

arts/entertainment

Exhibition contributes to art professors' vitality

Review By Penelope M. Smith

UNL students and members of the community will have the opportunity to see what faculty members consider some of their best works over the past year at the Sheldon Gallery Art Faculty Exhibit.

The exhibit, at one time a biennial affair, is now an annual event. Faculty members are expected to exhibit in regional shows and competitions throughout the year, but this is an opportunity to show their work in their own environment.

"It's generally expected for our faculty to exhibit regularly," said Dan Howard, chairman of the art department. "Here at our annual show, we depict the current efforts of the studio art faculty in their individual creative activities."

Howard explained teaching studio classes can be taxing, and that such exhibits contribute to the continuing vitality of the professors as artists. In turn, they act as food for thought for student artists of the university and community, he said.

"It is vitally important for our studio faculty to continue to do work in their own field of endeavor, to keep themselves at the cutting edge of the discipline, but it also has vital pedagogical implications. We have to show that we practice what we teach and teach what we practice," Howard said.

Considering art department

The exhibit also is a good place, Howard said, for art students in the department and those wondering what the UNL art program is about.

"The exhibit gives the student a keener understanding as to what the department is about. It clarifies our attitudes and orientation," Howard said.

In UNL's case, Howard said, an exhibit that illustrates the art faculty's orientation is of special importance because the university offers a master's of fine arts—the terminal degree for a studio artist. In the graduate program, the artist emphasizes his own performance and production while the faculty serves as a guide.

Howard said he believes because of the nature of their

profession, that the art faculty has an advantage other UNL departments don't.

"The exhibit isn't like a paper or a thesis. We have a tangible way to put our best foot forward before the public because works of art are visible and visual. It's an advantage and a responsibility. We consider it incumbent upon us to be both productive and to support the program in order to facilitate the quality of curricular offerings," he said.

Almost every medium

The pieces in the faculty art exhibit represent almost every possible medium and there is something in it for everyone.

Patrick Rowan, a sculptor, has a number of very large pieces in the show. Most interesting among these is "Lake

Effect Installation No. 1," a construction of wooden limbs on braces which extend the length of the walkover at Sheldon.

David F. Routon is an artist who uses oil emphasizing areas of color and the expressive quality of line. His "Portrait of Barbara Hopkins" is a study in red oranges with a feeling of unrest echoed in the angry set of the mouth.

The exhibition pieces by Lynn Soloway mainly are pastels with a brooding romanticism and classical themes like "Oberon's Titania."

Doug Ross has both pastels and constructions in the show of welded and painted steel reminiscent of Kandinsky. Gail Butt is a painter whose series of large paintings of solid objects floating in a wet, almost frozen haze are accompanied by poetry.

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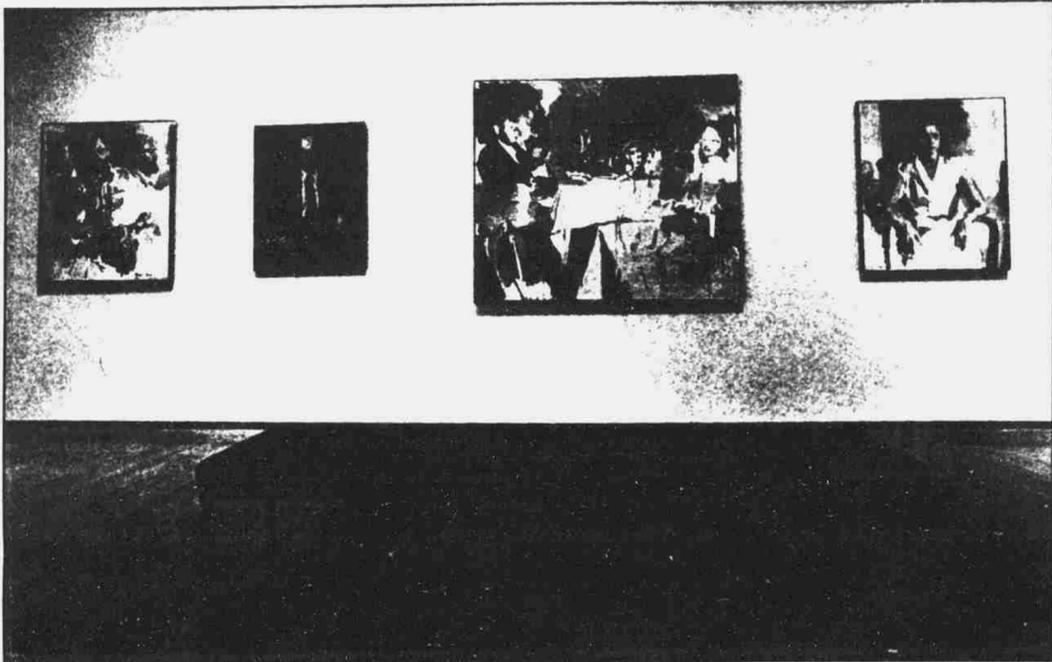


Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

Foreign film about homosexuals will upset some

By Pete Schmitz

The French-Italian production of *La Cage Aux Folles* (Birds Of A Feather), released last year, has become the largest grossing foreign film in America. This is quite surprising since its heroes are a middle-aged homosexual couple that has lived together for 20 years.

