

Arts & Entertainment



Dave Fox and Paul Marguard, graduate physics students, view a planetarium laser show.

Technology descends on UNL in form of laser extravaganza

By Charles Lieurance
Staff Reporter

In a world where most new technologies confront us in the form of weapons, it's refreshing to renew a more gratifying relationship with science once and awhile.

The Laser Rock Show at Mueller Planetarium in Morrill Hall doesn't close the window of vulnerability, patrol our skies, monitor Soviet satellites or cost a trillion dollars, so lay your head back and relax.

Laser Review

Using two Helium-Neon lasers for reddish patterns and one Argon laser for blues and greens, the Laser Rock show creates a hallucinogenic series of laser patterns in motion to the music of Heart, Jeff Beck, Kansas, Pink Floyd, Rush, Deep Purple, Triumph, Eric Clapton, Cheap Trick and Eddie and the Tide.

According to planetarium coordinator Jack Dunn, "variety is the key to a successful laser show."

Indeed, Dunn does not rely on a numbing barrage of continuous sound and light, but instead varies the pace and uses light sources other than lasers to make sure no one gets bored.

Heart's "All Eyes" opens the program, and the blue dot suspended in the darkness begins to quiver, finally inflating into multi-dimensional spinning circles.

Although the show retains certain shapes from show to show and uses the same music, Dunn said you have to stay alert on the job. Dunn changes the motions of the graphics and their placement on the ceiling from time to time and new graphic patterns are added as they are created.

After Heart, the music tones down to a beautiful acoustic guitar solo by Triumph, and as Dunn pointed out, moving the laser shapes in more subtle configurations is more difficult than manipulating the larger, more ornate shapes used for songs like Deep Purple's "Smoke on the Water."

Although the music will not necessarily be everyone's idea of rock 'n' roll nirvana, the music counts less than the precision and clarity of the sound system. This show is about the beauty of technology, not the beauty of Rush.

The music comes from a Teac reel to reel with eight channels of information. Two channels give life to the sound, four tracks synchronize the music and the lasers, one is an audio track for the operator to listen in on and one track synchronizes the music and slide program.

On Kansas' "Dust in the Wind," white light shone through a stencil of scratchings and arbitrary patterns is used rather than lasers. By slowly running light behind these stencils, a beautiful series of slow smears and blurs evoke the mood of an Oriental ink wash.

When the lasers finally kick in again on "Smoke on the Water" they have a renewed brilliance and vigor. The contrast definitely fights off boredom.

Walt Simmons, a student volunteer who built the computer graphic system that augments the lasers, is responsible for such unique touches as the floating guitar that gyrates and spins during Jeff Beck's "Get Us All in the End." It sounds as if Beck himself is playing.

Although the system cannot yet create actual animation, Simons' computer is a suitable and clever replacement.

Dunn remarked that the whole show works best when the audience is "uninhibited and responsive." Clapping, singing, hooting and any signaling of life are encouraged.

"Last week," Dunn said, "we finally got an audience to sing along with Crosby, Stills, and Nash after the football game."

That's exactly what Dunn expects of his audiences.

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'Miss Jean' continues at Community Playhouse

"The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" continues at 8 p.m. today and Saturday night at the Lincoln Community Playhouse, 2500 S. 56th St. Sunday's matinee performance at 2:30 p.m. will be interpreted for the hearing impaired.

"The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" is a study of a private school teacher's follies and fantasies. The play's action is framed within the memory of a cloistered nun, one of Miss Jean's former students. Bette Croissant, winner of the Playhouse 1984-85 Best Actress award, plays the nun.

Leta Powell Drake, program director at KOLN/KGIN-TV and producer of "The Morning Show," stars as the romantic and misguided "Miss Jean." Drake, a former UNL acting student, last appeared at the Playhouse 16 years

ago. The playhouse production is directed by Michael D. Mitchell. Marva Lucca-Thyberg is assistant director and stage manager.

Tickets for "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" are \$6.50 for adults and \$4.75 for people 18 and under Thursdays and Sundays. Friday and Saturday tickets are \$8.50 for adults and \$6.75 for 18 and under.

Reservations may be obtained by calling the Playhouse box office at 489-9608, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and noon to 4 p.m. Saturdays.

Additional performances are scheduled Thursday through Saturday, Oct. 17 to 20 and Oct. 24 to 26, at 8 p.m. A second Sunday matinee is set for 2:30 p.m. Oct. 27.

