

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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## State of the ARTS

Jeff Randall

### Omaha site offers shows for all ages

Over the semester break, I was able to spend some long-needed time away from both residence hall food and Lincoln.

Granted, I wasn't too far away from Lincoln. I was about 50 miles to the northeast, in my hometown of Omaha.

On the surface, Omaha and Lincoln appear to be pretty similar. They are both generally flat areas in which the Big Red rules and driving laws are disobeyed.

But when I visited Omaha's Cog Factory, located just south of the downtown area, I realized once again that, musically speaking, Omaha and Lincoln are really worlds apart.

For those who haven't visited the Cog Factory, I probably should mention that it is the only remaining concert venue in Omaha that is devoted solely to all-ages shows.

It used to be that Omaha had a large number of all-ages venues. The Ranch Bowl was always good, the Capitol Bar was always better and Bell Hall was ... well, it was there. But the majority of those venues and their all-ages policies have gone out the door within the past three or four years.

In Lincoln, Le Cafe Shakes was another genuine effort with a lot of promise. But it, too, was replaced.

And now the Cog Factory remains as a lone torch of musical hope for the downtrodden underaged.

The all-ages shows part is important, but what the Cog Factory really does for Omaha is provide a place for small bands to play for small crowds. And this, as any true music fan will tell you, is a necessary ingredient in the development of a strong local music scene.

Judging from the size of the majority of the Cog Factory's shows, I would say that not much money is being made on this business venture. It's hard to get rich from a concert venue that charges \$3 at the door.

But money seems to be the proprietors' last concern. What I saw in the Cog's small space and minimal decor was a genuine concern for music, musicians and their fans.

To the unappreciative, the Cog Factory may seem like a slightly dirty, cold and acoustically unsound facility. But to someone who has waited far too long for such a thing, it's heaven.

The Cog Factory has undergone its share of turmoil in its short existence. It has been shut down, reopened and shut down again. But now, it seems, it is here to stay — for at least a little while.

The true lesson that can be learned from this modest building on Leavenworth Street is that, when it comes to making something musical work in Nebraska, sacrifice is necessary.

To create a non-alcohol performance space for bands that may be invaluable musically, but not viable economically takes more desire, guts and work than most people have or are willing to give.

I just hope those attributes don't disappear or break as quickly as my guitar strings — or at the very least, hold out until I turn 21, guys.

Randall is a sophomore news-editorial major and the Daily Nebraskan arts and entertainment editor.

## Slackers slap serious stick in 'Bio-Dome'

By MaryAnn Muggy

Film Critic

Earth Day was never quite as fun. Directed by Jason Bloom, a student director from the University of Southern California's Film School who won an award for his film "Irving,"

"Bio-Dome" pushes the comedy envelope and fills the screen with environmental silliness that could come only from Pauly Shore and Stephen Baldwin.

Bud Macintosh (Shore) and Doyle Johnson (Baldwin), slackers supreme, are tricked by their eco-minded girlfriends into driving through the Arizona desert on Earth Day and find themselves on an adventure they never could have imagined.

Mistaking the ultra-modern Bio-Dome for a new mall, Bud and Doyle get trapped inside the experimental controlled environment, not to be let out until the full year is up.

William Leaky (Henry Gibson from "Laugh-In" fame), the experiment's main contributor, demands that the Generation Xers be removed. But head scientist Dr. Noah Faulkner (William Atherton) convinces him that they contribute to the chaos theory, and they are allowed to stay.

Although their popularity grows on the outside (including Bud and Doyle T-shirts and action figures), Bud and Doyle are quickly losing favor with their fellow 'Domers. With interruptions such as "Tag" in the bug room and golf with a billy goat as a caddy, the scientists finally decide to exile their two "guests" to the Bio-Dome desert.

Shore once again delivers his wacky style of humor that made him famous with the MTV generation. He has an unlimited reserve of energy and turns what could be a boring movie about a big bubble into a hilarious adventure.



Photo courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures, Inc.

Pauly Shore and Stephen Baldwin strike a pose in the outrageous new comedy, "Bio-Dome."

Baldwin, the youngest of the four Baldwin brothers, follows Shore's lead and plays the dumb sidekick part well. Shore and Baldwin mesh well and make their characters believable.

The only problem with the chemistry between Shore and Baldwin is that it overshadows the rest of the characters.

Kylie Minogue, who played oceanographer Petra Von Kant, spends a lot of time on screen, but just seems to be a pretty face rather than a valued scientist.

Patricia Hearst and Roger Clinton also make appearances. But they, too, are hardly noticed.

As for the other actors, the writers seemed to have spent so much time with Bud and Doyle that they forgot anyone else was in the movie.

