

City's art scene thrives during holiday season

LINCOLN from page 8

McClain also will be having a party for the release of her new CD, which she recorded live a few years back at Lincoln's now-defunct Purple Moon Café.

On December 31, Abendmusik's "Last Blast New Year's Eve Concert" will be held at First Plymouth Congregational Church.

The Plymouth Brass will perform its sixth annual New Year's Eve concert with a pre-concert dinner and post-concert dessert also offered, including mid-night champagne to welcome in 2001.

Other art events that will begin in 2001 are:

The Lincoln Community Playhouse will present, "The Little Prince," opening on January 11 and running through the 21st.

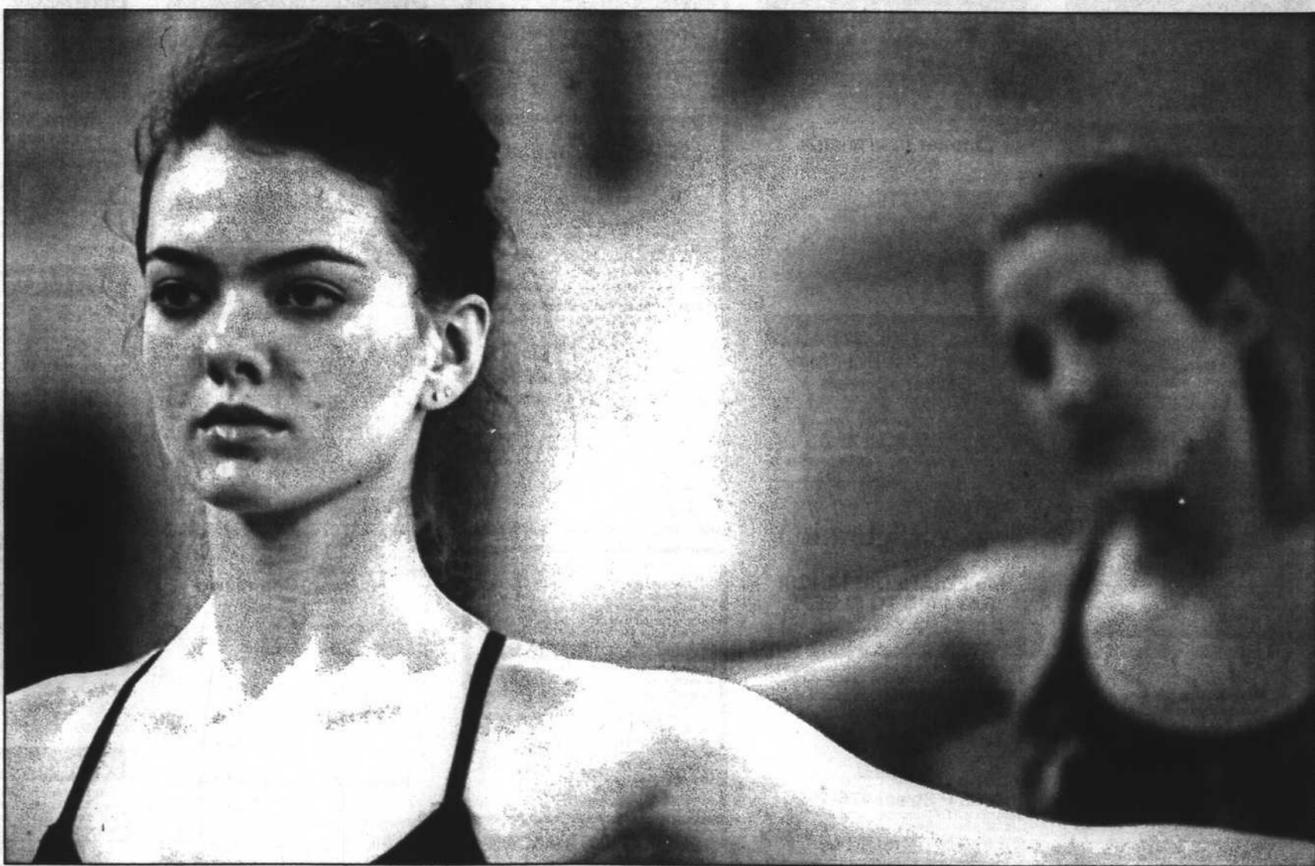
The Sheldon Art Gallery also will get in the act opening its showcase "African American Quilts" on January 12.

