tour with Driscoll landed him in Tennessee. He bought the band's CD and showed up for an audition.

"He was the missing link that we knew deep down we needed. He makes the music come together better. He knows where to go and

where not to go on the drums. He is not here to show off, he is here to take our sound to the next level. I think that he is already done that," said Sarah Lewis.

The band was originally formed by Sarah Lewis and her husband, J. Lewis. They recruited Tipton, who was classically trained on the violin. She had never attempted to play with a rock band, but obviously picked it up quickly.

They dragged Rawdon away from his punk roots and converted him to their more mellow style. His energetic influences add to the unique sound of Jag Star.

The band members all come from very different musical backgrounds, and they cite a varied list of musical influences. J and Sarah Lewis both listen to Dave Matthews Band, Jump Little Children, Tori Amos, No Doubt, Peter Gabriel and Angie Aparo. They actually played with Aparo at a previous performance.

Tipton is into Jeff Buckley and Rawdon likes Mr. Bungle and the Foo Fighters. Tierney finds his musical influences in a variety of music. All of the band members are inspired by the band VAST. They believe that this band and No Doubt will be strong influences on their next album.

J and Sarah Lewis were first inspired to pursue their musical ambitions by Jump Little Children. This band gave them the courage to work towards getting the band together, according to Sarah Lewis.

"Our main goal is to be able to make music without having to do anything else to put dinner on our table. We would love to travel all over the world playing Jag Star music, and I think we are working hard enough that we will do that someday. We are still a new band, but we know what we are capable of," said Sarah Lewis.

Tipton and Rawdon plan to graduate from the University of Tennessee soon, and the band will then increase their touring. Sarah Lewis hopes that she will be able to pass along some of her duties in booking, managing and promoting by then so that she can concentrate solely on their music.

Jag Star's audience is growing rapidly.

They hope that their unique style of music will have an impact on all of the music industry.

Review

The UNCA drama department hosts their Fourth Annual Haunted Theater on Oct. 26-31. The event converts Carol Belk Theatre into a house of horrors. A special children's "lights on" tour will begin at 6:30 p.m. nightly. The spooky adult tours begin at 7:30 and continue until 10 p.m.

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