



Emcee Steve Wolf introduces the next act for the open mike show, "This Could Be the Night," at the Rainy Day Cafe.

Artists, step right up to the stage

■ **OPEN MIKE:** "This Could Be the Night" moves to the Rainy Day Cafe

By Anne Moser-Kornfeld
Entertainment Editor

A scene from a largely cheesy, unknown film of the 1950s set the wheels of creativity in motion and inspired two friends originally from the Los Angeles area to take up the cause of revitalizing Eugene's downtown cafe scene.

Steve Wolf and University of Oregon comparative literature major Lauren Horwitch met in Eugene. Their shared interest in the performing arts and in vaudeville-type shows convinced them what Eugene needed most was a safe place to help nurture the talents of those people "who have been doing acts in the closets."

Every Tuesday night after 7:30 p.m. performers of all sorts arrive at the New Rainy Day Cafe to sign up for an open microphone event titled "This Could Be the Night."

The voice of Steve Wolf calls out to the crowd, "Ladies and Gentlemen, hold onto your

hats, because this could be the night!"

Beginning last Tuesday, the open microphone moved to The New Rainy Day Cafe at 50 E. 11th Ave. The cafe's new owners, Sharon and Lowell Eckhart, said they were pleased with the turnout at Tuesday's show.

"Everybody seemed to like the show. It was pretty much what I expected but every time is going to be different," Sharon Eckhart said.

That every show is different is what keeps the crowds coming in week after week. Wolf reminds potential participants "there is no control of the amount of variety or the material presented each week."

To prevent participants from feeling left out or jealous because they showed up late without securing a time to perform, names are thrown into a hat onstage and then drawn randomly.

Shortly after 8 p.m., the names of 12 acts are announced for what amounts to about a two-hour show — two songs or 10 minutes,

whichever comes first.

Irv, a poet and former University student, likes the format because it is all random.

"There are no biases and there's no hierarchy. There's always a chance to perform and no matter how good you think you are, there's a chance you don't get to go up," Irv said.

Wolf and Horwitch emcee the show and interact with one another, a little ad lib, a little slapstick.

But Calamity Lo, as Horwitch is called, said, "What we do is for the performers." She also said "there's a real concept of community that the open mike is building up."

One performer even went so far as to call in and ask the owners to slip a name in the hat just to ensure there might be a chance of reaching an audience.

And as Wolf said, with so many people showing each other there is no right way to do things. "This could be the night."

Non-abrasive 'Alice' still conveys its call for equality between sexes

■ **WOMEN:** Successful vaudeville-style musical addresses gender issues in a comic fashion

By Andrew Mayer
Freelance Reporter

"A... My name is Alice," said the cast, one after another.

The play, performed at Villard Hall's Arena Theatre, is written by Joan Micklin-Silver and Julianne Boyd, and was worth waiting a day to see, as I was out of luck with the sold-out Saturday evening show and had to buy tickets for the Sunday matinee.

THEATER REVIEW

A... My Name is Alice

Teresa Findorff-Johnson, Sandy Loew,
Valerie Herkert, Patricia Meade and
Rene Ragan

Director: Michael Phillips

★★★★

Director and piano man Michael Phillips played as his cast of five women acted out the 20 scenes dealing with issues of gender.

The play was a vaudevillian format and

presented two acts, which showed the playwrights' view of women in society as equal among themselves and among men in a way that was non-abrasive for the male audience, but was adamant enough to strongly convey the intended message of the need for equality between the sexes.

In fact the idea of a bleeding-heart feminist was satirized in a recurrent scene played by Patricia Meade, who had the audience laughing boisterously.

Also satirized was the idea of the repressed sexual desires of the prim and proper ladies of society that was played out by Teresa Findorff-Johnson, Valerie Herkert and Sandy Loew in the scene titled

"Pretty Young Men."

Rene Ragan got in on the fun with her satire "The French Monologue and Song," in which she seemingly identified all the different Western cultures that exist in America.

The music range allowed the actors to show off their voices. Not all scenes were musical, though, and those scenes were mixed in well to create a variety for the audience.

Plan ahead to get tickets for the evening shows, and see a matinee if it is sold out. Either way you cannot go wrong. Call the Mad Duck Theatre box office at 346-4192 for more information.

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