

ARTS ALIVE

THE SOUTHERN NEVADA MAGAZINE OF THE ARTS



Pianist Laura Spitzer:

She got her act together and took it on the road with Lorelle Nelson

Theater in the square: UNLV season

ALLIED
ARTS
COUNCIL

JULY/AUGUST 1984
VOLUME 4, NUMBER 4

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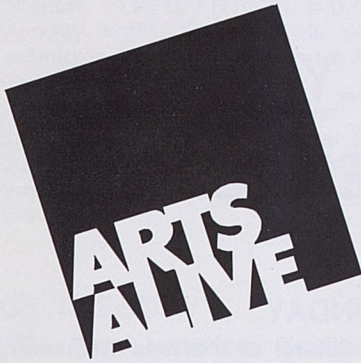
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Arts Alive is published by the Allied Arts Council of Southern Nevada and is distributed bi-monthly to its members. Call **731-5419** for membership information.

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Arts Alive is typeset through the courtesy of the *Las Vegas SUN*, its staff, and its computer services. The Allied Arts Council is partially funded by the Nevada State Council on the Arts, and funded mainly by our members and business supporters. Opinions expressed by columnists are theirs and not necessarily those of the Allied Arts Council board or staff. Information provided is as accurate as can be obtained at presstime, but is subject to change.

Arts Alive is published bimonthly at the subscription price of \$20 a year by the Allied Arts Council of Southern Nevada, 3207½ Las Vegas Blvd. So., Las Vegas, NV 89109. Second class postage pending at Las Vegas, Nevada. Postmaster: Send address changes to: Allied Arts Council, 3207½ Las Vegas Blvd. So., Las Vegas, NV 89109.



COVER PHOTO:

Laura Spitzer, pianist, and Lorelle Nelson, piano technician. Photo by David Brown. (See story, page 16.)



"Girls Just Want to Have Fun," 40x60 inch acrylic by Donna Beam. Her exhibit opens at the Gallery at First Western August 3 from 4 to 5:30 pm.; and the show continues through August 31.

Arts mailing list available

As part of its ongoing membership drive, Allied Arts Council has compiled a massive list of arts supporters, businesses, and other potential donors, which is available for use by non-profit organizations.

The list totals approximately 18,000 names, including over 3,000 businesses, and can be printed on pressure-sensitive labels in zip code order for easy use.

The mailing lists of virtually every important art organization in the area has been incorporated, and duplicate names have been removed. The final list is divided into various categories, such as "businesses," "visual artists," "high income addresses," etc. Organizations may purchase the entire list or any portion of it. For information on cost, call Allied Arts at 385-7345. **AA**

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The **DEADLINE** for copy, artwork, and ads for the September/October issue of *Arts Alive* is August 1.

JULY EXHIBITS

01 SUNDAY

The Las Vegas Artists Co-op presents featured artist Stella Kovats, impressionist oils, upper level, Meadows Mall, through July 31. 877-0761.

First Annual City Slide Competition, co-sponsored by the Clark County Library District and the Nevada Camera Club. The contest is open to all amateur Southern Nevada photographers. Entry forms available at all libraries. Entries will be accepted at Flamingo Library July 20, 21, 22, 28, and 29. 733-7810.

Jack Malotte: A contemporary exhibit of native Nevadan land and people; a series of ten mixed media drawings; Charleston Heights Arts Center, through July 20. 386-6383.

Pam Watson, silk flower arrangements and pottery, Henderson Library, through July 31. 565-9247.

"Mother and Daughters;" photographic exhibit by Linda Grove and her daughters Belinda and Diane, Flamingo Library Upstairs Gallery, through August 3; opening reception, 3 pm. 733-7810.

Permanent Art Collection of the Clark

County Library District, including the winners of the annual Art-A-Fair purchase awards, Flamingo Library, through August 17; opening reception 3 p.m. 733-7810.