'Badlands' star Sheen appears for screening

Martin Sheen will be in Lincoln today and Saturday in conjunction with a special screening of "Badlands," one of the most important roles of his varied career.

Sheen will speak today at 10:40 a.m. about his spiritual and religious philosophies and their relation to his career at the College View Seventh Day Adventist Church, 48th and Prescott streets.

The talk is free and open to the public.

On Saturday, Sheen will appear on the Sheldon Film Theater stage after the 7:30 screening of "Badlands." The \$5 tickets are sold out.

Additional screenings of "Badlands" at the regular Sheldon admission price of \$3.75 are 3 p.m. Saturday and 3, 5, 7 and 9 p.m. Sunday. Sheen will not be at any of these screenings.

Sheen's appearances are being co-sponsored by Union College and Sheldon Art Gallery.

A Sheldon release said Sheen is especially fond of his role as Kit in "Badlands." The movie is loosely based on the real-life exploits of former Lincoln residents Charles Starkweather and Caril Fugate.

"It's the best thing I've ever done," Sheen said. "I saw it again last year in

France, and when I looked at it I realized I wouldn't touch a frame. It's the only thing I've done in my life that I'm entirely proud of."

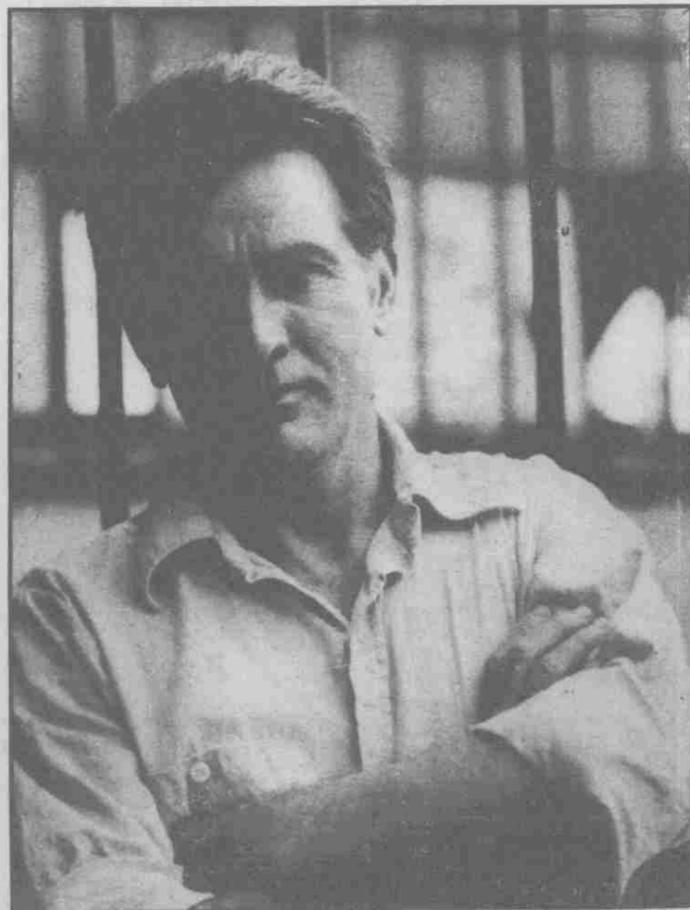
Sheen has also played the tortured soldier shot for cowardice in "The Execution of Private Slovik," Robert Kennedy in "The Missiles of October" and John Dean in "Blind Ambition."

In "Apocalypse Now," he played the soldier assigned to assassinate Marlon Brando. He suffered a heart attack during the intense filming.

He donated his salary for his role of a reporter in "Ghandi," saying "How can you make money off Ghandi?"

"Badlands," set around 1958, is the story of Kit (Sheen) and 15-year-old Holly (Sissy Spacek), who go on the run after Kit shoots Holly's father. Kit shoots several people who might threaten their freedom. Eventually, Holly gives herself up and Kit, — now a notorious outlaw — lets himself be captured.

Vincent Canby said in a New York Times review that "Badlands" is hugely effective, a smash. It is a most important and exciting film, always ferociously American. It is Terence Malick's blunt and beautiful first feature. Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek are splendid."



Courtesy of Sheldon Art Gallery

Sheen