

*Walker concert  
enchants the BYUH  
audience*

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Ke Alaka'i

# Acclaimed singer brings Broadway to musical life

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~ Staff writer ~

The auditorium lights dimmed and the audience burst into applause as BYUH's very own Merrilee Webb stepped onto the stage at the beginning of Way Classics in Concert featuring Diana Walker. Webb took her place at the piano, leaving the audience to question who the singer was. As the congregation heard Diana Walker, they saw her.

Walker floated into the auditorium past rows of seats filled with students, faculty and community members, singing "I Have Danced All Night" from "My Darling Clementine," accompanied by Webb. Walker captivated the audience as she glided before their eyes into the lovely and memorable characters of the way classics.

While performing a piece entitled "Ice Cream," the audience erupted with laughter and applause in response to the personality she portrayed as a woman in love. It certainly helped that the chemistry between Walker and Webb was fantastic. "I was so passionate when it needed to be,"

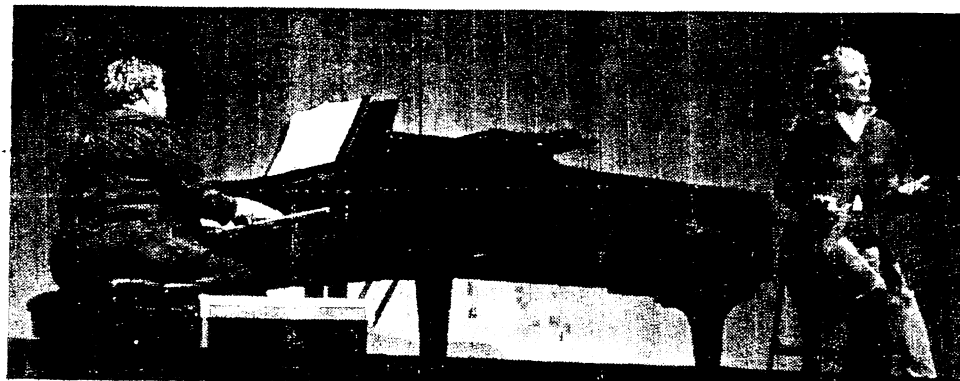


PHOTO BY NICOLE PARKINSON

Diana Walker, accompanied by Merrilee Webb, delights the McKay auditorium audience with a song.

Webb said, "It's fun to play for people who get into a song because then I can too."

Gerry Schwaker, a TESOL major from Switzerland, said that she was impressed with the "quality and sharpness of [Walker's] voice. I'm glad we have such shining stars that are members of the Church who can go throughout the world and share their talents."

"I think it's another way for the Lord to share the gospel because people can see His light in their countenances," Schwaker added. "I hope we'll have many people

who will follow her example as they study here at BYUH."

A highlight of the performance was "Kamehameha Waltz," which Walker lovingly dedicated to Auntie Genoa Keawe, referring to her as a "national treasure." Walker pointed out that the Hawaiian musician was given the National Endowment of the Arts and Culture Award in 2000, which is given to just 13 individuals nation-wide.

Walker expressed gratitude that her tour with the Phantom of the Opera in the early 1990's brought her to Hawaii.

Webb commented that Walker performed "difficult literature," or "songs that are very hard to sing and play."

Right before the intermission, Walker performed "Think of Me" from the "Phantom of the Opera," inserting an impressive section of the opera, "Romeo and Juliet."

"The performance was impressive," said Jayson Pagaduan, biochemistry major from the Philippines. "I loved the music. I think I will definitely go to this kind of program again."

Walker allowed the audience touching glimpses into her personal life. While introducing "Feed the Birds," she dedicated the song to her son Nicholas, saying, "Sometimes the things we wait for longest are the things we cherish most."

Megumi Masuda, a social work major from Japan said, "I enjoyed the music. She's great. It was nice entertainment. It [was] filled with the spirit of God. The organization of the show was well planned."

To students with dreams and goals, Webb encouraged, "Work for it. Don't let anyone tell you can't. We live in a world where if you work for it you can make it happen."