Donna Myerson, photographs, in the Nevada Artist Gallery; works from the Bicentennial Collection in the Main Gallery; and works from the Suitcase Gallery in the Youth Gallery; Las Vegas Art Museum, Lorenzi Park, through July 31; opening reception, noon to 4 p.m. 647-4300.

02 MONDAY

"From the Neo-Gothic Garden," paintings by Sylvana Barrett Abrams, presented by the Allied Arts Council at the Gallery at First Western Savings, 2700 W. Sahara, through August 2. Opening reception, 4 to 5:30 p.m. 731-5419.

08 SUNDAY

Dottie Burton, one-woman watercolor show, Charleston Heights Arts Center, through August 2; opening reception, 2 to 4 p.m. 386-6383.

JULY EVENTS

01 SUNDAY

Nevada School of the Arts Elementary I Program for children 8 to 11, teaching music, drama, dance, photography, through July 7, Lee Canyon. Fee: members, \$199; nonmembers, \$225. 739-3502.

"Love All People" in concert, Sahara Space Center, every Sunday, 3 p.m. Free. 731-0502.

Sylvia Syms with Jazz All-Stars Jack Sheldon (trumpet), Don Menza (tenor saxophone), Vince Falcone (piano), Bob Badgely (bass), and Carmen Castaldi (drums), French Quarter Room, Four Queens Hotel, 10 p.m. and midnight. 385-4011.

02 MONDAY

Allied Arts Council board meeting, Council offices, 3207½ Las Vegas Blvd. So., 5:30 p.m. 385-7345.

Patrons are guided through the collection at the recent Rembrandt opening at Minotaur Galleries in the Fashion Show Mall.



PHOTO: GINGER BRUNER

Joe Behar's Community Drama Workshop, Las Vegas Press Club, at its new location, 1116 E. Fremont, 8 p.m. every Monday night. Emphasis is on stage technique, scenes, and improvisations. Free. 731-4291.

Ernie Watts, alto saxophone, at Alan Grant's Monday Night Jazz at the Four Queens, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Recorded for later broadcast over KNPR 89.5 FM. 385-4011.

03 TUESDAY

"The Great American Tradition;" the Las Vegas Symphony Orchestra with Luisa Triana and Company in a South American dance potpourri, and Elissa Stutz in George Gershwin's Concerto in F, as well as a special multimedia presentation. July 3 and 4, 2 pm. Tropicana Hotel. 739-3420.

Las Vegas Poetry Group, Flamingo Library conference room, 7 p.m. Bring your favorite or original selection for reading and discussion. 733-7810.

04 WEDNESDAY

"The Great American Tradition." See 7/3.

Japanese floral art classes, presented by the Nevada chapter of Ikenobo Ikebana, 6 to 7 p.m. every Wednesday. 452-1920.

06 FRIDAY

Children's Theater, directed by Jay Elliot, presented by Joe Behar's Community Drama Workshop every Friday night, 8 p.m. at Chuck E. Cheese's, 3430 E. Tropicana, with stories, magic, mime, dance. Free. 731-4291.

08 SUNDAY

Nevada School of the Arts pre-junior high session of Summer Arts Camp, Lee Canyon, teaching music, visual arts, drama, dance, through July 14. Fees: Members, \$199, nonmembers, \$225. 739-3502.

"Love All People." See 7/1.

09 MONDAY

Community Drama Workshop. See 7/2.
Nevada State Ceramic Association, monthly meeting, Denny's, W. Sahara and Rancho, 8 p.m. 877-1614.

Gloria Lynne, vocalist, at Alan Grant's Monday Night Jazz at the Four Queens, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Recorded for later broadcast over KNPR 89.5 FM. 385-4011.

10 TUESDAY

"The Blue Bird" with Elizabeth Taylor, Jane Fonda, Cicely Tyson and Ava Gardner; children's musical fantasy film, Reed Whipple Center, 3 and 7 p.m. \$1. 386-6211.

11 WEDNESDAY

Japanese floral art classes. See 7/4.
"Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," Disney film, Charleston Heights Arts Center, 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and Baker Park, dusk. Free. 386-6383.

