

ENTERTAINMENT

Star Trak: amateur singers become stars

by Lisa Neilsen

guest writer

If you think your sound is great in the shower and you have fantasized about showing your singing on stage 25-year-old Gary Hansen may be your stepping stone to stardom.

Hansen, known to his Carlos Murphey fans as "Gary G." brought *Sound Trek* to Las Vegas in Sept. 1986.

Sound Trek is the show that gives the audience a chance to be the star.

During the show an audience member can choose one of over 400 songs to sing on stage.

The singer is provided with background music, the words to the song, and an echo chamber which improves the sound of the individual's voice. Participants are aided by

various props and usually a few good drinks. After singing the audience member is given a tape of the performance free of charge.

Hansen first learned about *Song Trek* at Luigi Murphey's, a bar near his home in Stockton, Calif. He had always wanted to sing during the *Song Trek* show but was too nervous. Hansen explained, "One night aided by a couple of beers I got up the courage to sing. The guy liked me and asked me to work for him." That month Hansen began flying to Las Vegas every week to do the show at Carlos Murphey's.

About seven months later Hansen signed a contract with Sneakers Bar and Grill and made Las Vegas his home. In June 1987, he added the Brass Monkey to his list of

places he performs.

Hansen became interested in singing at a

"I have fun on stage, it's what I enjoy and I'm getting paid for it." Hansen

time; I'm in control."

Currently Hansen is trying to improve his act. "I really don't know anything about anything. I'm trying to catch up," Hansen said. Hansen is learning to play guitar and keyboard. "I want to learn to be more than just a singing person on stage," Hansen said. "I want to do more comedy. I also want to develop more stage presence and become adept at handling a crowd."

Aside from working for *Song Trek* Hansen provides entertainment for private parties and weddings. He went to Canada on Nov. 11 for one week to emcee a dance revue called *Grin and Bear it Girls*.

Hansen plans to work in Japan for three months to emcee a dance revue

featuring female dancers from Las Vegas. If he doesn't go to Japan he will work at Carlos Murphey's in San Diego for three weeks. He also may work at Carlos Murphey's in Tucson, Ariz for three months but he said, "They'll have to pay me more."

Hansen's short-term goal is to be comparable to Tommy Rocker and Chuckie—both are entertainers at Carlos Murphey's—his long-term goal is to be a serious musician.

If you would like to see or participate in the *Song Trek* show Hansen performs at Carlos Murphey's every Sunday and Monday and at the Brass Monkey each Wednesday and Saturday night.



young age. "I was always singing around the house ever since I was a kid," Hansen said. Surprisingly Hansen has never taken singing lessons.

Hansen likes his work.

prefers being a one man act, he said, "Being a solo act is a lot easier than being in a group, you make more money and don't have to worry about finding new people all the

Fine Arts Briefs

The University Wind Ensemble presents an evening of music featuring special guest percussionist Steve Houghton on Tuesday, November 24 at 8 pm at UNLV's Artemus Ham Concert Hall with musical selections ranging from the classics of Mozart to the modern sounds of Childs.

Guest Steve Houghton is one of the brightest new faces on the Los Angeles

music scene. He currently performs and records with Tribal Tech, the highly acclaimed new jazz/rock ensemble headed by innovative young guitarist Scott Henderson. He has also played with the big bands of Woody Herman, Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin and the Freddie Hubbard Quartet as well as appearing in solo symphonic performances with orchestras

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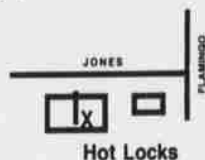
nationwide and in Canada.

Houghton is presently an instructor at the Hollywood-based Percussion Institute of Technology and has served as staff clinician for Yamaha. His recording resume reads like a *Who's Who* of jazz and popular music, and he maintains a heavy studio schedule, ranging for television,

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