

Drag Divas ROCK Lyndon State

BY MARCIANN MAYER

It might have been billed as a battle, but on Saturday, October 17th, the Northeast Kingdom got a phenomenal demonstration of the power of acceptance and love. Divas Noel and Yolanda rocked Lyndon State College's Alexander Twilight Theatre with two great sets and some lively duets, while the audience chipped in with some lively aisle-dancing and a moving protest of anti-gay violence.

"The Battle of the Divas" was

ater to a newly planted tree. In a tribute to slain Wyoming student Matthew Shepard and a protest against hate crimes, each person tied a small rainbow ribbon onto its branches. Short, informal and deeply moving, the ceremony left a bright beacon on campus and a warm glow inside all those present.

Once back inside, it was Yolanda's turn to take the stage. A fixture on the Burlington scene, it was her Northeast Kingdom debut and she was out to impress. Accompanied by her band, The



During the concert intermission, members of the Lyndon State Gay/Straight Alliance planted a tree in remembrance of Matthew Shepard.

sponsored by *Out In The Mountains* and Lyndon State College's Gay-Straight Alliance. With about one hundred people in attendance, the music, dancing and laughter lasted for nearly three hours. The message of peace, protests against hate and violence and dozens of rainbow ribbons lingered on campus long afterward.

Local favorite Noel began the show with songs from her new album it's just a phase. Perhaps her most telling statement of the evening was from her song "Love Don't Need a Reason" when she sang "I don't want to fight, but know I'm gonna stay." It summed up the show's theme, helping to make people aware that violence is never the answer, and that hate will not destroy the existence of homosexuals, bisexuals, transgendered people, or anyone else.

Between sets, the audience and volunteers headed outside the the-

Plastic Family, Yolanda brought a unique energy to the stage in a set dedicated to joy, fun, and freedom. She was poignant in her dedication to Shepard: "You had a right to surrender, but I miss you just the same," but strong in her message to hate-mongers with a tune called "Eat Me." She stressed the overwhelming need for violence to end and acceptance to begin.

The concert began to draw to a close when Noel and Yolanda sang a series of duets. From the rousing "I'm Every Woman" to the haunting "The Crying Game" and the unifying "You've Got A Friend," they had the audience begging for more.

More came in the form of Noel's familiar finale: "The Love You're Looking For." The divas walked through the audience, shaking and grasping hands. It was a touching end to a difficult week and a powerful show. ▼

"The drag musical community spawns its most intriguing performer since RuPaul in the form of wildly charismatic Vermont-based tunesmith..."



YOLANDA is releasing her first CD project with her fabulous band The Plastic Family. The CD is entitled

YOLANDA & the Plastic Family... Welcome to YOLANDA WORLD

10 original songs written by **YOLANDA** and arranged by Adam Wood. Included on the CD is the song "Angels" that **Billboard Magazine** called:

"one of the strongest AC/pop compositions in months."

YOLANDA needs YOU to make this project a success!! If you order NOW you will receive the low, low pre-production price of \$10* for 10 original **YOLANDA** songs.

Each pre-production order will receive an autographed photo of **YOLANDA** and her now famous bumper sticker "YOLANDA IS MY CO-PILOT" free of charge.

name _____ send a \$10 check or money order
address _____ payable to Roger Mapes to:
phone _____ **YOLANDA's CD Project, PO Box 812,**
email _____ **Burlington, VT 05402**
of CDs ordered _____ **or contact 802-865-0385,**
Yolandaman@aol.com/yolandavt

<http://members.aol.com/yolandavt>