12 THURSDAY

"Barnum," musical performed by the Rainbow Company at Spring Mountain Ranch State Park and presented by the State Parks Cultural Arts Board, 8 p.m., July 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, and 28. Gates open at 6 p.m. and close at 8 or when the parking lot is full. 875-4141.

Utah Shakespearean Festival, Cedar City, Utah, featuring "The Taming of the Shrew," "Troilus and Cressida," and "The Tempest," through September 1. Las Vegas contact: 870-7442.

"Crimes of the Heart" by Beth Henley, directed by Kathryn Sandy O'Brien, Las Vegas Little Theater, 8 p.m. July 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, and August 2, 3, and 4; and 3 p.m. July 15 and August 29. 735-0167.



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Eddie Harris - Kenny Burrell

JULY EVENTS CONTINUED

13 FRIDAY

"Barnum." See 7/12.

Children's Theater. See 7/6.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

14 SATURDAY

"Barnum." See 7/12.

"Abbott and Costello Meet the Invisible Man," captioned children's film for the deaf (with sound), Flamingo Library, 1 p.m. 733-7810.

"A Golden Fleecing," melodrama by R. Eugene Jackson, directed by Iris Newman, featuring Sarah Sweetflower, Stanley Stoutheart, Sly Scavenger and Miss Twinkle Toes, 7 p.m., Rotary Park, July 14 and 22, Lorenzi Park, July 15 and 28; Baker Park, July 21; and Hadland Park, July 29, presented by the City of Las Vegas. Free. 386-6211.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

15 SUNDAY

Nevada School of the Arts junior high visual arts program at the Lee Canyon Summer Arts Camp, through July 28. Fees: Members, \$418; nonmembers, \$468. 739-3502.

Nevada School of the Arts junior high dance program at the Lee Canyon Summer Arts Camp, through July 28. Fees: Members, \$398; nonmembers, \$450. 739-3502.

Nevada School of the Arts, junior high music program at the Summer Music Camp at Lee Canyon, through July 28. Fees: Members, \$398, nonmembers, \$450. 739-3502.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

"Love All People." See 7/1.

"A Golden Fleecing." See 7/14.

16 MONDAY

Community Drama Workshop. See 7/2.
Arthur Prysock, vocalist, at Alan Grant's

Jazz at the Four Queens, 10 p.m. and midnight, through July 23. 385-4011.

17 TUESDAY

"Doctor Doolittle" with Rex Harrison, children's classic film, Reed Whipple Center, 3 and 7 p.m. \$1. 386-6211.

Arthur Prysock. See 7/16.

18 WEDNESDAY

Japanese floral art classes. See 7/4.

Arthur Prysock. See 7/16.

"For the Love of Benji," Disney film, Charleston Heights Arts Center, 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., and Baker Park, dusk. Free. 386-6383.

19 THURSDAY

"Barnum." See 7/12.

Professional Photographers of Nevada, monthly meeting, El Jardin, 610 Naples Drive, 6:30 p.m. 873-1673.

Clowns of America, monthly meeting, Wengert Community Meeting Room, Pearson Bldg., 6226 W. Sahara, 7:30 p.m. Free instruction for anyone who would like to become a clown. 452-8877.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

Arthur Prysock. See 7/16.

Clark County Library District board of trustees monthly meeting, Flamingo Library board room, 11 a.m. Open to the public. 11 a.m. 733-7810.



PHOTO: DAVID BROWN

20 FRIDAY

"Barnum." See 7/12.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

Children's Theater. See 7/6.

Arthur Prysock. See 7/16.

21 SATURDAY

"Barnum." See 7/12.

"A Golden Fleecing." See 7/14.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

Arthur Prysock. See 7/16.

22 SUNDAY

"Love All People." See 7/1.

"A Golden Fleecing." See 7/14.

23 MONDAY

Community Drama Workshop. See 7/2.

