

Arts & Entertainment

Filmmaker links snippets, creates movie

By Julie Liska
Staff Reporter

A filmmaker who uses no camera? Impossible as this may sound, Bruce Conner, whose films will play at Sheldon Film Theatre, does just that.

Conner's unique films consist of various obscure footage, spliced together

to create new material. According to Conner, this method of combining film snippets into a creation of his own was "one way of making films on a small budget."

Conner's films are short. Including his first work, which was released in 1958, titled "A Movie," Conner has made about 14 films. Combined, these

movies are no more than two hours in length.

The movie's short length, however, is no indication of the amount of work put into the films. For example, "Looking for Mushrooms," which is three minutes long, took Conner a total of five years to make. "The amount of time spent on a film," Conner says, "depends a lot on the amount of available footage."

phenomena of an atomic bomb is really like. Few individuals actually see the proportion of the atomic bomb."

Serious as Conner's "Crossroads," is, however, his films also have a lighter side. "Breakaway" is composed of footage shot by Conner himself, and is a fast-paced account of women dancers. The film provides a sarcastic look at the emphasis society puts on sex. "Permian Strata" is ironically set to the song "Everybody Must Get Stoned" and consists solely of material from a Biblical movie, which includes — yes — a man being stoned.

Each of Conner's films has a separate and unique personality. Although the films are largely abstract, each creates its intended impact on the audience through the use of background music, unique images and consistent editing. Often, the music and film complement each other so well, it appears the two were made for each other. Present in all of the works is a sophisticated irony which is Conner's own.

Conner attributes his unique filmmaking technique to a comedy he saw as a child. He had always enjoyed a Marx Brothers' movie titled, "Duck

Soup," in which various animals were involved in a ridiculous chase scene. Conner kept imagining how he could add on to the film and this curiosity led him to his present fame.

Conner is also a noted sculptor and painter who has attained numerous awards for his many talents. He received a bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Nebraska in 1956. However, Conner's filmmaking excellence is because of his own hard work, since the university offered no film classes at that time and Conner has had little formal film training.

Cost is one of the biggest factors in Conner's movies. In "America Is Waiting," in which Conner did only the titles, \$4,000 was needed. The movie Conner currently is working on is titled, "The Soul Stirrers: By and By." The film will be about 90 minutes long and require a total of \$400,000 to make. Presently, Conner is trying to fund the task, which already has cost \$105,000.

Several of Conner's films will be featured at Sheldon Film Theatre Saturday and Sunday. Bruce Conner will attend the evening screenings to discuss his work with the audience.

REVIEW MOVIE

Conner finds his footage in various places. Cuttings for "Crossroads" was taken from the National Archives. In a few of his earlier films, such as "White Rose," "Breakaway" and "Looking for Mushrooms," shot most of his own material.

"Crossroads," which is Conner's longest film (36 minutes), consists entirely of atomic bomb tests in the Pacific Ocean. Conner said he made such a lengthy film on atomic bombs because "they are fascinating, frightening and sometimes beautiful. I wanted people to be aware of what the

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HOT SPOTS

At the Temple

- **The Rules of the Game** continued performances tonight at 8 p.m. through Feb. 23 at the Temple Building's Studio Theatre. The story by Nobel Prize-winning author Luigi Pirandello weaves the elements of farce, melodrama and manipulation, challenging audiences to decide who is controlling whom. It examines the roles men and women play to meet what they see as society's expectations.

Television

- **Julie and Dick in Covent Garden** airs on Channel 12 at 8 tonight. With London's colorful landmark, Covent Garden, as the backdrop, Julie Andrews salutes wartime London in song and performs a medley from a Broadway musical. Guest stars are Dick Van Dyke and Carl Reiner.

Around Town

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