

Photographs capture the weirdness of everyday things

Review By Jim Williams

Some major midwestern galleries still don't seem to take photography seriously—but the Nebraska Union main lounge isn't really a major gallery. Maybe that's why they feel no qualms in scheduling two photo exhibits back-to-back—Hungarian professional Peter Korniss' last week and UNL senior Steve Boerner's beginning today.

The inevitable comparison is interesting. When looking at Korniss' exhibit last week, with its straight records of Hungarian folk costumes, I wondered, "Would anyone pay attention to these photos if they'd been taken in eastern Nebraska instead of eastern Europe?"

Now we'll know the answer. One section of Boerner's show is devoted to what could be called American folk costumes, showing people doing what American folks do. The rites and occasions are typical—the hoopla surrounding a Nebraska football game, the Burwell rodeo, a street festival and so on.

The photographs in this section show Boerner's background in news photography—he used to be a photographer for the *Daily Nebraskan* and was chosen the 1975-77 Nebraska Press Photographers Association's college photographer of the year this spring. The photos are straight, unmanipulated "human interest," with the focus on expression and content.

"I just liked the way they were,"



Sandhills, Nebraska
March, 1976

Photo courtesy of Steve Boerner

Boerner said of the photos in this group. But well-done as these pictures are, they struck me as being just that—well-done newspaper photos. There is not enough background information for the viewer to put himself into the situations Boerner was recording, to share the experience.

The other group of photographs, though, needs nothing but what's there. This shorter-section of the exhibit contains not one living being. The subjects are skies, buildings, rocks, water, graveyards—and much as I usually hate photos of dumb objects, just standing there, these were actually pretty good.

Boerner is an expert printer, and this section shows his abilities in working with delicate gradations of light and dark.

Ever see a sunset photo that really looks great in black and white? There's one in the exhibit.

More than that though, Boerner captures the weirdness you find in everyday things when you behold them in one sudden instant, instead of the rambling, half-interested look you really give them.

I must admit, Boerner is a friend of mine, although not so good I can not say there are some pretty boring photos in his show. But on the whole, I like them. If you like landscape art or good newspaper photography, you probably will too.

In fact, if Boerner were Hungarian, he would probably have it made.

Theatre

Students on spot in theatre show

Review by Jerry DeLorenzo

When actors depend on suggestions from the audience, often their ability to create humorous situations is "on the spot."

Appropriately named, "On The Spot" is an experiment in improvisational theatre in which five actors take ideas from the audience and work them into a pre-planned frame. The show played last weekend after the performance of the Howell Theatre production *Merry Wives of Windsor* Friday and Saturday nights in Temple Bldg. 310. The show will be presented by the Union Program Council Tuesday and Thursday in the Nebraska Union Small Auditorium at 12:30 p.m. "On The Spot" also will continue playing after *The Merry Wives of Windsor* on Friday and Saturday.

Two of what seemed to be the better improvisations of Saturday night's performance were a fairy tale and a recent event. When the actors asked for a recent event, a member of the audience shouted, "Oil spills in the North Sea." The actors showed how six different religions would handle the problem of oil spills.

This was done using mainly the technique of a minister, preacher, priest or rabbi lecturing to the congregation about the problem.

When the actors asked for a fairy tale, "Hansel and Gretel" was the response from one member of the audience. The actors then showed how different playwrights, including Tennessee Williams, Anton Chekov, Harold Pinter, Sophocles and William Shakespeare, would have written the fairy tale.

Since the show depends on the actors' abilities to create situations, not all the improvisations brought thunderous laughter from Saturday's audience of about 20.

But during the funny sketches, the audience could appreciate the actors' quick thinking and ability to create impromptu situations.

Graduate student Jay Perry, who teaches the improvisation class in which the show's actors are enrolled, said the secret of improvisational theatre is "freedom within the form."

"The process involves every acting skill," he said. "I never know if the show is going to work or not."

Weekend performances cost 75 cents but the Tuesday and Thursday shows in the Union are free. Profits from the show will be used to help hire an instructor to teach workshops in the Theatre Dept., Perry said.

