

## Ex-plumber constructs complex art using trash

BY DANE STICKNEY

Dave Stewart's ascension as one of Nebraska's best artists is a story straight out of Hollywood.

He sold his successful plumbing business in Hastings for a custodial job in the local college art department. Like good Will Hunting, Stewart saw an assignment on the chalkboard and anonymously submitted a finished piece to the department's art gallery.

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Turner McGehee  
Hastings College  
art department director

unusual way, Stewart decided to enroll in art classes and has completed every art course offered.

Because his job as a custodian provides a variety of interesting artistic material, Stewart's artwork has an unusual impact.

It has drawn critical acclaim across the state, including his being named one of Nebraska's best artists by the Omaha World-Herald. Twenty-eight of his pieces, titled "Found Object Constructions," are on display at the Haydon Art Gallery, 335 N. 8th St., until Nov. 18.

H. y. d. o. n. Director Teliza Rodriguez anticipated the show would be popular as it demands that viewers "have questions."

"He poses a statement with no exact answer," she said. "He just leaves it up to you to interpret."

Stewart's artwork has depth on multiple levels, literally and figuratively.

His artwork can be classified as assemblage, with various pictures, advertisements and three-dimensional objects put together to comment

on different aspects of society.

Allusions to cigarettes, patriotism, women's rights, technology and Time and Life magazines abound. Many pieces look like shadow boxes — one picture attached to the glass and another picture to the back of the box a few inches behind the glass.

But Stewart's creativity goes beyond the shadow-box motif. One piece of art, "Old Gold Dancing Pack," consists of a large cigarette box situated on top of life-sized mannequin legs.

In another unusual piece, "Talkin' Trash," headphones hang on the wall, their cord leading into a silver trash can filled with broken stereo parts. Two halves of a smashed boom box are at the top of the trash can; one-half still plays music.

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Teliza Rodriguez  
Haydon Art Gallery director

Heather Donahue, Justin Leonard and Mike Williams

R (language)

4 stars

### "Those Daring Young Men"

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Friday at the Haydon.

"He is a unique individual," Rodriguez said. "He's always wearing overalls with a notepad in his pocket, so he can write down any ideas he has."

McGehee said Stewart is unlike anyone he has ever met, and the fact Stewart abandoned his business to pursue art is proof.

"Dave is a very independent individual," he said. "He does exactly what he wants to do. He doesn't need prestige or anything like that."

One thing that Stewart does need is trash, so he can keep producing his constructions.

"I have to be very careful about what I throw away," McGehee said. "I have to take it somewhere else if I don't want it to be part of one of Dave's constructions."

### piece of crap."

Sure is. In almost all the ways a movie can be. If anything, a horror movie this gory and laughless shouldn't be confusing from start to finish. But "Blair Witch 2" ups the ante, doubling the confusion by questioning if anything that occurs onscreen actually does.

There is no such question in the original, which builds the tension on the imminent shoe that's about to drop on the three student filmmakers investigating the legend (Heather Donahue, Justin Leonard and Mike Williams). We know the shoe's going to drop. They know it. The intrigue is in realizing our expectations. This, if it scared a person, is what scared them: Certainty of fate, uncertainty of method.

"Blair Witch 2" has the obvious conclusion, but director/co-writer Joe Berlinger has drawn these five characters: the guide; a goth (Kim Director); a couple writing a book (Tristina Skylar and Stephen Barker Turner); and a Wiccan (Erica Leeheen) as such unlikable folk that emotional connection is impossible.

Moreover, when odd things go bad in the woods, and later, in the guide's warehouse of a home, we haven't reached a level of caring.

Part of it is the acting, which is bad, so bad, that to watch them



Delan Lonowski/DN

deliver lines turns into a fest of winces. Not to say the first "Blair Witch" cast, outside of Donahue, had a deep gorge of talent, but so much more acting is required to be done here. And so much less is done with it.

It plays like a cheap and bloody B-movie, without the buxom babes and hunks to offer as eye candy. The woods scenes are brief, as the tour group finds their camp destroyed in the morning and wondering why. They spend the next hour of the movie sitting in a warehouse watching

video, occasionally seeing apparitions. Then, more gore, a slapped-together aftermath and an ending.

A few lingering questions: Why is the sheriff of the film, whose name I cannot locate on any Web site, a long-haired, cowboy hick of a cop? Why does he speak in sound bytes that seem lifted from a Martin Luther King Jr. speech? Why does the film place the tour guide in the mental hospital as a prologue to the story?

And why, anybody, is the movie titled, "Book of Shadows"? There is no book and no shadows



Courtesy Photo

GALLERY PREVIEW	
Found Object Constructions	
Where:	Haydon Art Gallery 335 N. 8th St.
When:	Now until Nov. 18 Opening reception Friday @ 7 p.m.
Cost:	Free

## Moviegoer: Blair Witch sequel a 'complete piece of crap'

BY SAMUEL MCKEON

You play coy — that's the strategy. Like you've done this before. Slide the money over, bite that lower lip, pray to the god of lenient ticket-takers.

A couple of girls tempted fate for entrance into a late afternoon showing of "Book of Shadows: Blair Witch 2" at the Lincoln Theater. The gods were unkind.

Girl No. 1, the brave one, the one with the wire frames, retrieved the money and offered a sheepish shrug. Her blonde friend blushed. Denied from the biggest fall movie event since who knows what. Denied from the sequel of "The Blair Witch Project," a cleverly marketed and edited horror film.

Made for peanuts, good for millions, the movie spawned a movement, a Web site, a couple of documentaries, two best-selling books, eBay madness and a bunch of very pissed-off people in the town of Burkittsville, Md., site of the original film, shot nearly four years ago. There is nothing to see in Burkittsville because the movie, while pitched as a documentary, was entirely fictional, ingeniously so, but still quite made up. A far fetch. A tall tale.

But devoted "Blair Witch" fans came anyway, hoping for a glimpse of the legend, maybe one of those mysterious stick figures

lurking in the woods. These are the same kind of people who gleefully enter pyramid scams and own sea monkeys.

The sequel, as much a departure from the documentary style of the first as it could be, plays upon that phenomenon in the opening scenes, the only ones worth saving for an alternate film that ought to exist in place of unspeakable tragedy that currently graces the celluloid.

There's cut after cut of disgruntled Burkittsville residents, mixed in with aspiring entrepreneurs, explaining the "Blair Witch" theory and mass exodus to the area. It then cuts to a fictional tourist team, "The Blair Witch Hunt," a collection of four Gen Xers and a tour guide (Jeff Donovan) crazy enough to believe this legend might be real.

There are few scenes after the introduction of the characters that have any genuine value. "Book of Shadows" is a walk-out kind of movie, an incoherent, interminable mess that doesn't deserve your attention long enough to figure out what's going on.

Better yet, it's a please-never-go kind of flick. Waste money at your own risk. To quote Lincoln Theater employee and UNL sophomore communications major Karissa Kumke: "It's a complete

piece of crap."

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MOVIE REVIEW	
The Blair Witch Project	
Directors:	Daniel Myrick & Eduardo Sanchez
Stars:	Heather Donahue, Joshua Leonard, Mike Williams
Rating:	R (language)
★★★½	of 4 stars
Blair Witch 2 Book of Shadows	
Director:	Joe Berlinger
Stars:	Bad Actors
Rating:	R (language, gore)
★★★½	of 4 stars

that have anything to do with the book that doesn't exist.

The movie played to an audience of about 12 on Monday afternoon, which proves that the sequel won't work box-office magic like the first. Those girls, coy and blonde, didn't miss a thing.