

Daily Nebraskan WEEKEND PREVIEW

For the weekend
of Nov. 5 - 6

Give it a shot

► **Sandy Veneziano** — A production designer in the film industry, this UNL alumna returns to campus as part of Masters Week. She will speak today at 1:30 p.m. in Howell Theatre, addressing issues relating to entering the film industry. The discussion is free and open to the public. Veneziano's credits include "Dead Poets Society," "Home Alone 2" and "Terms of Endearment."

Tournee of 'toons to show world's best animation

By **Joel Strauch**
Senior Reporter

Be sure to 'toon in to the 24th annual Tournee of Animation this weekend at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The Tournee is the acclaimed annual feature-length compilation of the world's best animation. It is made up of 13 animated shorts from five countries and includes a tribute to Will Vinton Studios.

Dan Ladely, the director of the Ross film theater, said, "Will Vinton is the fellow who worked

in claymation and made the California Raisins commercials.

"He started out doing all the work on his own, and he was so impressive that he started doing commercials and now has his own studio."

Vinton Studios is represented with "A Salute to the Dimensional Artistry of Will Vinton Studios."

This 22-minute segment includes "Mr. Resistor," an electrifying adventure in stop-motion animation, and "Cool Tools," a computer-generated short that features a hip-hop hammer.

This year's Tournee also includes an impressive group of award-winning films.

Among them are "The Sandman" by Paul Berry and "Words, Words, Words" by Michela Pavlatova.

"There are a lot of really good examples of practically every type of animation," Ladely said. "Everybody will find something that they like in this diverse selection of animation."

An animator who worked with Steven Spielberg on "Jurassic

Park" also is included. Phil Tippet's "Prehistoric Beast" was made in his garage and took two years to complete.

Ladely said the Tournees had been received well in previous showings at the film theater.

"Animation has gotten really popular in the last few years," Ladely said. "We have had a lot of people call and ask when the next Tournee was going to be."

"Hopefully those people will come see this one."

Quik Facts

Event: The 24th Annual Tournee of Animation

At: The Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater

Times: three showings today and five showings Saturday

Tickets: \$5, \$4 for students, \$3 for senior citizens, children and Friends of the Riepma Ross

Youths' acting saves 'The War'

By **Joel Strauch**
Senior Reporter

"The War" may revolve around a conflict between two groups of children, but its central theme of the futility of violence gives a message to everyone.

Stephen Simmons (Kevin Costner) is a Vietnam veteran who suffers from post-traumatic stress due to the horrors of the war and his own feelings of inadequacy.

He returns from a voluntary stay at a mental hospital and tries to instill his feelings of pacifism into his explosive son, Stu (Elijah Wood).

Stu and his sister, Lidia (Lexi Randall), are building a tree fort and also battling with a family of rough kids, the Lipnickis.

The film touches on a number of deep issues, but the main one it tackles is the deteriorating effects that war has on the human spirit.

Stu listens to his father's advice of passive resistance but does not fully grasp his intentions until after a major battle with the Lipnickis.

The film is awesome on most counts, but a few mediocre acting performances and some holes in the plot keep it from being a show of award-winning capacity.

The realistic dialogue and behavior of the children in the movie give it a special charm that is rarely seen on the big screen. Children usually are ignored or presented as little adults.

The acting of the young folks in this one saves the show. Elijah Wood gives a great performance as Stu, an emotional boy who just wants his father around.



Courtesy of Universal Pictures

Kevin Costner stars with Elijah Wood in "The War," a new film about the futility of violence.

Newcomer Lexi Randall also is fantastic as Stu's older and more rational sister.

Latoya Chisolm is fabulous as Lidia's best friend Elvadine. She gets into her assertive and hilarious character with every ounce of her body and soul.

Kevin Costner has yet to do a poor job as an actor and this film is no exception.

But Mare Winningham was transparent and seemed as if she never got into her role.

"The War" is a great show, filled with emotional ups and downs and is an enjoyable film for almost anyone.

Quik Facts

Movie: "The War"

Rating: PG-13

Stars: Elijah Wood, Kevin Costner, Mare Winningham, Lexi Randall

Director: Jon Avnet

Grade: B+

Five Words: Kid show appeals to everyone

Artist says sculptures are simple

By **Patrick Hambrecht**
Staff Reporter

Fletcher Benton will appear with his outdoor sculpture "Three Triangles" at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday to meet admirers.

But to really enjoy the sculpture, situated in front of NBC Bank at 13th and O streets, one should walk past it quickly without much pondering. That's what Benton, the sculpture's creator, says.

Benton said in a phone interview, "People should be able to enjoy a sculpture for what it is, like they'd enjoy a tree."

"If you see a beautiful woman walking past you on the street, you don't get to spend a lot of time with her. But you know you've seen something you like."

Too many people will stop in front of a sculpture and rake it for a secret meaning that the piece actually doesn't have, Benton said.

"What do I want a person to feel when they pass my sculpture?" Benton asked. "I want them to have a good feeling."

Before he became successful in the late 1950s, Benton painted signs to fund his career as a painter. And throughout his career he has used the alphabet in his art, because of its simple beauty.

"Letters have the most beautiful of all geometry," Benton said. "It's not the sounds of the alphabet. It's the geometry."

Benton especially admires the letter R.

"Look at a page of advertising, and you'll see all different types of R's: beautiful R's, ugly R's, sexy R's. It's one of the most beautiful and graceful of all letters."

"Artists create because it's fun," Benton said. "It has a sense of reward. And you've made a statement, good or bad, and there it is for everyone to deal with."

So if you bump into Benton on Saturday morning, or wander past "Three Triangles" while bar-hopping the night before, Benton would advise you not to think too much.

"When people look at art, they ask, 'What does that mean?' because they're intimidated," Benton said. "When people look at art, they should drop their baggage and become children again."

Alum's comedy tour brings his antics home

By **Chad Lorenz**
Staff Reporter

College makes good comedy material. Experiences from his six-year stay at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln have inspired Mark Gross' best acts, like the one he used two weeks ago for his "Tonight Show" audition.

Tonight he will bring it back to Lincoln. Gross, a 1989 UNL graduate, will perform stand-up comedy with fellow Lincolnite Craig Peters at Noodles Comedy Club at 8:00 tonight and Saturday night.

"It's going to be loose and fun. We'll have old bits and new stuff," Gross said. Gross pursued his comedy career right

after graduation. His five years of comic acts have included A&E's "Comedy on the Road," "Evening at the Improv," Comic Relief '92, and writing for Comedy Central's "Politically Incorrect." He also recently toured with comedian Paula Poundstone, where he performed with Paulie Shore, Howie Mandel and Kevin Nealon.

His first comic exposure was when he placed third at the Showtime comedy contest as an undergraduate, Gross said. He mounted successes by winning comedy contests in Lincoln, he said.

"I constantly thought about dropping out and going on the road. But I stuck it out, graduated, and have been at it for the past

five years," Gross said.

He said he missed the optimism he had in college. Having a goal like graduation to look forward to was a promise of success, he said.

"There are no landmarks like that anymore," he said.

He said he had enjoyed his work on the club circuit, which kept him on the road 52 weeks a year. But he said he soon hopes to cut his involvement on the club scene and find a more stationary job.

"I want to be able to have a dog, to see art on my wall. I'm fascinated with domestic life because I'm sick of traveling. Last year I bought my own pillow, and it was the most exciting thing I did all year," he said.