



Review: Cutting-edge styles fuse with klezmer at the Lied

By John Cutler / for the Lincoln Journal Star | Posted: Saturday, March 6, 2010 10:26 pm

It didn't take long for the Lied Center for Performing Arts crowd to warm up to Abraham Inc. on Saturday night.

The nine guys and guitarist Sheryl Bailey brought a fusion of hip-hop, rap and jazz venues together for what was billed as a "jubilant klezmer funk dance party."

Klezmer is the East European interpretation of Jewish folk music.

At the heart of this music is David Krakauer. His pioneering work with keyboarder-sampler-vocalist Socalled in the 1990s led to expansion of the group into the present venue.

But traditional culture was the influence for the opening "Baleboste," which quickly moved into a trip through the current music styles.

While Krakauer's music and clarinet talent was evident, Abraham Inc.'s other musicians came into play quickly.

"The H Tune" (Hava Nagila) quickly worked the traditional music into an excellent demonstration by trombonist Fred Wesley, who had a hand with Krakauer in writing and arranging the piece.

Quickly the other band members were pulled into the mix, all demonstrating excellent solo work. One of these was "Tweet-Tweet," with Krakauer offering the tweets on the clarinet while others took the solo lines.

The audience was quick to get into the "tweet" business too, and the musicians made sure the 800 people in the Lied crowd were in the middle of the show and 100 percent involved.

"It's Not The Same" was jazz, hip-hop and a taste of rap all in one, an excellent commentary on the group's approach to this eclectic blend of styles.

Patrons cheered and begged for more when the group left the stage, so Krakauer gave them what they wanted. Rapper C-Rayz Walz and Krakauer enticed the house to join in the rap lines, saying "We're Gonna Have a House Party."

The crowd yelled and clapped along, and bodies wouldn't stand still. It was clear by concert's end that Abraham Inc. had galvanized the crowd into loving what was done on stage.

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