

Student exhibitionists

Rotunda Gallery exposes UNL student body to art

BY CHRISTOPHER HEINE
Staff writer

It is not easy getting your artwork seen by hundreds if not thousands of people. Especially in Nebraska.

But that's just the opportunity several University of Nebraska-Lincoln undergraduate art students will be afforded during the next two months.

The Student Art League will present two exhibits in the Nebraska Union's new Rotunda Gallery, located directly across from Imperial Palace Express. The show is juried by members of the Society of Art Historians, a student art club.

Traditionally, UNL art students have been limited to showcasing their talents on the outskirts of city campus at Richards Hall.

Larry Griffing, one of the featured painters of the exhibit, said the foot traffic of the union will benefit the artists.

"I like the high-profile aspect that comes with the student union," Griffing said. "I bet the walk-by effect is 10 or 20 times higher than it would be back at Richards Hall."

Art League acting President Jason Merritt agreed that the new location for exhibits will give art students better exposure.

"We feel great about having the show in the union," Merritt said. "So many people either hang out or pass through the building. It will not only give a lot of the students their first hanging in a professional atmosphere, but also good exposure."

Merritt said the exhibit will be divided into two shows. The first show, which officially runs from Jan. 15 to Jan. 26, will include ceramics, photographs, paintings and graphic designs.

The opening will be held Friday from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. However, the art might be displayed as early as today, Merritt said.

The second show, featuring works of sculpture, drawing, prints and art books, is slated to open Feb. 5 and will run through Feb. 19.

Merritt said the Art League collects several types of media for the show.

"The idea is to bring together as many forms of media as possible," he said.

"The forms of media designated to each show are divided up in more of a formal manner than for any conceptual reasons."

Merritt describes the work as "subtle yet cathartic."



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LARRY GRIFFING
painter

"Approaching art on an emotional level is an important part of understanding why people make it," Merritt said.

"The most provocative thread that seems to run through the best student work here is catharsis. When you can get a sense that these young artists are working on knowing themselves better — regardless if they ever become famous — you can really experience their deepest sense of reality."

Merritt said that most people in Nebraska don't understand how to approach art and that is why it isn't as popular here as in other places.

He said Griffing's painting, "Blue Dress," is a good example of the por-

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"SILENCED," an oil painting by senior art major Amy Martin, was selected to appear in this month's Student Art League exhibition.

ART COURTESY OF LARRY GRIFFING

(ABOVE LEFT) LARRY GRIFFING, an undergraduate art student, submitted three pieces to January's art league show in the Rotunda Gallery. "Equis," one of several abstract pieces, is likely to be selected from among his entries.

Theater department casts new faculty member

BY LIZA HOLTMEIER
Senior staff writer

In the acting profession, gauging the success of one's work by the amount of money earned can be self-defeating.

"Acting is a really perverse thing to do for a living. You'll do one job and get paid \$100, and then you do another job, do less work and get paid \$3000," says Andrew Sutherland. "There's no way to equate your work with money. The only reason to be an actor is because you love it."

Sutherland, a new professor in the UNL Theatre Arts and Dance Department, wants to teach his students how to survive in the sometimes distorted but exhilarating profession of acting. He hopes to give students practical advice on how to make a living acting, while helping them find self-fulfillment in their work.

Sutherland replaces former University of Nebraska-Lincoln Theatre Professor Paul Steger. Steger, who joined the faculty in 1991, moved to Los Angeles after the fall semester. He plans to tour for 10 months in a show written by two of his friends and to teach stunt and stage-fighting work-

shops in Seattle and Las Vegas.

Sutherland comes to UNL from Sacramento City College in California. There, he taught classes in movement and children's theater while serving as production manager for the college's theater.

This semester, Sutherland will take over stage combat, acting and movement classes at UNL. At the end of the semester, the department will hire a permanent replacement for Steger.

Sutherland said his first challenge at UNL is to build on what the acting students have already accomplished. He wants to provide the students with a certain level of continuity in their training.

To get to know the students and their abilities, Sutherland plans to immediately dive into the department by helping with the university's first spring play "Childe Byron." Sutherland will coordinate the sword fighting for the show, which follows the scandalous life of the renowned poet Lord Byron through the eyes of his only legitimate daughter.

"I'm just hoping he has a lot of energy and enthusiasm and is willing to take us to different places."

AMY RAFA
theater graduate student

"The best way to get to know actors is to watch them work," Sutherland said.

Sutherland's involvement in the show will also give his students a chance to adapt to his technique.

Students compared the arrival of the new professor to the experience of working with a new director.

"There's an amount of time where you're just sort of getting to know each other," said Amy Rafa, a theater graduate student. "You're trying to feel out his approach, and he's trying to figure out where you're coming from. That's sort of what you have to do with a director."

However, the rehearsal process doesn't provide

the luxurious amount of time a classroom situation does, Rafa said. As a student, Rafa said, she would have more time to adjust to Sutherland's methods.

"I'm just hoping he has a lot of energy and enthusiasm and is willing to take us to different places," Rafa said.

Sasha Dobson, a graduate student in theater, said the students realized the adjustment could take awhile.

"I think it's going to be especially hard for him coming into the department in the middle of the school year ... and replacing Paul Steger because he is so loved by this department and is such a great friend and teacher," Dobson said.

"Whatever (Sutherland) brings in, that will be great," Dobson said. "I think my class is always eager to learn anything and take whatever someone can offer."

Shirley Carr Mason, an associate professor of theater arts and dance, said Sutherland would instantly impress the students with his confidence.

"They'll immediately recognize that he knows exactly what he's talking about," Carr Mason said. "I think they'll be willing to trust him."