Arthur Prysock. See 7/16.

24 TUESDAY

"Cactus Flower" with Goldie Hawn and Walter Matthau, captioned film for the deaf (with sound), Flamingo Library, 6:30 p.m. Free. 733-7810.

25 WEDNESDAY

"The Lost Flight of Noah's Arc," Disney film, Charleston Heights Arts Center, 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., and Baker Park, dusk. Free. 386-6383.

Japanese floral art classes. See 7/4.

26 THURSDAY

"Barnum." See 7/12.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

27 FRIDAY

"Barnum." See 7/12.

Children's Theater. See 7/6.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

28 SATURDAY

"Barnum." See 7/12.

"A Golden Fleecing." See 7/14.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

29 SUNDAY

Nevada School of the Arts senior high dance program at the Lee Canyon Summer Arts Camp, through August 11. Fees: Members, \$398; nonmembers, \$450. 739-3802.

Nevada School of the Arts senior high music program at the Lee Canyon Summer Arts Camp, through August 11. Fees: Members, \$398; nonmembers, \$450. 739-3502.

Nevada School of the Arts senior high visual arts program at the Lee Canyon summer arts camp, through August 11. Fees: Members, \$418; nonmembers, \$468. 739-3502.

"Love All People." See 7/1.

Trio Serenata, the violoncello trio, presents "Music from the Movies;" musical themes and melodies from popular movies, Flamingo Library, 3 p.m. Free. 733-7810.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

"A Golden Fleecing." See 7/14.

30 MONDAY

Community Drama Workshop. See 7/2.

AUGUST EXHIBITS

01 WEDNESDAY

The Las Vegas Artists Co-op presents featured artist Brian Wilson, wood carvings, upper level, Meadows Mall, through August 31. 877-0761.

Deadline for submission of slides to Allied Arts Council's Las Vegas National Works on Paper show. Entry forms available at Allied Arts, 3207 1/2 Las Vegas Blvd. So. 385-7345.

Jim Heller, opaque watercolor and oil paintings, Henderson Library, through August 31. 565-9247.

03 FRIDAY

Donna Beam, paintings, presented by the Allied Arts Council at the Gallery at First Western Savings, 2700 W. Sahara, through August 31. Opening reception, 4 to 5:30 p.m. 385-7345.

05 SUNDAY

"Places and Origins;" a photographic exhibit, documenting typical towns and villages left behind by six European groups: Irish, English, German, Italian,

Polish and East European Jews. Opening reception time TBA. 733-7810.

Al Haislip, oils and watercolors in the Nevada Artist Gallery; works from the Permanent Collection in the Main Gallery; and works from the Suitcase Gallery in the Youth Gallery; Las Vegas Art Museum, Lorenzi Park, through August 31; opening reception, noon to 4 p.m. 647-4300.

18 SATURDAY

First Annual City Slide Competition Exhibit, of prints developed from selected winning slides, Flamingo Library Main Gallery, through August 31; the slides themselves will be shown continuously August 18 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; August 19 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., August 25 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and August 26 from 1 to 5 p.m. 733-7810.

Cliff Segerblom one-man show, watercolors, celebrating fifty years of painting in Nevada, The Burk Gal'ry, Boulder City, through September 1; opening reception 1 to 4 p.m. 293-3958.

AUGUST EVENTS

01 WEDNESDAY

"Peter Pan," Disney film, Charleston Heights Arts Center, 10:30 and 2:30 p.m., and Baker Park, dusk. Free. 386-6383.

Utah Shakespearean Festival, Cedar City, Utah, featuring "The Taming of the Shrew," "Troilus and Cressida," and "The Tempest," through September 1. Las Vegas contact: 870-7442.

Japanese floral art classes. See 7/4.

Funding resource workshop; introduces nonprofit agencies to the Funding Resource Center at Flamingo Library, 10 a.m. to noon. Free; preregistration required. 733-7810.

02 THURSDAY

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

03 FRIDAY

Children's Theater. See 7/6.