Also of interest on January 14, UNL's premier choral ensemble, the University Singers, will present a performance at New York City's Carnegie Hall.

The University Singers will perform with the New York Chamber Orchestra and singers from Hofstra University for a performance of Mendelssohn's Psalm 42, Opus 42.

So there's a sampling of what is going on in the Lincoln arts and entertainment world. If you get a little tired of your Uncle Lenny and Aunt Martha, try a few of the ideas out.

Whether these events can draw students away from their new PlayStation 2s is still to be decided. That's up to you.



DEDICATED DANCERS: Alyson Edle and Margaus Chapin focus on dancing in sync with the music during advanced ballet practice at Chase Fitness 643 S.25th Street. Both girls have been taking ballet or dancing for 7 years and were preparing for the end of the year recital.

Nate Wagner/DN

This year's films offer the good and the bad

MOVIES from page 8

ter, a LA high school basketball player who falls in love with her neighbor, also a basketball star (Omar Epps). The movie catalogs, by quarter, their romances and career arcs.

Non-pandering movies like this are rare. Latham nicely embodies the heart of a woman whose love for basketball begins to wane, not in a phony, useless way, but in the right one, as she longs to return home and rekindle love with Epps' character.

4. "High Fidelity" - Can more movies about love be made like this? John Cusack's adaptation of the Nick Hornby novel may not be set in Britain, but it's been pitched perfectly to Chicago, where Rob (Cusack) owns Championship Vinyl, a classic record store that serves as his monologue backdrop, which cover the failed romances in his life.

Rob has just been left by Laura (Iben Hjejle), who he'd like to place into the same sordid list of former loves, but can't. "High Fidelity" is bottom-line honest about everything within, music

and love included, with side performances from Todd Louiso and Jack Black, as Rob underlings, who fill their respective roles well. You see the movie, you want to see it again. See it again, and you want to be the movie.

3. "American Psycho" - A big wink and nudge to the 1980s, with one hell of a performance from Christian Bale. Mary Harron's movie is the type of tight, weird, period drama we need more of - a criticism through humor, rather than a pointed finger accented by a sarcastic laugh.

Bale's Patrick Bateman is a young tycoon on the verge of losing his mind, so much so he's murdering his friends. It gets stranger from there. Pay attention to the opening scene; it says quite a bit about what eventually unfolds.

2. "Time Code" - It is rather easy to overlook Mike Figgis' movie as a gimmick - running four screens uncut, simultaneously, with one uninterrupted take - without seeing the point buried beneath, which cuts right to the meat of Hollywood thinking. The conclusion nicely points toward that moment. And the beginning, mostly

covering love lost and found, is a unique tale all its own. Not many people have seen it. Many people should.

1. "Hamlet" - The top movie so far is an adaptation, a roaring, alive version of the tale, aptly updated for the modern century in New York City, starring Ethan Hawke in the title role. The pleasures of this film are many. Not the least is Hawke's performance, which captures the slacker, brooding nature of the character. Updating the story into the video age was a wise touch by director Michael Almereyda.

The story is still one of Shakespeare's best. What's more, it fits the new setting, which can't necessarily be said for all films. The movie is not garish, like "William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet", nor does it spend much time on violence. Rather, it explores the matter inside out, as the cast is a aptly troubled clan of folks, and that troubled nature leads to more trouble, which leads to more, which leads to more...

Special Distinction: "Bamboozled" - Spike Lee's film on race is brilliant and hampered at the

same time by its use of blackface. See it, but be prepared for the reality of being severely put off by the use. I didn't grade this film.

The five worst:
5. "The Replacements" - A worthless football movie. Devoid of any reality or enjoyment. The movie has no idea how to cut a film.

4. "Blair Witch 2" - They made it. I will never know why it was made like this. Utter exploitative trash.

3. "Down To You" - My God, is this thing laughable. Julia Stiles, an upcoming talent, was wasted in this teen-college movie, along with Freddie Prinze, Jr. It spends a lot of time on porn.

2. "The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle" - The movie is so self-aware of itself it simply ceases to exist. The first film that would rather be its own in-joke than a film. I kept waiting for the movie to dissolve or something.

