

# Arts & Entertainment

## Collection expresses western heritage

By Laura Hansen  
Staff Reporter

Hidden in the depths of Love Library, not far from the infamous "stacks" lies the Great Plains Art Collection.

The Great Plains room, on the second floor of Love south, holds the multi-million-dollar Christlieb collection of Western Art. Jon Nelson, curator of the collection, said it was donated in 1980 by Dr. and Mrs. Christlieb of Bellevue.

Nelson said that there is only room to show about one third of this vast collection at a time. The collection is supplemented with traveling exhibits and donations like "In Search of a Route" which will be showing until the end of the month.

Nelson said the room also contains examples of work by famous artists, like Charles Russel and unusual pieces by Carl Kauba.

Nelson said a basic theme of realistic, western subjects ties all these great pieces of art together. Western art, he said, is an expression of American values, it represents the feeling people hold about this country.

Nelson said that if we don't know about our culture we are ignorant people, and that art is important, to our culture.

Through July 23rd the room will be displaying a recent acquisition, "Summer Shower," a painting by western artist Ted Long. The painting was donated by Dr. Leon S. McGoogan, of Omaha.

Long, a Nebraskan, also has a bronze in the Great Plains room. The piece contributes to the room Nelson said, "like a voice in a choir," merely adding to the tradition of great western artists. The painting is part of a display of paintings about Native Americans by contemporary artists.

Long's "Summer Shower" is representative of the artist's work, and was inspired by his feelings for the West.

Long said he "dreamed of the days when the great herds of buffalo, the Sioux, Cheyenne and Pawnee once traveled and camped on the ground."

"In Search of a Route" is a series of lithographs that function like photographs Nelson said, and they tell a tale of America in the summer of 1853.

They were produced on the Issac I. Stevens survey of the 47th and 49th parallels.



Andrea Hoy/The Nebraskan

Jon Nelson, Great Plains Art Collection curator, seems to contemplate our Western heritage as he views a bronze exhibit featuring buffalo and a Montana mountain man.

Artist John Mix Stanley accompanied Stevens on his survey, illustrating detailed accounts of the plains.

The Congressional Globe of January 1859 said "Every unexpected or unanticipated gorge in the mountains has been displayed in a beautiful picture . . . in the highest style of art in the most brilliant colors."

Nelson said people can learn a lot from an exhibit like this. These are straightforward pictures, he said, that

can tell us a lot about early lithograph production and Western history.

The goals of the Great Plains room include displaying great works of Western art, becoming bigger and becoming better, according to Nelson.

To meet these high ideals the showroom has many things planned for the upcoming year, Nelson said.

In January they are planning the first Solon Borgham exhibit in the United States since 1904. Borgham was the

younger brother of Gutzon Borgham, the sculptor of Mt. Rushmore in South Dakota. Solon was born in Utah, but raised in Fremont and Omaha.

There is also a Ted Long and Tom Palmerton exhibit coming up this fall.

Rosaline Carr from the Great Plains center in Oldfather Hall said that she hopes the collection will make students more aware of things of beauty and make them more human. Art, she said, is a big part of the human

experience.

Nelson said he hopes people can gain a visual history of the great plains by viewing the collection.

The Great Plains Art Collection is open to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and from 1:30 to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

The gallery is not open when the library is closed.

# Critic laughs at Madonna clone's demands

Rex Reed . . . Siskel and Ebert . . . Liz Smith . . . Judith Crist . . . Vincent Canby . . .

Mention these critics' notorious names to anyone and stand back: out pours a deluge of disgust and hatred



Scott Harrah

from the mouths of many film, music, book and theater fans. A critic is considered a professional bitch, someone who uses exotic adjectives to ruthlessly slaughter everyone's favorite entertainment. They are perhaps the most influential journalists in the mass-media, because if enough of them slam out a negative word about a particular film or album, failure follows.

Critics, infamous or not, are a misunderstood species.