"Crimes of the Heart." See 7/12.

05 SUNDAY

"Love All People." See 7/1.

Bluegrass concert, part of the Sundown Hoedown series, Lorenzi Park, West Washington and Twin Lakes, 7 p.m. The series continues on August 12, 19, and 26. 386-6211.

06 MONDAY

Allied Arts Council board meeting, Council offices, 3207 1/2 Las Vegas Blvd. So., 5:30 p.m. 385-7345.

Community Drama Workshop. See 7/2.

07 TUESDAY

Deadline for final payment for group trip to the AAC Craftfair in San Francisco (September 21 to 23). Paul Haines, 878-5037.

AUGUST EVENTS CONTINUED

Las Vegas Poetry Group, Flamingo Library conference room, 7 p.m. Bring your favorite or original selections. 733-7810.

08 WEDNESDAY

Japanese floral art classes. See 7/4.
"Night Crossing," Disney film, Charleston Heights Arts Center, 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., and Baker Park, dusk. Free. 386-6383.

09 THURSDAY

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" by William Shakespeare, performed by Theater Exposed, directed by Marguerite Hall, presented by the State Parks Cultural Arts Board, Spring Mountain Ranch State Park, August 9, 10, and 11; 8 p.m.; gates open at 6 and close at 8 or when the parking lot is full. 875-4141.

10 FRIDAY

"A Midsummer Night's Dream." See 8/9.

Children's Theater. See 7/6.

11 SATURDAY

"Black Beauty," classic children's story of a beautiful black horse and the boy who raised him; captioned film for the deaf (with sound), Flamingo Library, 1 p.m. Free. 733-7810.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream." See 8/9.

12 SUNDAY

"Love All People." See 7/1.

Bluegrass concert, part of the Sundown Hoedown series, 7 p.m., Lorenzi Park, West Washington and Twin Lakes. Free. 386-6211.

13 MONDAY

Community Drama Workshop. See 7/2.
Nevada State Ceramic Association, monthly meeting, Denny's, W. Sahara and Rancho, 8 p.m. 8877-1614.

15 WEDNESDAY

Japanese floral art classes. See 7/4.

16 THURSDAY

Professional Photographers of Nevada, monthly meeting, El Jardin, 610 Naples Drive, 6:30 p.m. 873-1673.

Clowns of America, monthly meeting, Wengert Community Meeting Room, Pearson Bldg., 6226 W. Sahara, 7:30 p.m. Free instruction for anyone who would like to become a clown. 452-8877.

Clark County Library District board of trustees monthly meeting, Flamingo Library board room, 11 a.m. Public welcome. 733-7810.

17 FRIDAY

Children's Theater. See 7/6.

19 SUNDAY

"Love All People." See 7/1.

Backstage at the Ultimate Las Vegas Showgirl competition.



PHOTO: LEE ZAICHICK



PHOTO: PATRICIA MORTATI

The opening reception for the Clark County Community College Faculty Show at the Gallery at First Western Savings. Work by Joanne Cooper in the foreground.

Bluegrass concert, part of the Sundown Hoedown series, 7 p.m., Lorenzi Park, West Washington and Twin Lakes. Free. 386-6211.

20 MONDAY

Community Drama Workshop. See 7/2.

22 WEDNESDAY

Japanese floral art classes. See 7/4.

24 FRIDAY

Children's Theater. See 6/7.

25 SATURDAY

Auditions for "Paper Lanterns, Paper Cranes," an original play on the aftermath of the bomb in Hiroshima, to be presented by Rainbow Company in October, Reed Whipple Cultural Center. Times TBA. 386-6553.

26 SUNDAY

"Love All People." See 7/1.

Bluegrass concert, part of the Sundown Hoedown series, 7 p.m., Lorenzi Park, West Washington and Twin Lakes. Free. 386-6211.

Trio Serenata in concert; the violoncello trio presents an evening of light classical music, Flamingo Library Auditorium, 7 p.m. Free. 733-7810.