1. "Whatever It Takes" - This movie ought to be arrested for rape, for that's exactly what occurs late in the film, and nobody seems the wiser. This was a teen comedy, disguised as sado-masochism.

Poe weighs in with haunting, innovative cuts

ALBUMS from page 8

Techno music received a new audience when Fatboy Slim's "You've Come a Long Way, Baby" was released in 1998 with accessible and pop-friendly tunes such as "The Rockefeller Skank" and "Praise You." But following up such a huge hit is tough. Fatboy Slim solidifies the statement with "Halfway Between the Gutter and the Stars." Collaborating with Macy Gray on two of the album's tracks was Norman Cook's first mistake, catering to the lackluster demands of the funk queen whose 15 minutes have expired. The first single from the album, "Sunset (Bird of Prey)" brings back the complaints that techno music doesn't go anywhere.

Unfortunately, Fatboy Slim turns Jim Morrison's voice into one of the most annoying sounds ever to the human ear after seven minutes of listening to it say, "Bird of prey." But on the opening track, Cook cuts off the song just as it begins to get interesting, filling the first half with redundant shouts from a Gospel-pop nobody who deserves to remain that way.

Best Album: Poe, "Haunted"

Based on recordings of her late father's voice, "Haunted" explores Poe's pursuit of spirituality and closure. The album is filled with Poe's great alternative rock and each track is segued with the next with ambient and thrilling compositions.

The album was recorded entirely on a computer, allowing Poe to take tracks recorded for one tune and put them into a completely different song. This practice makes "Haunted" the most connected album I have ever heard. The inclusion of her father's voice makes the album crawl with frightening yet touching energy. Hearing Poe's fabricated conversations with her father could break even the hardest exterior. "Haunted" deserves more attention in the public eye.

It houses real emotions and the raw tastes of the bitterness of life. And by the time "Haunted" plucks its final note, the listener feels like they have actually experienced something worthwhile.

'Kid A' claims most overrated album

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Best Comeback: the Go-Betweens, "The Friends of Rachel Worth" This Australian pop duo spent the last 12 years doing nothing, yet they emerged with some of their strongest material ever. Having more in common with their early raw output, Quasi and Sleater-Kinney help re-define the group's indie-pop sound.

Best cover song: Macha, "Believe" (originally by Cher) From the "Macha Loved Bedhead" tribute-album-of-sorts, this ultra-saturated rendition of one of 1999's dance floor anthems brings out the oft-overlooked sentiment in

today's pop music. Complete with a touch-tone melody you can try at home.

Runner-up: Helio Sequence, "Tomorrow Never Knows" (originally by The Beatles)

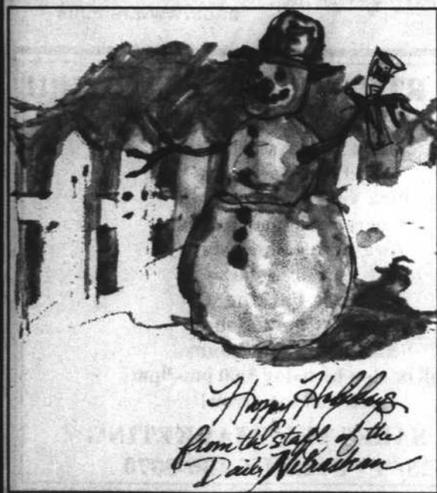
Most overrated album: Radiohead, "Kid A" Had anyone other than Radiohead released this album, no one would have cared. But as is the nature with being revolutionary, Radiohead's experimentation has been done before. So hooray, Radiohead have finally caught up with 1996. At least they're out of 1993.

Best Album: Super Furry Animals, "Mwng" Recorded on an \$8,000 budget, this Welsh quintet

still produced one of the most sonically exciting and challenging albums of the year. It would be the best sing-along album of the year if not for the fact that all of the songs are in their native tongue.

Defiantly spitting in the face of indie-rock norms, the Super Furry Animals continue to grow as a band and remain one of the finest examples of a group writing songs as a group. In any other context, their songs would be golden indie-pop classics, yet their insistence on pushing the sonic envelope will always put their music a few decades ahead of the charts.

Runner-up: the Cure, "Bloodflowers"



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