

# Arts & Entertainment

Business expands

## Picture Man crew shoots the state

By Lisa Olsen  
Staff Reporter

The mild-mannered UNL business school graduate dons his yellow shirt, grabs his camera, two flashes, four sets of batteries, 10 to 30 rolls of film and hits the party. Charlie Mohrman is no ordinary party goer. He's a picture man.

As a picture man, Mohrman works with the largest photography manpower force in Nebraska. The Picture Man, 1630 O St., a special events photography service, employs about 30 photographers in Lincoln, Kearney, Grand Island and Omaha, Mohrman said. The company also has two or three "picture women."

Owner Bob Olsen (whose portrait appears in the Picture Man logo emblazoned on every yellow shirt), bought a fledgling campus photography service 11 years ago. He and his employees have been shooting and selling party pictures ever since.

In an average week, Olsen said, Picture Man photographers will photograph about 12 events. Most of his photographers' time is spent shooting college parties, Olsen said. Picture men also photograph proms, graduations, reunions and more than 100 weddings each year.

Olsen says that "personality is 75 to 80 percent of a picture man's job."

"You need someone who can dive into a strange group and have fun with them," he said.

As a picture man, Mohrman dives into strange groups all over the state. His job has taken him to places like Kearney, Tecumseh and Brainard.

At one wild party at a Hollidome in York he was almost thrown into a pool — camera and all. At the same party his camera was taken, but it was returned about a half hour later. Other picture men have been less lucky with their equipment.

One picture man ran over his camera case, crushing an expensive company camera and flash. Another had a full beer poured into the open back of his camera as he was reloading his film.

Working as a picture man has given Mohrman, a former high school yearbook photographer, a chance to get paid for something



Troy Phipps/Daily Nebraskan

he likes to do. Besides his better-than-minimum wage salary, there are fringe benefits to being a picture man, Mohrman said. He's allowed to dance and even drink on the job.

"As long as you don't overindulge so that it affects your job it's OK," Mohrman said.

He's even accepted some date offers he has received as a picture man. Some of them turned out OK, he said.

But being a picture man isn't all dates and beer.

In a single evening, a picture man might work four to six hours with no break and no dinner hour, Olsen said. Hearing "Picture Man!" yelled over and over gets old after two or three hours, Mohrman said.

"Sometimes they start grabbing your jacket. You turn and shoot in a circle — you don't even stop shooting," he said.

He also occasionally has to deal with two or

three picture hogs — people who want to be photographed with literally everyone else at the party. Other times, he has to almost beg to get people to pose for him.

"You can tell when they're on a first date," Mohrman said.

At most parties he shoots four or five rolls of film in an hour, (144 to 180 pictures). He has shot as many as 33 rolls in a single evening, (1,188 frames). During the night he constantly reloads his camera and replaces batteries. He also must try to make sure that all of the camera adjustments are always correct. He earns a pay percentage based on the number of the resellable pictures he takes.

Most of the pictures Mohrman shoots are the traditional hug shots. His least favorite pictures are table and couple poses at formal dinners.

Mohrman prefers less traditional shots. Some of his favorite pictures have been a

little risque.

"We black out with a magic marker anything obscene that might embarrass the person (before returning the proofs), but we get a laugh out of it," he said.

Mohrman's favorite parties are costume parties where people are really having fun, he said. He likes island parties and other interesting party sites where there are props he can use in his pictures.

Olsen also prefers to shoot parties with interesting themes. Recently, Olsen said, college party-givers have economized by having larger parties without themes.

"Creativity has fallen off," he said. A lot of recent parties are just dancing and drinking, Olsen said.

In Mohrman's 2 1/4 years as picture man, he has seen a lot of drunks.

"I've even got pictures of them losing their cookies over the side of a rail at river boat."

## 'The Dining Room' questions traditional values

By Julie Liska  
Staff Reporter

Not a room, but the people within. That's what "The Dining Room," currently playing at the Temple Theatre, is all about.

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Written by A.R. Gurney and directed by Paul Barnes, the play is set within the genteel luxury of a classical family dining room. Six actors stage the performance, which has roles ranging from a senile grandmother to a naughty little boy who peeks at the maid while she bathes.

The demanding problem of one person portraying multiple roles was handled with apparent ease throughout the opening-night performance. Basic clothing was cleverly adorned with a few accessories to indicate the role being played.

