

Activist talks of Christian, gay lifestyle

By ANN STACK
Senior Reporter

In 1985 the Rev. Dr. Mel White ghostwrote Christian fundamentalist Pat Robertson's book, "America's Date With Destiny."

Ten years later, Robertson had his former employee thrown in jail for trespassing.



White

White, who will be speaking at UNL tonight, worked with the evangelical Christian community for 30 years as a professor, pastor, filmmaker and communications consultant. He has a doctorate degree from Fuller Seminary in Los Angeles.

He was a ghostwriter for some of the industry's most powerful and influential men — Billy Graham, Jerry Falwell and Robertson.

And he is gay.

It wasn't easy, he said, to come to terms with his sexuality.

"I heard for so long that it was a sin and a sickness to be gay," he said. "When someone comes and represents the church, it's not a sin. It's a gift from God."

He came out on National Gay Pride Day, June 27, 1993, at the Cathedral of Hope Metropolitan Community Church in Dallas.

He later appeared on "60 Minutes" with Morley Safer and came out publicly, after his book, "Stranger at the Gate: To Be Gay and Christian in America," came out.

White said he spent 30 years trying to deny his orientation, going to therapy, hypnotists and undergoing shock treatments. He even lived in a heterosexual marriage, fathered two children and had a grandchild.

Still, the homosexual democrat ended up working for staunch conservatives.

"For the first 20 years of my life, I made films and wrote books that were deeply spiritual, that were very big in churches," he said.

"About that time, Billy Graham asked me to write a book for him," he said. "I suddenly found myself writing for these extremist Christians."

"This was when Communism was over and they needed a new enemy. They picked gays, just as I was discovering it was OK to be gay."

Of course, he said, as soon as he dropped the bombshell, most of his Christian friends dropped him. Robertson had him arrested for trespassing at the set of his "700 Club" TV show. He also received hate mail.

Many of the hate letters referred to the Leviticus passage that says "a man who lays with another man is an abomination into Christ."

"The scholars said that it has to do with priestly standards," he said, "for priests of total purity."

White said that if that passage were to be taken literally, children who sassed their parents, men who slept with their wives while they were menstruating, people who saw their grandchildren naked and any-

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ART APPRECIATION

Nebraska artists donate talent to local gallery

By BRET SCHULTE
Staff Reporter

Although Lincoln may seem to lack free expression, artistic endeavors are not limited to displays at the Sheldon Art Gallery or Lied Center. Local galleries, supporting a myriad of Nebraska artists, showcase regional artwork, ranging from expressionistic furniture to free-form sculptures.

The Noyes Art Gallery, 119 S. 9th, is a leader in the exhibition and support of local talent. Established in 1994 by Rick and Julia Noyes, the gallery operates as a cooperative between the owners and the artists.

The gallery has displayed wares from 23 artists across Nebraska. In exchange they pay a small fee and donate their time and talents to performing the more mundane tasks required to operate a business.

"We all try to spend at least one day a month here," contributing artist Jahanna Harsch said. "I do everything from acting as treasurer to cleaning the light bulbs."

The artists and owners in the co-op exist in a symbiotic relationship, helping each other survive in the uncertain and competitive world of art.

"If you are a lone artist trying to promote yourself, you are not going to have enough time to do art," Julia Noyes said. "This (co-op) really works out for everyone."

Artists have the chance to display their most recent



JAY CALDERON/DN

SPECTATORS STAND OUTSIDE of Noyes Art Gallery, 119 S. 9th St., looking at the work of Dean Palmerton in the foreground.

works every month. October features artists Beth Gaylord, emphasizing pastels; Sharon Ohmberger, exhibiting beautifully glazed pottery; and John Gentry who is using his camera and pen to document rural Nebraska with colored photos and poems.

"Each day I'll just take a different road going in a different direction," Gentry said.

Although three artists are featured this month, more than a dozen people display their talents in the gallery. Tammie Tonniges molds exquisite pottery implementing the ancient Japanese method of Raku.

Mike Fluent, a Norfolk native, said he feels most comfortable with a plasma cutter and a shiny sheet of aluminum. His surrealistic sculptures, often of women, utilize empty space framed by ornate metal work to convey a sense of flow and cohesion within the piece.

This group of Nebraska artists frequently works in the studios above the gallery, where a sense of collectivity and free expression emanate.

The collection of Nebraska artists and their work are on display from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

University orchestra opens season Three pieces to be performed in tonight's concert

By EMILY WRAY
Staff Reporter

The University Symphony Orchestra kicks off its season with a concert Thursday at Kimball Recital Hall.

Tyler White, director of orchestral activities and assistant professor of music, will conduct the 65-member group. The orchestra features three pieces in its 8 p.m. concert.

The ensemble plays *Elegy "to the memory of my friend, Serge Koussevitzky"* by Howard Hanson to celebrate the 100th anniversary of native Nebraskan Hanson's birth.

"Koussevitzky was a longtime conductor and music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra," White said. "He was a great champion of 20th century music. This is a tribute to his memory as a friend and mentor from Hanson."

The piece includes a brief quotation, or brief soundbite, from Hanson's own *2nd Symphony*, White said. Though quotations have become popular in the past 20 or 30 years, White said, Hanson used the particular quotation he did as a tribute to what Koussevitzky meant to his own career.

"The piece is characteristic of Hanson's mature work," White said. "Hanson has the wonderful ability to write memorable tunes."

White says that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat major for violin, viola, and orchestra, K. 364 (320d)* is an unusual piece.



COREY ROURKE/DN

TYLER WHITE directs the faculty recital Tuesday afternoon at Kimball Hall.

Mozart wrote the large grand concerto at age 23, White said.

"In maturity and subtlety, it's comparable with anything later in his life," he said. "It's long been recognized as one of his great achievements."

David C. Neely, assistant professor of violin and chair of the string division and Clark Potter, assistant professor of viola, are featured performers in the piece.

Symphony No. 8 in G major, Opus 88 by Antonin Dvorak is extremely lyrical with beautiful melodies, particularly for the cello section, White said.

The orchestra also fills a niche with its romantic music this season.

"In a way, it's a happy coincidence," White said. "The music is on our agenda at the time when it's not as much on the agenda of the professional orchestra in town."

White encourages students to attend Thursday's free concert and watch their colleagues on stage.

"I firmly believe as a musician in academia that getting students in the habit of going to concerts can be a really life-changing kind of thing," he said.

Concert Review

De La Soul gets crowd into concert

By PATRICK MINER
Music Critic

LAWRENCE, Kan. — De La Soul pleased a crowd of about 500 people Monday at the Granada with their signature fusion of hip-hop, soul and funk.

The band played Sunday in Ames, Iowa, sharing the ticket with Fishbone. When Fishbone dropped off the bill of the Lawrence show, the ticket prices dropped from \$24 to \$14.

Monday's show began with the song, "Wonce Again Long Island," from De La Soul's fourth and latest album, "Stakes Is High." Rappers Plug One and Plug Two immediately encouraged the crowd to jump around and sing the lyrics, which was unnecessary as most of the crowd was already bouncing to the tune.

The foursome, which also includes Plug Three and DJ Maseo, played for an hour and 15 minutes. Most songs played came courtesy of "Stakes." Several tracks were also heard from their first record, "Three Feet High and Rising."

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