27 MONDAY

Community Drama Workshop. See 7/2.

28 TUESDAY

"Casey's Shadow" with Walter Matthau, captioned film for the deaf (with sound), 6:30 p.m. Free. 733-7810.

29 WEDNESDAY

Japanese floral art classes. See 7/4.

31 FRIDAY

Deadline for entries to the Allied Arts Council's Stage Playwriting Competition. Entry forms available at Council offices, 3207½ Las Vegas Blvd. So. 385-7345.

Children's Theater. See 7/6.

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Newly elected Allied Arts Council President Paul Burns, left, with outgoing President Mark Tratos at the election membership meeting at Greystone courtyard.

New AAC President Paul Burns

PHOTO: DAVID BROWN



Paul Burns, a UNLV history professor, was elected President of the Allied Arts Council at a membership meeting June 11 at Greystone Building. Mark Tratos, stepping down after two years in the office, was the recipient of heartfelt thanks by membership, board and staff.

Burns, who has been on the Allied Arts Council board for two years, specializes in Russian studies and film studies, giving him a particular interest in Russian film. He served as board Sec-

retary in the last year and planned and coordinated the Council's "Shadows of War" film series.

Carl Vickers, flute; and Ron Johnson, guitar; performed for Allied Arts members as they partook of conversation and of food and drink hosted by Greystone Building, which also provided its graceful ambiance.

The reception took place streamside in the business building on Flamingo Road, beneath the trees and among artwork by Greg and Kim Kennedy,

sculpture by Lee Sido and his students, and the winning entries in the billboard art and directory cover competitions. The stream flows through both sections of Greystone Building, with a waterfall in between. Greystone has won nine architectural awards, more than any building in the state.

Elected First Vice President was Janet Line. Outgoing President Tratos was elected Second Vice President. He will also serve as the AAC's legal counsel. Virginia Mulloy Dambach was elected Secretary, and Jack Guinn, Treasurer.

Newly elected to the Allied Arts Council board were: Arts supporter and philanthropist Marjorie Barrick; Boulder City artist agent David Comarow; community leader Vivienne Morris, who has previously served on the board; Cheryl Rogers, also known for her work in support of the arts, and legal secretary Helen Waterman, familiar for her volunteer work in many local organizations.

Board members elected to new three-year terms were Carl Apple and Wayne La Fon.

Board member Pat Marchese presented outgoing President Tratos with a Greg Kennedy vase on behalf of the board, and AAC Director Patrick Gaffey thanked Tratos for his devoted service during his presidency, recalling his hammer and nails work late weekends on exhibits for the new children's museum and his extraordinary attention to all the details of the Council for the last two years.

"I look forward to working with the new board, the membership, and the staff," said the newly elected Burns. "The Council is just about to move into new offices and we have a number of new programs planned. The next year looks exciting for the Allied Arts Council, and for the arts generally in Southern Nevada." **AA**

NSCA grants available

Jacqueline Belmont, executive director of the Nevada State Council on the Arts, has announced that \$3,500 has become available for Direct Assistance grants to eligible non-profit, tax-exempt organizations and individual artists. Direct Assistance grants of up to \$1,000 per project are for specific, short-term technical or project assistance which fills an immediate need.

Applications for Direct Assistance grants will be accepted through September 1, 1984, or until the available funds are depleted, whichever comes first. Projects funded from these monies must be completed no later than September 30, 1984. Prospective applicants are urged to contact the Nevada State Council on the Arts, before applying, at 329 Flint Street, Reno, 89501 (789-0225). **AA**

Newsom's Fine Arts Gallery

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Lobbying begins for more arts funding

by Lamar Marchese
President, Nevada Alliance for the Arts

Arts advocacy in Nevada took an important step toward maturity last month when a coalition of arts administrators, artists, patrons and staff and council members of the Nevada State Council on the Arts met in Carson City to begin the process of increasing state funding for the arts.

