



"PABLO PICASSO AND PEERS" opens today at the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery. Open through February, the exhibit showcases more than 30 cubist and surrealist pieces from Sheldon's permanent collection.

Sheldon show explores Picasso's prolific career

Exhibit focuses on artist's historical evolution

BY JASON HARDY
Senior staff writer

Few 20th-century artists rival the reputation and artistic contributions of the Spanish painter and sculptor Pablo Picasso.

Having created more than 20,000 works in his 92 years, Picasso is regarded as one of the most innovative and prolific artists of modern day, if not of all time.

Starting today, the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, 12th and R streets, will showcase these contributions with an exhibition of more than 30 works by Picasso and some of his most notable contemporaries, including Georges Braque, Juan Gris, Jean Metzinger and Francis Picabia.

"Pablo Picasso and Peers" will trace Picasso's artistic experimentation via 17 works on paper ranging from symbolism to cubism to surrealism and touching on a number of Picasso's utilization of other styles.

George Neubert, director of the Sheldon, said many of the featured prints are from the gallery's permanent collection and were not previously on display.

"Our print collection is much more diverse and holds examples of artists beyond America," Neubert said. "This enables the local community to see the diversity and depth of our holdings outside of our normal focusing on American art."

He said this exhibition not only showcases the Sheldon's impressive variety of works, but it also allows exploration of Picasso's artistic development, as the exhibition will include pieces from 1911 through the 1960s.

"His impact on art in American art is indisputable," Neubert said. "This gives people an opportunity to experience one of the best artists of

the 20th century more in-depth.

"You really follow his artistic development through these prints, and you can also follow some of the issues historically, which are reflected in some of the images."

Neubert said most of the featured works are etchings, but there also are some lithographs and even four ceramic plates Picasso made. Together the works explore Picasso's many phases, including his development of cubism, surrealism and some of his linear drawings.

"Some are quite beautiful and elegant, and some are very angst-ridden," Neubert said. "But in totality, it's a very impressive selection."

Also featured will be 14 works on paper by a number of Picasso's contemporaries who all were influenced by Picasso's work. The pieces offer a historical explanation of Picasso's impact on modern art and document his creative journey. Neubert said that seeing the differences in the work of Picasso and some of his contemporaries shows the different directions the artists were exploring during the same time period—all the while illustrating Picasso's overwhelming influence.

Neubert said he was sure the exhibition would please more than just those with an interest in modern art and that he was proud to present such a well-rounded collection.

"Seeing them all together is impressive. It was a pleasant surprise to see the strength and diversity in the quality of the works," Neubert said. "Even though he may be avant-garde and modern, I think a lot of people still relate to his work, obviously because a lot of them reflect ideas and anxiety of our time."

The exhibit opens today and runs through Feb. 7. For more information, contact the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery at (402) 472-2461.

Zoo Bar combats closing; occupancy level increased

Iguana's owner denies rumors that she turned bar in

BY SARAH BAKER
Senior staff writer

Larry Boehmer isn't going to be singing the bar-closing blues anytime soon.

Boehmer, owner of the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St., fought back against the recent crackdown on fire codes his bar has been facing in the past two months—and won.

Boehmer said the bar was re-measured Nov. 23 and, after consideration and re-calculation, was granted a new occupancy rating of 125 patrons, up from the original, binding level of 86 people.

"We can't run as packed as we did in the old days," Boehmer said. "But we can do what we have done in the past with no problem."

Before the new measurements and figures were established, the Zoo received two write-ups for not complying with the old code and, because of the resulting monetary loss, could have faced at the least an all-local music schedule and at worst closing.

Boehmer said the bar was forced to book only local acts—when it has always been recognized for attracting some of the most famous blues artists of all time—but after the jump in occupancy, he said the bar will resume booking the usual national acts.

"This has been somewhat tiring, but it has been a learning experience," he said. "I am real happy we are staying in business. It's time to get back on track."

Since the crackdown, rumors con-

cerning the source of the complaints against the Zoo have run rampant. Most of the speculation accuses dueling O Street bars as the source of the incriminating reports.

Chuck Schweitzer, a fire inspector for the Building and Safety Bureau of Fire Prevention, stressed that no special measures were taken for the Zoo Bar and that any restaurant or bar can take the same steps that Boehmer did.

"Absolutely no exceptions were made for the Zoo," he said. "There was no preferential treatment. Mr. Boehmer just followed the procedures."

The process that Schweitzer described was simple. The owner of the establishment brings in an architectural drawing or blueprint of the business, and the fire inspector looks at the layout and decides on the best possible occupancy level according to the available space.

Schweitzer said the reason the bar got its occupancy level raised was because over the years, the layout of the furniture in the bar was re-arranged, therefore changing the useable square footage.

"If anything else, one of the most important things is that (all bars) have the option, they just have to follow the process," he said.

