

Frantic 'Light' wears audience out

LCP production too high-strung to hold attention

By LIZA HOLTMEIER
Senior staff writer

Not even cotton candy has this much fluff.

"Light Up the Sky," a play running at the Lincoln Community Playhouse, romps through the eccentric circus of theater with puckish delight. But though the high-strung antics melt in the mouth, the audience leaves still hungry.

The actors maintain a breakneck pace with their theatrical hijinks, swearing oaths of loyalty and hatred in practically the same breath. But all that bipolarity can wear an audience out.

Moss Hart, the play's author, did not begin with the most original premise. His "Light Up The Sky" is a play about putting on a play.

The show begins in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Suite of a big-time Broadway actress, Irene Livingston. It's the opening night of her play's Boston preview, and everyone, from the director to the producer to the playwright, is flying high with the belief that they will reinvent theater.

But what begins as enthusiastic optimism develops into lowly depression when the Boston audience fails to



SCOTT McCLURG/DN
ECCENTRIC DIRECTOR CARLTON FITZGERALD (Scott Glen), pleads with Frances Black (Mindy Fuelberth), in "Light Up the Sky," produced by the Lincoln Community Playhouse. Nan Cowell (Deirdre Barney) back left, and Peter Sloan (Mark Giesler) look on from the bar.

Please see LIGHT on 11

Siedell focuses class on gallery

By CHRISTOPHER HEINE
Staff writer

Focus.

Art History instructor Dan Siedell intends to give his students a lot more of it this semester by emphasizing the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery as "part of our classroom."

Siedell said the curriculum for his class, Special Topics: New York School, will be built around the gallery's nationally reputable collection of such New York School artists as Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock.

The arrangement makes a lot of sense because Siedell also serves as curator of the gallery.

"The class is going to be able to better understand the complications and difficulties of certain pieces and artists of the movement," he said.

"It's almost impossible to get the same understanding from just slides."

The New York School consists of 1940s and 50s artists that helped define art movements known as abstract expressionism and avant-garde.

Siedell has reinstalled Sheldon-owned works from the period to fill two rooms at the gallery. The exhibit will "interact" with the curriculum for his special topics class, he said.

Students in the past have been encouraged to expand their knowledge of art movements and works at the gallery, Siedell said. However, he said this is an "opportunity to focus in-depth by studying one of the strengths of the gallery - early modernism."

It's all about actually seeing the art. "The class will be able to break down the period on much higher levels," Siedell said. "Students will be able

"Hopefully, this is the start of many other classes using the gallery in a similar fashion."

CRISTIN MAMIYA
art history professor

to see the differences between the more intellectual cubists and the gestural surrealists like Robert Motherwell."

For art students such as Jason Merritt, using the Sheldon as an instructional tool was a big opportunity.

Merritt said observing "actual works of the actual artists we're studying" will be beneficial.

A fine arts major, Merritt said each student in the special topics course should be able to apply his or her own interest. The class plans to visit the Sheldon together for the first time today, Merritt said.

"I'm really interested in the period in a historical sense," Merritt said. "It'll be interesting to study Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock in relationship to what they were doing during World War II and the advent of the atom bomb."

"It's great that we get to look at a lot of this stuff."

Art History Professor Christin Mamiya said a class like Siedell's is rare because he is curator of a gallery

Please see SHELDON on 11

Kilmer discovers vision in 'Sight'

By CLIFF HICKS
Senior editor

When two stars just can't make their performances click, it can single-handedly hold back a film. Such is the case with "At First Sight."

The film, which is based on a true story, stars Val Kilmer as Virgil, a massage therapist blind almost since birth.

Enter Amy Benic, played by Mira Sorvino, an architect who visits the spa where Virgil works and ends up falling in love with Virgil and his magic hands.

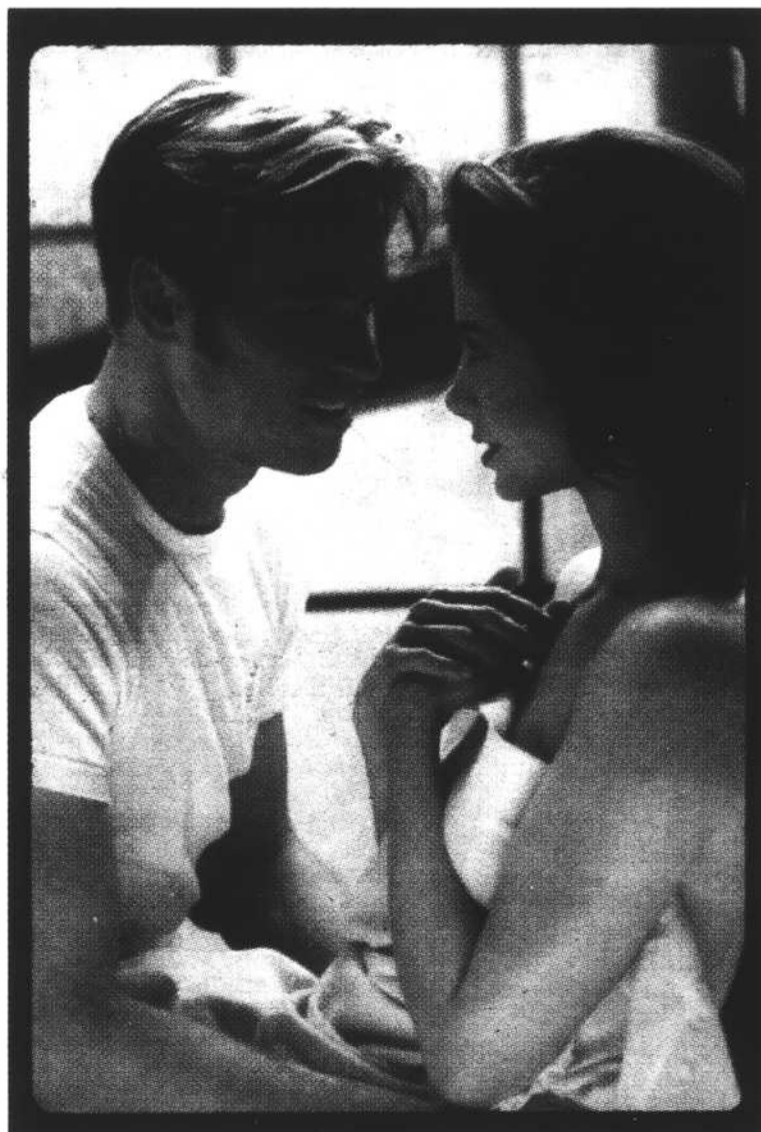
But this is only the beginning. After consulting with a doctor, it's learned that with surgery, Virgil will probably be able to see again. Despite a bit of reluctance to the idea, Virgil agrees.

Kilmer, who hasn't had any solid acting parts lately, really has a chance to shine here, and comes through in spades.

As a person who is abruptly thrust from complete darkness into blinding light, Kilmer reflects with adept skill the sudden and unforeseen changes such a person has to go through. It's a part that reminds us why we liked Kilmer in the first place.

Part of this is due to the solid script, which is based on a story by Dr. Oliver Sacks, who also wrote "Awakenings."

Virgil even meets Sacks, played delightfully by Nathan Lane, who tries to help him adapt to the new world around him, to understand what his brain has



COURTESY PHOTO

VAL KILMER stars as charming, blind masseur Virgil Adamson and Mira Sorvino stars as New York City architect Amy Benic, who convinces him to undergo experimental surgery that will restore his sight in the new film "At First Sight."

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