

CONCERT REVIEW

The Triangle Area's newly-formed Real Women Productions brought two rapidly rising women's music stars, Lucie Blue Tremblay and Diedra McCalla to UNC's Carroll Hall October 24 in a concert co-sponsored by the Carolina Gay & Lesbian Association.

Tremblay's second North Carolina performance was equally mesmerizing as her first appearance at the Charlotte Indoor Women's Music Festival last winter. Tremblay, who is French Canadian, performed songs in both French and English. The English translations that she provided before each French song were almost unnecessary; she is so expressive that the audience can understand what she means without understanding the words.

Perhaps more amazing is her whistling. Tremblay doesn't whistle by puckering up her lips and blowing like most people do. Instead, she produces a deep whistle somewhere in her throat which she modulates by moving her lips. The effect is both unique and beautiful.

Tremblay has been touring the U.S. for several months and is obviously enjoying herself. She displayed her fascination with American accents and American folk music, even singing one song with a reasonably good Southern accent and a mischievous grin which delighted the audience. She dedicated one song to her father which had an American country music sound which he loved dearly. She even introduced the audience to her newest acoustic guitar, "Missy," whom she met in Albany, New York.

While Tremblay's part of the concert was gentle and romantic, Deidre McCalla's half was passionate and fun. She joked, clowned around on stage playing the air guitar, and told stories. On her mother's visit to McCalla's performance at the New England Winter Music Festival: "You haven't lived until you've tried to explain lesbian S&M camping to your mother".

In one song, dedicated to AVF (Adult Victims of Felines), she describes the problems involved with having a relationship with a cat owner. She advised the audience to accept the fact that "felines are a power greater than ourselves." Some of her songs had a serious side, too, dealing with suicide and her relationship with her mother.

McCalla's second album, "With a Little Luck" has just been released on Olivia Records. Produced by Teresa Trull and featuring Linda Tillery on backup vocals, "With a Little Luck" is a good follow-up to her critically acclaimed first album.

HATE CRIMES DOCUMENTED

As a result of lobbying by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), the American Psychological Association, the American Civil Liberties Union and other organizations, the House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice voted 5 to 2 in favor of the Hate Crime Statistics Act (H.R. 3193), a bill sponsored by Rep John Conyers (D-MI) that would mandate the federal collection of statistics on crimes based on sexual orientation, race, religion, and ethnicity. An amendment to remove the "sexual orientation" provision offered by Rep. George Gekas (R-PA) failed in a 4 to 3 vote with the Democrats present voting against the amendment and the Republicans voting for it.

"This vote is a victory for the gay community and all those concerned with ending crime motivated by bigotry," said Kevin Berrill, Director of the NGLTF Anti-violence Project. "It may well be the first time a positive bill with a 'sexual orientation' provision has ever passed a Congressional subcommittee. It is also an acknowledgement that anti-gay violence is a serious problem, one deserving greater official recognition and response."

During the debate on the amendment to remove the 'sexual orientation' clause, Rep. Patrick Swindall (R-GA) dismissed the arguments that the bill would help end violence against gay people, calling gays "sexual deviants" and comparing them with "rapists and child molesters." Commented Berrill, "Rep. Swindall's rhetoric was ugly and frightening and only served to underscore the need for this bill."

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