Everyone has a favorite performer and a film, book or album they consider "the best."

But no matter how much praise people have for a certain entertainment, someone out there is going to hate it.

It is always the critic who doesn't care for the latest public rave like "Ghostbusters" or "E.T." who receives myriads of hate mail.

I remember the days when I too despised critics. Like many, I thought: "If the critics all think it's a dud it must be a blockbuster." But then I got a job on the entertainment page of this paper as a reviewer and my perceptions of critics changed tremendously.

I had written fake reviews for fun in high school, but I never took it seriously.

My first reviews were a bit too serious — and too lenient. I didn't want to be known as another caustic critic out to rip apart everything, so I tried to be nice with lots of flowery adjectives.

After writing a number of reviews laden with action verbs and colorful cliches like "a riveting, tour de force," I started to feel like Mr. Rogers giving vocabulary lessons.

So I began dishing dirt, constantly revealing every slice of reprehensible rankness in the things I criticized.

I soon became the very thing I'd once disdained: a cruel critic . . . and I've loved every pompous, pretentious moment of it.

Tearing apart someone's artistic endeavor may not be the most respectable job around, but it is often appropriate because most of the trip Hollywood

and the disc-biz churns out is 100 percent pure pabulum.

Only a select few actors, writers and musicians truly deserve to be called "riveting, tour de forces."

Wit, satire and humor have always been the creative impetus behind insults, ridicule and criticism in daily life. So naturally it is necessary for a critic to also be a talented writer. Most of them are.

It is no surprise then that some of America's greatest writers like Willa Cather and Truman Capote were also critics. Cather was once a drama critic for the Lincoln Journal; Capote was a critic of everything.

Critics do perform a worthwhile service for the public. They let consumers of movies, albums and literature know what's got class and what's total trash. But what many don't understand is that they are writers with a certain style and an arbitrary sense of taste that should not be restrained by journalistic objectivity or people in general. They speak their mind like any other writer and should be allowed to do so whether their opinions are public consensus or not.

That's why I always laugh at people who send me letters, telling me my

reviews constitute bad journalism because they're "subjective." That's exactly what a review is supposed to be.

Some have even tracked me down to personally tell me where to go. "How dare you put down Sheena Easton!" a teary-eyed Madonna clone screamed at me once in the union. "She has a pretty voice and dresses so hot."

Another time I was in a local record store where a group of "underground

elitists," dripping with paisley and punk pretensions, pointed at me. One of them said, "That's him! He's the guy who slaughtered the Smiths."

I really don't care if my reviews affront Madonna clones, pseudo punks, or anyone else if I don't always praise their immortal idols. I instead find it amusing because I know they would feel the same if the dreaded poison pen was in their hands. In other words, don't knock it 'til you've panned it!

## Shorts

Auditions for the new musical "King of Hearts" will be held at the Lincoln Community Playhouse, 2500 S. 56th St., tonight from 8 to 10 p.m., and Wednesday, July 17 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Those interested in auditioning are encouraged to attend an information session from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. tonight to find out about the play and to hear the music before auditions.

Those auditioning should be available for callbacks at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 18.

America's leading folk instrumentalist, John McCutcheon, is returning to Lincoln, Friday, July 26 at the Joyo Theater, 6102 Havelock Avenue.

The 8 p.m. concert will feature

McCutcheon on fiddle, hammer dulcimer, banjo, and singing traditional songs — a show that will appeal to all ages. Advance tickets are available at Dirt Cheap, the Nebraska Union, and London Stringed Instruments for \$5, \$2.50 for senior citizens, and \$1 for children under 12.

The concert is sponsored by the Lincoln Association for Traditional Arts.

Kool and the Gang, one of the most popular R & B pop bands of the '80s will perform at the Omaha Civic auditorium Friday, July 19 at 8 p.m.

Reserve tickets for the group, known for their current hit "Fresh," and "Celebration," are \$15.25 and on sale at Pickles.