### The Facts

Film: "Bio-Dome"

Stars: Pauly Shore, Stephen Baldwin, William Atherton

Director: Jason Bloom

Rating: PG-13 (language, nudity, mature situations)

Grade: B

Five Words: Outrageously silly and environmentally fun

## Radio contest lets musicians hit airwaves

By Emily Wray

Staff Reporter

Nebraska Public Radio Network is focusing on young musicians in its new series, which is aptly titled "The Young Musicians Competition."

Steven Robinson, general manager of NPRN, developed the idea of holding a contest and featuring the winners in this series.

"There is hardly any attention given in the press to young musicians. Young athletes are written about every day. Young artists need recognition, too," Robinson said.

After submitting performance tapes in 1995, the winners each were given an opportunity to do a private recording session, he said.

In addition to recording their performances, winners also were interviewed. Each winner's recording is broadcast twice on NPRN.

Even though 1995 was the first year for this type of competition, Robinson said he foresaw an annual competition that would be open to the

entire NPRN listening area from Chadron to Falls City.

The young musicians' public exposure may even continue outside Nebraska's boundaries. Robinson said National Public Radio representatives had agreed to listen to three or four of the performances for prospective airplay on "Performance Today," an NPRN music program.

Several Lincoln-area schools are represented by the 15 winners selected. Six of those winners are UNL students.

Chris Bowlby, a junior piano major whose performances aired Jan. 3 and Jan. 9, said he was challenged by the recording process but was pleased with the outcome.

"The recording will provide a lot of exposure across the state and a nice product. It's also a chance to check up on my work and look for areas of improvement," Bowlby said.

Bowlby played primarily classical music, but other genres also are represented in the series.

Andrew Vogt, a senior saxophone major, recorded a jazz session with his quartet.

"It was a good opportunity to record from an educational standpoint, and I'm always looking for opportunities to perform jazz," Vogt said.

Vogt, who is also a composer, wrote half of the compositions featured on his April 3 and April 9 broadcasts.

Matthew Meyer, a senior percussionist whose specialty is marimba, recorded four pieces — two on marimba, one on multiple percussion and one on timpani. His first broadcast was Jan. 10, and his second will be Tuesday.

Meyer described his music as contemporary but not atonal. The marimba, he said, is a relatively contemporary instrument.

Seniors Julie Baker and Kenneth Floyd were winners in voice. Baker's performance will air Feb. 28 and March 5. Floyd's will air March 28 and April 2.

Pianist Lia Jensen's broadcast airs March 20 and 27, featuring her skills on the keyboard.

"The Young Musicians Competition" series, which began Jan. 3, will conclude April 16 and is underwritten by the Woods Charitable Fund.

## 'Two If By Sea' lacks comedy, surprises

By Gerry Beltz

Film Critic

If Denis Leary had just starred in the abysmal romantic-comedy "Two If By Sea," that would be forgivable; all talented stars have appeared in some piece of dreck in their careers.

(Granted, "romantic-comedy" and "Denis Leary" sound as if they should go together as well as "Newt Gingrich" and "humanitarian," but that's not important right now.)

But Leary contributed to both the story and screen play, thus placing the "smoking gun" next to his name.

Sandra Bullock's starring role makes this even more of a crime; she so desperately needed a hit after the lukewarm response to the so-called thriller "The Net."

A part-time burglar and plasterer, Frank (Leary) is on the run from the cops with a stolen

painting, a stolen car and his longtime girlfriend, Roz (Bullock).

Unfortunately, Frank has the intelligence of belly button lint, and Roz is the one who always comes up with the escape plans.

It's a few days until the buyer shows up to get the painting, so they hide out at a house left vacant while its owners are on vacation.

Frank is out of his element, dealing with the bluebloods he is rubbing elbows with. But Roz is another story. She really takes to the atmosphere of this society, and becomes the object of affection of neighbor, Evan (Stephen Dillane).

Not only does Frank have to avoid the cops (led by Yaphet Kotto) and Frank's cousin Beano (Wayne Robson), but he also must find a way to win back the heart of the woman he loves.

With all the different angles this movie presents (and ties up oh-so-neatly at the end), it's really not surprising that the characters have the depth of origami paper.

As the girlfriend who longs for change and happiness, Bullock is acceptable because she shows the most strength in her role ... at first.

### The Facts

Film: "Two If By Sea"

Stars: Denis Leary, Sandra Bullock, Yaphet Kotto

Director: Bill Bennett

Rating: R (language, adult humor)

Grade: D

Five Words: Bland story drowns talented cast

Eventually, she deteriorates into a whiny mass of gelatinous celluloid waste.

What is surprising is the lack of comedy with Leary and Bullock in the lead roles. The biting edge of Leary's past comedy bits would have been great, but all we get to laugh at are Frank's attempts to be sociable. The funniest bits come from the hapless antics of Beano and his bean-headed gang of morons.