Schweitzer said the complaints—what originally made the fire marshal look into the Zoo Bar—started last year. Rumors have abounded around the local bar scene as to exactly who told on the Zoo Bar, and although specific bars have been named, neither Boehmer or Schweitzer would confirm anything.

"I am real happy we are staying in business. It's time to get back on track."

LARRY BOEHMER
owner of the Zoo Bar

"I won't verify anything," Schweitzer said. "All of the complaints we get are confidential. That is what I have told the public. I cannot go into specifics."

Jodi Luth, owner of Iguana's, 1426 O St.—one of the bars incriminated in the rumors—vehemently denied any involvement in the reporting of the Zoo. "I have heard the rumor twice, and I don't think it would make much sense for us to call them in," Luth said.

She added that Iguana's has also fought the battle of overcrowding and it has been a "constant hassle."

"It would have been pathetic for us to start it," she said. "I challenge anyone to come out and say it was me. I give (Schweitzer) permission to tell whether it was me or not. I demand he tell the truth."

Boehmer would not confirm any of the rumors, but added that he also wouldn't deny any of them.

"I have heard some specifics," he said. "But I don't want to declare war on anyone."

Tribute recalls N.W.A.'s hip-hop influence

Unfortunately, it doesn't live up to original 'Straight Outta Compton'

BY JEFF RANDALL
Staff writer

In the brief but storied history of hip-hop, a number of so-called "revolutions" have sprung forth.

And in this rapidly evolving genre—which is more populist and street-based than nearly all of its contemporaries—discerning the most prominent revolutionaries is a difficult task.

But all discussions of upheavals and breakthroughs in hip-hop are bound to contain three letters: N.W.A. And with 1998 as the 10-year anniversary of the release of "Straight Outta Compton," it's time to pay respects.

Priority Records does just that today, releasing a tribute album featuring a track-by-track reworking of the album by an assortment of modern-day rappers.

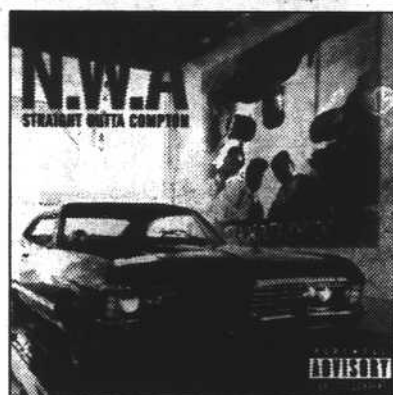
Founded in 1986 by Eazy-E (Eric Wright), a drug dealer turned record entrepreneur, along with Dr. Dre (Andre Young), DJ Yella (Antoine Carraby), MC Ren (Lorenzo Patterson) and Ice Cube (Oseia Jackson), Niggaz With Attitudes emerged from the streets of inner-city Los Angeles.

Musically, lyrically and socially, N.W.A. altered the face of hip-hop forever.

It singlehandedly created and perfected the so-called "gangsta rap" phenomenon. But to pigeonhole its influence into that limited genre would be both unfair and ill-advised.

The tracks that were laid down by Yella and Dr. Dre for N.W.A. records remain among the best ever heard.

Music



COURTESY PHOTO

Every album the group released was rampant with beats and low-end sounds that matched the lyrical fury second by second.

And the lyrics—by Eazy-E, Ice Cube and MC Ren—redefined hardcore sensibilities. They were at times misogynistic and quite often excessively violent, but they also spouted forth images of a grim reality that had never before been portrayed for such a wide audience.

Racism was an obvious target. But for N.W.A., crime, drugs, poverty and police brutality were facts of daily life, not overblown tales of immorality told merely for shock value.

Even after the members of N.W.A. went their separate ways, they continued to make their mark on hip-hop.

The most notable of these individuals are Ice Cube and Dr. Dre.

Cube has released more than a half-dozen critically acclaimed albums. His militant stature has dwindled slightly in recent years, but his early works (most notably "AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted" and "Death Certificate") are about as good as hip-hop albums get.

Dr. Dre truly spread his artistic talent around, expanding his producer role into the vocalist realm. Rolling Stone recently deemed his solo debut, "The Chronic," as the most popular blueprint for hip-hop artists of today.

Eazy-E, MC Ren and Yella also continued to record and influence fellow artists on different levels.

The fact that these five industry heavyweights were at one time recording under the same umbrella is virtually unmatched in popular music.

And it has now been a full decade since the release of "Straight Outta Compton," N.W.A.'s full-frontal attack on just about everything hip-hop had established.

And with the onslaught of obscenity-laden, bullet-riddled hip-hop albums that have followed it, one might expect "Straight Outta Compton" to have lost some of its immediacy and impact.

But then, one would be wrong.

From the opening sounds on the album—the strains of police sirens—all the way to the bitter end, "Compton" is a disheartening and expertly produced examination of ghetto life.

The title track sets it off, and the

Please see N.W.A. on 10