The actors for the shows interchange so everyone in the class gets a chance to do a show, Perry said. The actors in Saturday night's show were Judy Zimmerman, Eric Sorenson, John Koch, Paula Langdon, Dave Beins and musical director Doug Anderson playing piano.

Concert combines biofeedback, Moog

The Lincoln Improvisation Ensemble, directed by Randall Snyder, will present a concert of new music and two premieres of multi-media works at Kimball Recital Hall at 8 tonight.

An original play, *The Grand Admiral* by Robert Beadell, will be directed by Jay Perry. It will attempt to expose the myth of Christopher Columbus with historical fact, showing that the real Columbus was a greedy, religious fanatic and his exploits in the New World were those of a pirate, Beadell said.

Musician uses pyramid power

By Carla Engstrom

Music is just as necessary to survival as food, according to Stanley Capps, who has lived by his motto for most of his life.

Capp, a composer and musician, has been teaching jazz in Lincoln since 1924. He teaches piano lessons and in 1924 copyrighted a progressive chord system for playing.

The system is called Capps System of Modern Piano



Photo by Kevin Higley

"We are all meant to be musicians, for we are all born with a built-in musical instrument in our bodies—a voice."

—Stanley Capps, composer and musician.

Mike Bergtraesser's *You've Got a Lot of Nerve* uses biofeedback instruments that present five different life situations, ranging from meditative to the sexual by way of program tape and slides. The performer's response to these situations will be monitored through various combinations of four different biofeedback instruments attached to a studio Moog synthesizer.

"*You've Got a Lot of Nerve* is the first known piece of its genre to be performed in Nebraska," Snyder said.

Harmony. Students learn to play chords in every key with his system, Capps said.

The 80-year-old musician said he can teach a student to play in every key during the first lesson. His system uses a chord chart that is put on the piano keys.

"It's like a slide rule and it analyzes the chords," he said.

For Capps, there are two kinds of music, classical and jazz. Jazz or folk music is the true American music, it encompasses ragtime, dixie-land, blues and rock 'n roll, Capps said.

Objected to jazz

Capps was raised in a musical family since his mother owned a studio and taught piano lessons. But she did not believe a mother should teach her own child, Capps said. So after taking music lessons elsewhere and learning to play popular music, Capps said he ran into some trouble because his mother played classical music and objected to his playing jazz.

But that did not stop Capps. He played vaudeville, performed professionally and kept composing music and experimenting with other facets of life.

The composer started doing research work in what has been commonly labeled pyramid power. He makes and tests different sizes of pyramids. He said he can make the finest wine overnight, preserve fruit, recharge batteries, sharpen razor blades and purify tap water by placing the objects under a pyramid.

"Nobody knows how it really works, but they have to be made according to the measurements of the pyramids in Egypt," he said.

Capps said he and his wife sleep with a pyramid under their bed and he has one hanging over his piano. "I think I've been able to stimulate my brain power to arrange music."

Pyramid power is nothing like a pet rock, it's not an overnight sensation and it doesn't have anything to do with faith," he said.

Humans have a force field around them just as the pyramids that produce some kind of force or power, Capps said.

Fine, smooth wine

To experiment, Capps said he got a bottle of Thunderbird wine from a friend who had to quit drinking. The wine was the cheapest his friend could buy so Capps put a glass of it under a pyramid overnight and said it produced a fine, smooth wine that tasted like it was aged.

He also said plants watered with tap water that has been put under a pyramid develop almost twice as fast as plants watered with plain tap water.

Possibly the Egyptian mummies were preserved for so long because they were buried in pyramids, Capps said. Supposedly, as in King Tutankhamen's tomb, a third of the way up is the most powerful spot, so to sharpen a razor blade, one should place it a third of the way under the apex of the pyramid, according to Capps.

Like the pyramid, music is age old. "The human voice is the most beautiful musical sound of all. Musical instruments are merely imitations," Capps said.

"The first musical lesson was a mother singing a lullaby to her baby," he added.

Music is part of the vibrations and very energy that surround humans just like pyramid powers, Capps said.