

# Exhibit offers diverse quality

By Mark Baldridge  
Staff Reporter

"Recent Acquisitions in Photography," at the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery until Jan. 26, features works by 40 photographers who have recorded events of America and abroad over the past 60 years.

Also of note are a selection of pieces by photographers with ties to Nebraska, including those of strobe-light pioneer Harold Edgerton. His "Bullet Through Plexiglass" is a classic example of a work in which art and technology meet.

Choosing a single theme for the

show would be extremely difficult. One might suggest "Life in The City" for its scenes that include some excellent architectural studies.

Photographs in the urban category would include the humorous "Police-man Buttonman" by the famous photojournalist Weegee and the magical "Paris" by Henri Cartier-Bresson.

However, the show also boasts a small but remarkable selection of nudes and figure studies. These photos stand out against the urban scenes that surround them for their quality and variety of approach.

Marsha Burns offers an untitled photo of a swimmer that is luminous as if painted by air brush, while Irving

Penn's "Nude No. 16" takes a solid, sculptural approach to the female figure.

One can almost smell the fresh air in Jock Sturges' portrait of five girls on the beach. The photo is an insightful exploration of the inner seriousness of puberty.

There is, throughout the exhibit, a sense of the transcendent about to break through. Some of the city structures seem part of a fairyland architecture. Debra Goldman's untitled photo of a serpent, a stone and a sea shell contains something from dreams.

The entire collection displays a wide variety of talent and some wonderful additions to the museum's permanent collection.

# Tribute to duo misses the mark

## Reviews



"Two Rooms — Celebrating the Songs of Elton John & Bernie Taupin"  
Artists  
Polydor Records

Throughout the 1970s, the song-writing partnership of Bernie Taupin and Elton John produced some of the catchiest, lyrical and poignant pop songs of the entire decade.

John's abrupt piano-playing and melodic lines fit perfectly into Taupin's poetic, often enigmatic lyrics. They never worked together in the same room, writing as a true collaboration, but pieced the songs together after inspiration came from two different places: two adjacent rooms.

So, years after the duo unofficially terminated its partnership, some of the largest names in popular music today geared up to do cover versions

of favorite John and Taupin tunes on "Two Rooms — Celebrating The Songs of Elton John & Bernie Taupin."

It's a noble and overdue project, and it almost works.

The problem stems from the artists' miscalculations on how to approach these quirky pop songs penned years ago. Performing on "Two Rooms" are Oleta Adams, The Beach Boys, Jon Bon Jovi, Kate Bush, Eric Clapton, Joe Cocker, Phil Collins, Daryl Hall and John Oates, Bruce Hornsby, George Michael, Sinéad O'Connor, Rod Stewart, Sting, Tina Turner, The Who and Wilson Phillips.

Some get the picture, and inevitably, some do not.

For example, the Beach Boys' cover of "Crocodile Rock" is so dead-on serious that it's laughable, because John and Taupin were simultaneously

paying homage to and making fun of groups like the Beach Boys. The cover is likeable but only with a couple of salt grains.

Similarly, Phil Collins' attempt to resurrect the wonderful "Burn Down The Mission" fails primarily because the little, smiling elf Collins doesn't have the depth to cover the song properly.

Some tracks, however, are just plain blasphemous, both in calculation and in execution.

The inclusion of "Daniel," one of the duo's prettiest songs of all time, is a natural selection for the compilation. But allowing Wilson Phillips to sanitize any emotion out of it is beyond stupidity. All poignancy in the song is completely lost on the trio, and they pour saccharine down its throat. As far as miscalculations go, it's a loo-loo.

But all is not lost.

Some artists, who forsake their pretensions and go for the heart of the tune, have hit the jackpot. Eric Clapton's slowed-down "Border Song" is chock-full of giddy soul, and Sting's delicate reading of "Come Down In Time" is one of the best things he's

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