

# Rewriting History

**UNL art history professor co-authors newest edition of leading college textbook**

BY MELANIE MENSCH

Learning usually comes after reading a book, but for Christin Mamiya, the learning came before the book was even written.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln art history professor has co-authored the 11th edition of "Gardner's Art Through the Ages," the leading college textbook in art history.

Not only is the textbook used by all sections of Art History 101 and 102 at UNL, but schools ranging from community colleges to Ivy league universities.

Approximately 75,000 introductory art history students used the 10th edition, and that number is expected to increase with the new edition's arrival.

"This has a significant impact on the field of art history because so many students use it," said Mamiya, who has taught

at UNL since 1987.

"I was amazed at the fact that I learned so much myself. It allowed me to get in depth in larger areas of art history."

First published in 1926, the textbook was created with students in mind by Helen Gardner, a teacher at The School of Art Institute of Chicago.

Gardner's book gave students a global view of art history. The textbook began chronologically with cave paintings during the Ice Age through civilizations of the Orient, the Americas and Europe to contemporary artists of the time like Pablo Picasso, Edward Hopper and Georgia O'Keefe.

As these artists have become modern masters, new artists such as Jeff Koons and Chuck Close take Gardner's textbook into the next century.

"With such history and such tradition, this book is revered by many," said Mamiya, who received her A.B. cum laude in art history from Yale University and her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in art history from the University of California, Los Angeles. "I knew it was going to be an enormous responsibility, but I'm very pleased with the result."

In 1995, the senior acquisitions editor at Harcourt College Publishers visited various universities, including UNL, to talk to faculty about possible improvements on the 10th edition.

Mamiya then received a call from the editor in 1996 asking her to consider rewriting the next edition.

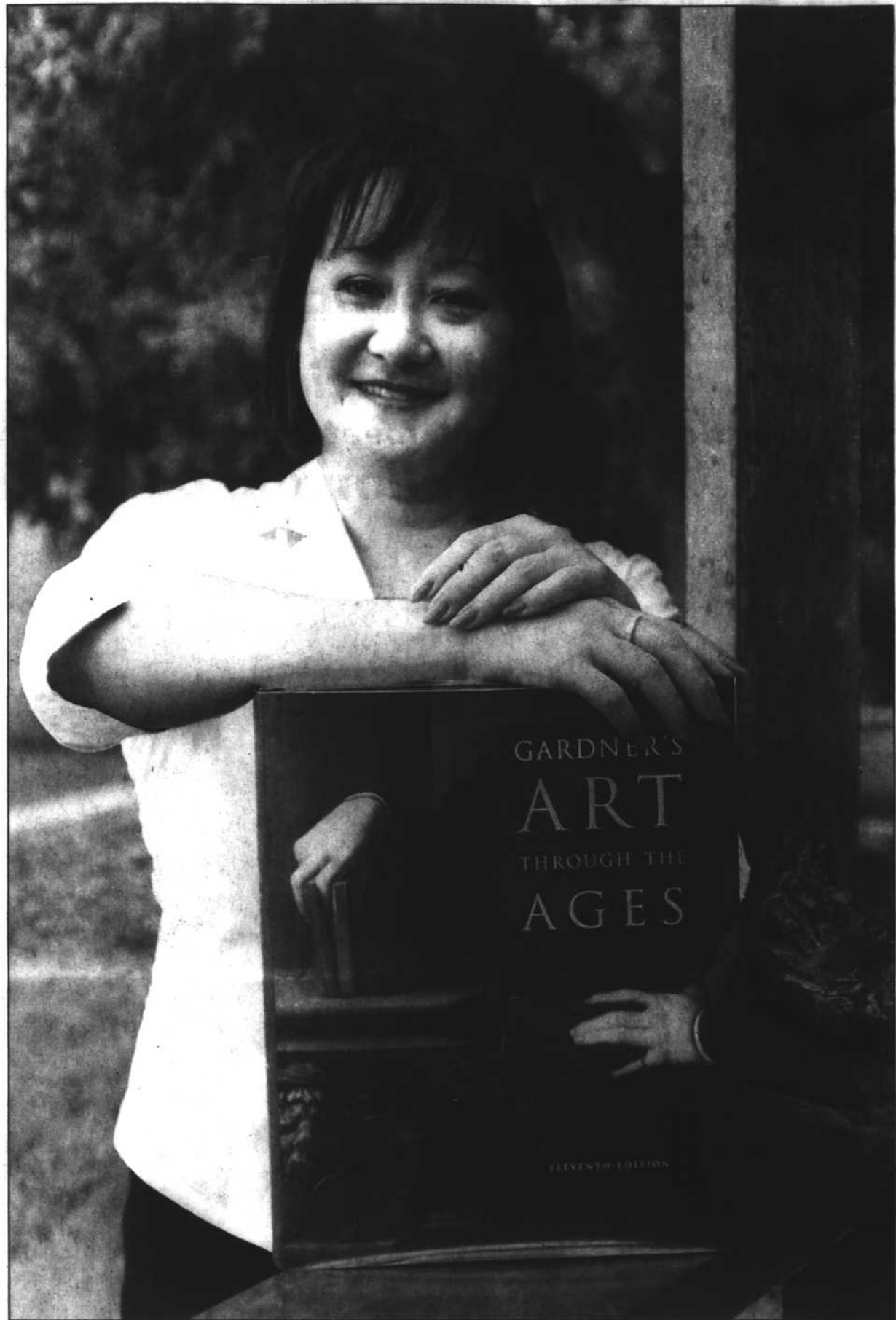
Mamiya began her work in 1997, researching and rewriting text without the benefit of leave or teaching assistants.

