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# Artist publishes book, opens anti-Warhol exhibit

WARHOL from page 7

The following year, an idea was born out of O'Connell's distasteful Institute experience. An idea for "The Anti-Warhol Museum: Proposals for the Socially Responsible Disposal of Warholia," a miniature limited-edition book that because of its design can be set up to look like a star-shaped building.

O'Connell put the offset press-produced book on sale in 1994, but three years and 20 art shows later she is still getting requests to display the work. "The Anti-Warhol Museum" will be part of Gallery 9's "Nebraska Book Arts Center Showcase," which has its opening reception Friday at 7 p.m.

The work's appeal is in its message as much as its design, O'Connell said. Each "page" consists of three parts: a message about some social injustice, a tiny reprint of a Warhol painting and a suggestion for how the money museums and galleries gain from selling Warhol pieces can be used to right social injustices.

For example: "Proposal No.5: European and American institutions holding Warhol's 'Statue of Liberty' ought to be funding refugee resettlement programs and immigration efforts."

"The Anti-Warhol Museum" is actually a departure from the handmade book medium in which

## Letterpress books an art

By JOHN FULWIDER  
 Senior Editor

Bonnie O'Connell's work is part of an exhibit of book arts curated by Denise Brady, coordinator of the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Nebraska Book Arts Center.

O'Connell's machine-printed piece actually isn't representative of most works in the exhibit.

All but two or three of the other works are made by a different printing process called letterpress. It's the "traditional" method of lining up by hand rows upon rows (upon rows upon rows) of individual letters cast in lead or another metal on a rack. The rack of letters is inked, then pressed into a piece of paper.

Some would say letterpress printing isn't art, it's a craft. Brady says it's both. Letterpress is a craft in that it requires perfection by practice of a repetitive hand skill.

"On the other hand, someone said when technology becomes obsolete, it becomes art," she says. Indeed, letterpress printing technology has become obsolete among commercial printers, which mass-produce books entirely by electronic automation.

Art books are just a pleasure to read, Brady says — filled with excellent writing (original poetry or stories), interesting illustrations and beautiful handmade paper.

Such books give the reader a connection to the artist that's impossible with a painting hung on a wall. The reader touches the hard work and care that went into placing each letter just so, getting the texture of the paper just right.

And unlike that painting on a wall, the person of average financial means can own an art book. They're typically produced in editions of 100-200 copies and cost around \$20-35, she said.

"These are books that are just a pleasure to read."

O'Connell usually works.

The Gallery 9 show will feature some of O'Connell's more traditional works that employ letterpress instead of offset printing techniques.

One book, "A Decade of Kooser

Valentines" is a collection of 10 annual valentines written by famed Nebraska poet Ted Kooser. Look inside the book for a new feature O'Connell recently figured out how to accomplish — a pop-up heart in the centerfold.

## Artist cuts, weaves watercolor works

AXTHELM from page 7

The effect she gets from weaving together two paintings intrigues her. She has to be careful to make parts of the two paintings similar enough that there is a recognizable focal point, because the image gets more and more distorted as she weaves out from the focal point.

"I think you can tell your story

through art," Axthelm said.

And she does — her story is of a woman who loved art as a child and transformed her fabric shop in Ord into an art gallery. She tries to spread her love of art to the next generation and is making art well into retirement.

"You're never too old to love art," she said.

Or too young.

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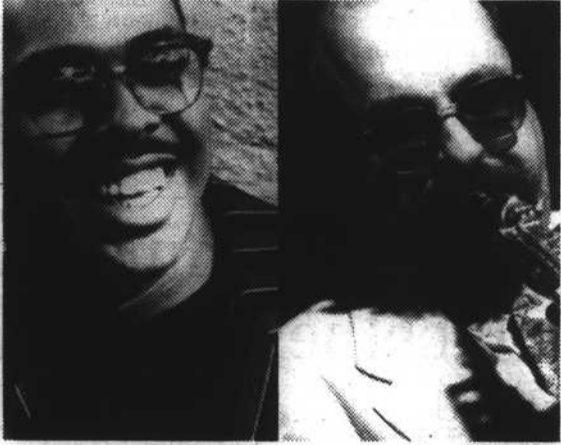


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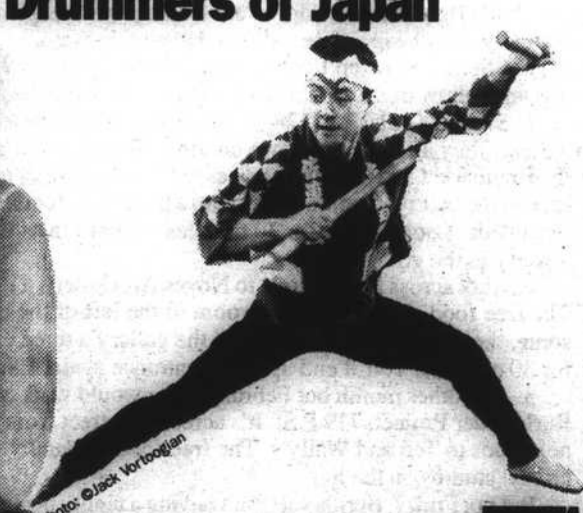


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