

Human body and fabrics provide subject for vases

By Janet Lliteras

She uses soft pastel blues for the background of her pottery. She etches a human figure in clay with orange, yellow and green. The figure is shaped around the body and neck of the porcelain vase so that the body becomes the vase and the vase becomes the body.

This work is typical of Prilla Brackett, self-taught artist.

Her porcelain vases, plates and oil pastel drawings are on display until March 13 at the Haymarket Art Gallery, 119 S. 9th St.

Dressed in faded blue overalls, her sleeves rolled up to the elbow, Brackett took time out from her UNL art class to talk about her work.

"I'm dealing with the voluptuous content," she said.

The artist said she uses the "imagery from the human body and patterning taken from fabrics," to create her vases and drawings.

"I like the sensuous feel of porcelain, graphite, oil and pastel," she added.

Brackett, 34, mother of two boys, has been involved in many art shows, mainly in California where she has lived for the past 11 years. She gave a one-woman show called "Porcelain and Paper" in Hayward, California.

She came to Nebraska in July 1976 when her husband changed jobs. She began taking art classes at UNL and said she is officially classified as an "unclassified grad student."

"I'm basically a self-taught artist," she

added. Raised in Connecticut, she received a bachelor's degree from Sarah Lawrence College in New York and a master's degree from the University of California at Berkeley, but her education was in social sciences, not art.

"I felt futile, frustrated. I wanted to do something more satisfying personally," such as counseling. She said her career was decided on, but when a friend asked her, "Have you ever thrown a pot before?", she replied she hadn't.

She said after the first time she worked with clay she was hooked.

"I jumped into it completely," she said, her former career was forgotten so she did not go back to school.

She began working with clay in 1968 at Berkeley, getting help from her friends and taking a few evening art courses.

Then she took up drawing in 1973 while she was in San Francisco.

"I'm in school now to try out things I didn't do when I was in school before," she explained.

She added her classes at UNL are making up the undergraduate credits she never got.



Photo by Kevin Higley

Prilla Brackett takes time out to relax in her home studio with her son Matthew.

arts and entertainment

Films

Rape victim relates film story to male experience

Review by Michael Zangari

In 1962, Martha Coolidge was raped. It wasn't a sordid back alley affair, but involved statistically what is a more common experience. She was raped by someone she knew in the course of a date.

Coolidge was 16 at the time.

Not A Pretty Picture, at Sheldon this week, is her painstaking reconstruction of the assault and the immediate after effects.

The film manages to be a very human document, rather than just a feminist vehicle. Much of the film's power comes from being able to address the male experience as well as the female.

Intercutting the fictionalized rape account with a

documentation of the actual film making, Coolidge deals honestly with her own feelings, and those of the two major roles.

Actress Michele Manenti who in reality also was raped and actor Jim Carrington, are shown improvising through scenes, breaking down in the course of a sequence and discussing their feelings with each other and Coolidge.

New power

By making the film's production part of the story, Coolidge opens the field to an entirely different type of power.

The examples are legion. In one particularly violent scene, Carrington scares himself with his own aggression. In another he and Manenti fall exhausted into each other's arms, and throughout Coolidge looks on, hand over her mouth, mixing her personal pain with a quiet obsession.

It is reminiscent of the American Indian tradition of

exorcising pain from a past event, by recreating it.

Carrington's self exorcism, and reflections on the adolescent experience is sometimes abrasive, and sometimes enveloping, something that can be said about the entire film.

It is a very real movie, so real in fact, that there is an urge to talk to Coolidge at length about it.

After seeing the film, I made attempts at calling her, with no prepared questions or no direction really, just a desire to perhaps complete the cycle, to be assured that it indeed was a real story.

The frustration that came with being unable to reach her initially was soothed later when I reached her in L.A.

Real Film

She indicated her initial fear was that it would be "just another story" and said that she meant the film to be very real.

