

Arts & Entertainment

Brazilian poet now local painter

Editor's note: Unveiled is a new, regularly appearing column about local artists. The stories will contain some opinions of the author.

"If you're painting and not selling your work, you are a painter. If you are selling it, that is something else," said the most recent artist to be pushing daisies, Andy Warhol. That, too, is

part of the rationale for local painter A. Sergio Klafke.

Indeed, Klafke has decided to see his art after 12 years of informal education.

Klafke, 34, is a native of Sao

Paulo, Brazil. He has been in America for about three years. Like many others involved with the fine arts, Klafke didn't start with painting. In Sao Paulo, he was a poet with a degree in business administration — a strange combination — but it seems to work for him.

Parallel to his informal pursuit of oil on canvas (among other things),

with paintings. The attic, his workroom, also is covered with paintings. Although the paintings are, as one might put it, abstract, the combination of rough symbols and vivid contrast give off definite ideas.

Aside from thin unique forms, the pictures are painted on anything from quality canvases to old license plates.

"I paint with the heart . . . with the mind . . . with the body," he said. Doesn't everybody? The major difference is that Klafke seriously means that. One look around his workroom proves painting is his business. Three-dimensional artwork, little statues and the like are scattered around. Even the hanging cloth he calls his "ghost" gets its



Paul Vonderlage/Daily Nebraskan

Klafke works on his art at home.

Unveiled by Kevin Cowan

Klafke wrote four books of poetry that were published by Civilizacao Brasileira. Meanwhile, his mainstay was reviewing books for Folha de Sao Paulo, a widely read newspaper.

Before Klafke became a published poet, he worked as a business administrator for an iron-smelting plant. The experience, as he titled one book, was "Nine Months in Hell."

"The workers there are like animals, he said. "Not like animal. Worse than animal."

The smelting iron would produce noxious fumes, Klafke said, causing many deaths among the plant's 15,000 employees.

Klafke is safely embedded now in the laid-back, wholesome community of Lincoln — also, he is no longer a writer, he is a painter.

"If you want to do something it has to take up all your concentration," he said.

And Klafke has concentrated. Only having had one sketching class in high school, Klafke said he acquired his talent by assisting fellow painters and by a rather lengthy period of library research. But, he said, "you can know everything about art and still not be an artist."

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face repainted two or three times a week.

Klafke's pictures seem to directly mirror his emotional state at the time they are painted. The first painting he did in Los Angeles is of a face with eyes as large as mill wheels.

But when asked about the meaning of this picture, he said, "I cannot say. I think about nothing when I paint."

Despite the lack of rational cognition, his paintings are pleasing to the mind.

However, his judgment day is near. He recently only decided to try to sell his art.

"I think I am ready to call myself an artist," he said.

Klafke said he will apply for a spot in the Bemis Project, a new gallery opening in Omaha. The gallery will give artists a place to live and work from three months to one year.

Whether he is accepted or not, Klafke said, he will continue to paint and study the nature of painting.

"If they want to buy this kind of work — great," he said. "If not, I will continue."

Indeed, so what about his paintings?

As you walk into he and his wife Diane's house you can see the long, high-ceilinged living room covered

'Vanities' mirrors 3 stages of friendship

By Charles Lieurance
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska Director's Theatre, without a doubt the most adventurous theatre in Lincoln, will perform the play "Vanities" Thursday through Saturday and again on March 21.

"Vanities" is a play by Jack Heifner, who was a student at Southern Methodist University when he wrote the play in 1968. The play is about three women whose lives are traced from high school to adult maturity. The story begins in 1963 when Joanne, Mary and Kathy are energetic, beautiful cheerleaders in high school. The play charts their friendship, their competition, their conflicts with each other and the world

beyond their small circle.

From high school Heifner shoots his characters ahead five years, to their college sorority house. At this time the characters are facing an uncertain future with optimism and a strong sense of humor. The audience rejoins Joanne, Mary and Kathy again in 1974, when, for a short time, they are reunited. Though much time has passed, their friendship is rekindled with effort.

Jack Parkhurst, who directs the production at NCT, says the play's themes are evident in its title.

"The title tells what the play is," Parkhurst said.

"It discusses the fact that all of us

are vain and where does it really get us?"

The play was difficult to produce, according to Parkhurst, who refers to the show as "tough" because the actresses had to progress through three

Theater Preview

very different stages of life, from high school students to college seniors to 28-year-olds.

"The play also takes us through some very dynamic times for people growing up in that time period," says Parkhurst. "They went through Vietnam and you can see the characters change

because of that period."

Although some of the themes and issues raised in the play have serious connotations, the play is basically a comedy, dealing with human relations using a sharp contemporary wit. Parkhurst has already applied his talents to lighter comedic fare such as "The Music Man" performed at Omaha's Orpheum Theatre and will also direct "Little Shop of Horrors" for the Nebraska Repertory Theatre this summer.

Parkhurst tells the story of how Heifner returned to SMU 10 years after he wrote the play and met the three women he based his characters on. Heifner was amazed to find that the women turned out just as he had

predicted in the final segment of the play.

"Vanities" is a cheerful study of vanity's effect on comradeship, according to Parkhurst.

The part of Kathy will be played by Melissa Schawl, the part of Joanne by Jill Pinkelman and the part of Mary by Susan Oltmanns. All three are students at UNL.

"Vanities" will be staged at 8 p.m. in the Nebraska Director's Theatre in the basement of St. Marks' on Campus Episcopal church, 1309 R. St.

Admission to the play is \$4 for the public and \$3 for students and senior citizens. Reservations are available by calling 472-1610.