Unlike most other pictures dealing with homosexuality, which homosexuals either love or hate, this movie has polarized homosexuals who have seen it.

movie review

In many ways, this comedy is refreshingly ahead of its time, as it deals with the problems homosexuals have had with aging, long-term commitments and children from heterosexual relationships.

The balding and temperamental Zaza is afraid that his better looking lover, Renato, will leave him for someone else. While Renato often finds his partner hard to tolerate, he sticks with him because Zaza makes him laugh, and because he owns 80 percent of their thriving nightclub.

Complications

The comedy centers on the complications that occur when Renato's son Laurent becomes engaged to the daughter of the Deputy of Moral Order. After a lot of deliberation and some hurt feelings (with a delightful twist of the Oedipal theme), Renato and Zaza submit to Laurent's request to play it straight when the prospective in-laws come for a visit.

But the real difficulty, and most of the film's funniest scenes, emerge when the couple practices at being macho and when Renato seeks the help of his son's sexually aggressive mother, who has not been seen since the son was an infant.

Some will inevitably be upset by the portrayal of the couple. Yet criticism of this kind of non-exploitative stereotyping ignores the truth that certain stereotypes are grounded in.

Accept lifestyle

As the film progresses, Zaza and Renato realize they

should accept the life-style and mannerisms that they chose. The most revealing aspect of this story occurs when Renato, the supposedly "masculine" partner, discovers he is not free from vanity, "feminine" affectations, and emotional outbursts. And, ironically, it is the seemingly self-centered and scatter-brained Zaza who wards off disaster.

The novelty of this movie is one of its strongest points, because in the end this domestic comedy amounts to an "I Love Lucy In Drag." Although both men discover hidden aspects of their personalities, the film ends with Zaza whining to Renato in a daffy fury that reminds one of Lucy and Ricky.

The first sequence is also disturbing. Zaza, in a state of sulky depression, teases and provokes his lover into hitting him, thus perpetuating the myth of the feminine partner who asks to be slapped around once in a while.

Superb performances

The performances of Ugo Tognazzi (Renato), Michel

Serrault (Zaza), and Benny Luke (as the couple's black "maid," who grudgingly and hilariously sings spirituals while preparing for the arrival of the in-laws) are all superb. The one performance that was under par, however, was Remi Laurent's portrayal of Laurent. He is so cold and demanding that one finds it hard to believe his parents were Renato and Zaza. Throughout the movie I wondered why this couple had gone through so much bother for the stuffy brat.

When all is said and done, *La Cage Aux Folles* will probably be forgotten and even ruined by forthcoming sequels (one has just been released and the story is set in an espionage-spy genre). It certainly won't be admired by all homosexuals and their sympathizers. But as flawed as the film may be, it should be seen and studied so that in the future we will have better movies dealing with the lives of homosexuals.

La Cage Aux Folles is showing this Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Sheldon Film Theater.

Fans ready for 'Super Watch'

I think I am going to hire somebody to watch the Super Bowl for me. I realize I should watch the game myself, that I have a responsibility as an American to watch not only the game, but the 30 or 40 hours of pregame programming that accompanies it. The fact of the matter is, I just don't have the stamina or the interest to watch.

pat clark

When the year started, I thought, even vowed, that this was the year when I would watch the Super Bowl. I went into training.

First I went in for a medical examination. My doctor was less than enthusiastic about my decision to watch the game:

"Kid, I know I can't stop you from going through with this idea of yours," said my doctor as he checked my

blood pressure, "but I don't think you fully realize what you are getting into. What kind of exercise program have you been following?"

"You mean jogging, lifting weights, that kind of stuff?"

"No, for heaven's sake, no!" said my doctor. "That's the worst thing you can do. These people who watch the Super Bowl and all of the fanfare that goes with it are

highly specialized, exceptional physical specimens. They can sit in reclining chairs for eight to 12 hours nonstop, blinking no more than thrice an hour as they stare at the television set. They did not get so unconsciously, terminally shiftless overnight. This is something they have been building up to since the preseason exhibition games. No, if you are going to carry off your plan to watch this game, you're going to have to learn how to minimize your desire to move. Weightlifting, jogging, basketball and the like are out, starting right now."

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