Although there are moments of awkward dialogue and some crude acting, she achieves that, if not by straight forward documentation, by subliminal emotional power.

In dealing with the after effects of the rape, Coolidge admits she isn't able to have a completely trusting relationship with a man.

In the story, she worries about pregnancy and tries to deal with the ignorance of the other women in her dormitory who write "whore" on her door and spit on her.

Continued on p. 13



Photo by Kevin Higley

Basil Mihiripenna performed the Ves Dance, a traditional Sun worship dance ritual from Sri Lanka, India, Wednesday night in the Union Ballroom.

Sri Lanka dancer conveys lifestyle, universe's rhythm

In Eastern Indian tradition, it is taught that sound is God. Indian music's history is more than 4000 years old. It has been handed down from "guru" to "shishya" (teacher to pupil) and recorded in Sanskrit verses. Indian dance symbolizes the life and death rhythm of the universe.

The combination of Sri Lanka dance and music tries to convey Eastern Buddhist philosophy and lifestyle, according to Basil Mihiripenna, Sri Lanka dancer, who performed Wednesday in the Nebraska Union ballroom.

He added that it is the Western tendency to perform for the sake of entertainment, but Eastern performing is connected to the spiritual development of a man.

Dance purifies the body and requires concentration, which is connected to meditation and the spiritual aspect, Mihiripenna said.

He performed traditional and modern Sri Lanka dance and music, along with flutist Anil Mihiripenna (his brother) and drummer D. R. Pieris.

Costumes are an important expression of Eastern Philosophy, he said. Each costume is designed for only one dance. One traditional costume takes him an hour to put on.

Mihiripenna trained five years under the foremost Kathakali dancer in Kerala State, India. He has toured China, the U.S.S.R., Pakistan, India and the U.S. He won the International Dance Festival prize at the Moscow Festival in 1957.

Mihiripenna directs a dance troupe in India and writes and produces ballets with his brother's help.

"We are from a musician's family," he said. Although ballet can be compared to modern ballet, the movements are different. They show tradition and history of the East, he said.

Mihiripenna said when he dances he "concentrates about the way dance is performed. If anything else comes to mind it is a failure."

He added that he is confident he will not be disturbed while dancing, which helps lead to spiritual enlightenment.

Graduate student wins opera award

Vaughn Fritts, a UNL graduate student, went to Minneapolis, last month, sang "Come dal ciel precipita" and came back \$100 richer.

He attended the Upper Midwest Regional Metropolitan Opera auditions and won the Mr. Austin D. Ditzler award.

Fritts, 23 of Omaha, is a native of Lincoln. He is working towards his master of music degree. Fritts said he entered the contest to get experience. He wants to be a performer.

"It's such an ify thing," he said. "Performance is something you can't expect to do: It's something you hope will happen."

It takes persistence, he said and lucky breaks. Entering contests gives him experience, he explained. He has competed two years at the regional level. He said he has sung in the UNL operas for the past five years.

Fritts said he wants to sing with a small opera company after graduation to get more experience and eventually sing in one of the larger companies such as the New York City Center Opera Co.

"It's really hard to get started," he said. "The competition is stiff."

If he can't make it as a performer he will be content to teach music at the university level, Fritts said.

"I'm in a performing art," he explained. "When the opportunity to better yourself comes along, you go ahead and do it. The experience won't go to waste and can always be used in teaching."

As for his \$100 prize, "I've already spent it," he said, "and I haven't even received the check yet." He bought a new carburetor for his car.

Collegiate band plays

The UNL Collegiate band will present a free mid-winter concert tonight in Kimball Recital Hall at 8.

The concert, directed by Robert Fought, UNL asst. band director, features the UNL woodwind quintet.

Program highlights are: "A Jubilant Overture" by Alfred Reed, "The Seventh Seal" by Francis McBeth and the quintet will play Newell Long's "Concertino for Woodwind quintets."