Although the resourceful use of supplementary clothing helped the overall effect of "Dining Room," ample acting skill was the backbone of the production.

Especially worthy of praise is Scott Dientzbier, who, through the course of the performance, handled each role with tremendous skill. Dientzbier, for example, conveyed the naive sensitivity of young Christopher — an honor

student who just discovered his mother is having an affair — as convincingly as he portrays Jim, a mature man in his late 60s.

Overall, the actors seemed to have an easier time portraying younger characters than older. A perfect illustration of this was Todd Pickering's version of a grandfather in Act I. Although the part obviously called for an elderly man of about 80, Pickering used gestures and spoke in a much more rapid fashion than would befit a man of such an elderly age.

Whereas the actual play relies heavily upon the overlapping of scenes for effect, this factor also poses a disadvantage. Unprepared audience members

can easily be confused by the presence of actors from two separate vignettes on stage at once. However, after becoming accustomed to the two scenes simultaneously taking place the play is enhanced.

Use of theater-in-the-round works effectively in "Dining Room." Because the audience totally surrounds the acting area and forms a type of "wall" around the set, the play seems to be suspended in a type of void. This is especially effective because the audience can see the action of the play not only is restricted to the theater, but to their own lives as well.

Remnants of the original production arch scene design, for which the

play was originally written, were still in evidence. It seems the west audience was being used as a backdrop since they saw the actors' and actresses' backs more than their faces.

I especially enjoyed the intimacy of the round theater space. Because of the close proximity of the actors, gestures and facial expressions could be experienced more fully.

The old saying, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" best sums up "Dining Room." Although a single scene does not relay any significant message, we are offered an overall look at both the traditional and modern values in our society today.

## 'Baby' action, laughs heat a cool April night

By Scott Harrah  
Staff Reporter

OK, I admit it. When I ambled into the theater to review "Baby: Secret of the Lost Legend," I thought I was about to see one of those fatuous flicks that

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critics have a ball slamming with their poison pens. But my preconceived delight turned to anger when I realized, after only 10 minutes of the film, that it's true "secret" is that it is hardly the turkey the ads make it appear to be.

"Baby: Secret of the Lost Legend" is

the entertaining tale of a young journalist named George Loomis (played by William "The Greatest American Hero" Katt) and his wife Susan (Sean Young), a paleontologist doing fieldwork in exotic West Africa. Under the protection of pompous professor Eric Kivist (Patrick McGovern), Susan discovers some obscure-looking bones that are "definitely not from a mammal."

Intrigued by the mystery of the bones, Susan begs her husband to let her stay in Africa and continue research, but he declines because he's been offered an editor's position at a newspaper back home. So Susan leaves her sleeping husband in bed and sneaks off to a village miles away where a tribe member is dying of food poisoning.

When asked about the food he consumed, the native draws a picture of a brontosaurus. It's at this point that the film shed its serious tone and the real fun begins.

George finds his wife and she tells him about the native's drawing, so they start to search the jungle for the purported dinosaur and are captured by hostile natives. After appeasing the nasty natives with a watch and Poinsett anaphots, the two pitch a tent and decide to make love.

Coltius interruptus ensues when an angry bronto topples over the tent as he casually meanders through the jungle. The next day, they discover a mommy and daddy dinosaur along with a baby hatchlet. The brontos look like a cross

between Muppets and Dino from "The Flintstones" with the ability to coo and giggle as well as roar.

Elated by her discovery, Susan takes numerous pictures of the creatures and christens the hatchlet "Baby."

When professor Kivist learns about the brontos, he sends out troops to tranquilize the beasts. While capturing the creatures, the daddy dinosaur is accidentally killed and his mate is tied up and taken to the village.

Incensed by the troop's brutality, Susan and George escape with Baby and try to hide her from the professor and his entourage. What follows is an action-packed climax that bears satirical hints of Godzilla and James Bond adventures, as well as the Muppet

Show.

"Baby: Secret of the Lost Legend" is totally implausible and ridiculous, and that's what it tries to be. It works because of grand cinematography, witty writing, and a fine cast and innovatively designed dinosaurs that are so adorable you feel sorry for them whenever the evil professor is mean to them.

You won't want to miss this cute, engrossing hodgepodge of lampoonery that has enough slam-bang action and laughs to heat up a cool April night.

"Baby: Secret of the Lost Legend" currently is showing at the Cooper Theater and is rated PG for language, light sexual content and intense violence.