"I would finish researching at 5:30 a.m., and

*"I was amazed at the fact that I learned so much myself. It allowed me to get in depth in larger areas of art history."*

**Christin Mamiya**  
professor

Please see MAMIYA on 9



Dr. Christin Mamiya, UNL Art History professor, holds a copy of her recent book. Mamiya co-authored the recently published 11th edition of Gardner's Art Through the Ages.

Sharon Kolbet/DN

## 'Croupier' gives viewers slick film noir

BY SAMUEL MCKEVON

"What kind of people are these?"

"Drug dealers. Mostly people who work in the casino business."

"And the girls?"

"They're just girls."

"Croupier" is the kind of movie that instinctively understands that kind of dialogue, and, more importantly, what kind of story ought to surround it.

It's British film noir, a slick, coolly haunting portrait of the gambling London underground. But the movie has a decidedly international feel — good film noir is good, national origin regardless.

But "Croupier" is better than that — an idealized version of the genre that seduces while it shocks. It plays itself as an easy mark, much like its protagonist, casino dealer Jack Manfred (Clive Owen) sees his clients as their grubby fingers plop chips onto the table.

But as the tense closing sequences, which play like the last blackjack game before bankruptcy, unfold, the mark becomes pretty clear. It's pleasurable to find disjointed fragments come together, as they often do in David Mamet films.

But there's a deeper, more

rattling effect at work from director Mike Hodges, who set the standard for British gangster flicks with "Get Carter" in 1971.

It opens with Jack, played by Owen with detached charm, struggling to make the right ends meet as a writer. A publisher wants a soccer novel, complete with blood, sex and drugs.

Jack obliges but supplements his starving artist lifestyle with a croupier job at the London-based Golden Lion casino. Jack knows this game, having excelled at it in South Africa.

When he returns to the mirror-filled basement of the casino, his voice over narration welcomes him back to "house of addiction." We come to learn what he's talking about.

He's the son of a gambler, who seemingly hasn't made the right ends meet once in life. Jack won't gamble, can't gamble — it's against the croupier rules. There's other rules, all of which Jack commits himself. And then, one by one, he breaks them.

Screenwriter Paul Mayersburg surrounds the scene with the typical noirish fare — a faithful girlfriend (Gina McKee), a troublemaker (Kate Hardie), a mystery woman (Alex Kingston).

Jack begins to write an alternate novel about the business, about a croupier he names Jake.

And those two personas begin to blur as the movie runs longer.

"Croupier" makes much of the two ends of gambling addiction — indeed, in Jake's mind, the only two personalities in life — that of the gambler and the croupier. Gamblers have hope. Croupiers have odds. Gamblers have superstitions. Croupiers have rules. Gamblers lie. And under most circumstances, croupiers, good ones anyway, certainly do not.

Just how that figures into the central sequence of the film, how morality can honestly fit into a immoral situation, is best discovered in the theater. But the repercussions of that scene are stark. And then a final twist, a big javelin right into the heart of the plot, puts the pieces in place. Better yet, it reveals all the pieces that didn't seem to exist.

My favorite movies are these — the kind that wants it both ways and gets what it wants. Owen gives a fine performance — some have hailed him as a fine candidate for James Bond movies — but his best work is to stay solid and move within the plot, rather than overshadow it.

McKee is appropriately put-upon as the girlfriend, while Hardie, who plays a dealer named Bella, gamely plays the fringe character who "used to be in the game."

The real difference maker is

MOVIE REVIEW

### Croupier

Director: Mike Hodges

Stars: Clive Owen, Gina McKee, Kate Hardie

Rating: R, (language, violence)

★★★★ of 4 stars

Hodges, who understands noir is best filmed without snappy editing tactics and inhabiting a world where nearly everyone smokes their own brand of cigarette. His camera plays fine tricks with the casino mirrors and drab, dead-looking flats.

It's that little film of sleaze that hangs over every scene that completes the portrait. Characters speak lines like they've spoken them before, playing the same game with new faces that turn out to be the same characters. I could spend all day with these characters, right through the moment they robbed me blind.

Title: "Croupier"  
Stars: Clive Owen, Gina McKee, Kate Hardie

## Theatre department offers new media

BY EMILY PYEATT

Students and film aficionados can now start creating their own films and computer animation through the Theatre Arts Department.

The addition of film classes, history, theory, screen writing and now filmmaking with new media have intensified the maturing film program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Last year, a film studies major was finally accepted, allowing students to pursue a Bachelor of Arts with a historical and theoretical approach to cinema.

The Department of Theatre Arts has now created a Film and New Media program that gives students hands-on experience in the filmmaking process.

Richard Endacott, a professor of filmmaking and screen writing, said the program simply offers classes that students have expressed considerable interest in taking over the years.

Although the program offers courses with an emphasis in film, there is not a major or minor accompanying the new program.

The program combines two separate areas of study by inte-

grating the classic production of film with digital and technical styles considered new media.

"We're lucky," Endacott said. "This program isn't strictly film or strictly technical. Since we are so new, we have the luxury of fine tuning this program to what students want to take."

With the new program in place, students can now take both digital and traditional 16 mm filmmaking courses.

The new media now offered includes CD-ROM authoring, multimedia, computer animation, special effects, web design and computer editing.

The computer aided theater design classes and technology from previous years have expanded to include the production and new media courses in the film program.

"Our program has high potential," said Sharon Teo, assistant professor of film production and 1998 American Cinema Editors (ACE) Eddie Award winner for best student editing.

"We are not trying to be NYU or UCLA, but we are trying to build a film program that doesn't exist by combining film with technology."