Hosted by the Nevada Alliance for the Arts, the Allied Arts Council, the Sierra Arts Foundation and the Brewery Arts Center, the first, maybe-annual Nevada Meeting on the Arts took place on Friday and Saturday, May 18th and 19th at the Brewery's theater.

It was an auspicious gathering. At the risk of overstatement, maybe even an historic one; for it marked a reversal in the previous crisis-driven nature of the Nevada Alliance's activities, added, for the first time, a constituent voice to the budget building process of the state arts agency and drew a clear direction for Alliance efforts to obtain state funding to match Nevada's federal appropriation on a "One-to-One" basis.

Currently, the State of Nevada supplies an annual appropriation of approximately \$124,000 to the Nevada State Council on the Arts (NSCA). This funding level places Nevada 53rd out of 56 states and territories in per capita support for the arts. However, if the state were to match federal funds dollar for dollar, the state appropriation would rise to \$386,000 and would raise Nevada's ranking to 23rd nationally. Even more importantly it would significantly increase regrant funds (funds available for grants to Nevada artists and art organizations), allow an augmented Artist-in-Education program and add grant categories in touring and artist fellowships.

These funds will ultimately strengthen local arts organizations, get more artists into the schools and allow urban-based artists and arts groups to take their programs on the road to Nevada's art-starved rural communities.

The meeting began Friday afternoon with introductory remarks by NAA President Lamar Marchese. "To succeed, the arts community has to convince legislators of the centrality of the arts.... No politician is going to bother with the peripheral. To succeed we have to give politicians political reasons for supporting the arts; reasons like: We are numerous, we are organized, we are voters and we have the support of powerful people willing to fight for our cause."

His remarks concluded with a warning, "...we will not succeed unless we can agree amongst ourselves on a course of action. If guerilla warfare breaks out in the *statehouse*, instead of *in house*, we'll all be the losers."

Jacque Belmont, executive director of the NSCA, followed Marchese's introduction with a presentation on the Arts Council budget process and an Alliance-suggested proposal on how the NSCA staff would apply additional funds realized if state funds on a "One-on-One" basis were appropriated.

The rest of the afternoon was well spent with Renny Ashleman, Reno attorney and lobbyist who offered some excellent tips and advice on effective grass roots lobbying. It probably didn't hurt that Governor Bryan's assistant Marlene Lockard was in the audience, because

of the key role the Governor must play if state support of the arts in Nevada is to be increased beginning in 1986.

A brief reception followed Ashleman's comments, allowing participants from Yerington, Fallon, Reno, Carson City, Hawthorne, Panaca and Las Vegas to chat, plan strategy and compare notes.

A full day followed on Saturday, beginning with comments from Steve Richer, director of the Nevada Commission on Tourism on the operations of that new state agency and the efforts planned to involve Nevada's arts community in tourism development. Jon Winet, statewide Artist-in-Education coordinator, conducted a session on networking in Nevada, Carol Mousel moderated a panel on the activities of the Sierra Arts Foundation and arts councils in general, followed by the concluding business meeting of the Nevada Alliance for the Arts.

At that meeting new board members were elected, the membership voted to approve changing the status of the Alliance from a 501 (c) 3 to a 501 (c) 4 organization in order to facilitate the advocacy mission of the organization and approved the concept of the "One-on-One" match funding formula for the Nevada State Council on the Arts.

The consensus that was needed to begin the lobbying strategy was reached. Now it's time to put the plan to work. **AA**

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Leonid Hambro Piano Quartet, top; Texas Boys Choir, bottom.

Notes

Concert series a good buy

by Esther Hoffman Weinstein

A 47 year old organization in Las Vegas must have something going for it. After all, how much was here 47 years ago?

A railroad depot, dirt roads and for entertainment, a few gambling clubs, a couple of movie theaters, church social halls and the Las Vegas High School Auditorium. And at a that time also, there were the seeds of development for the current Southern Nevada Community Concert Association.

On January 6, 1937, a small group of visionary citizens formed the Cooperative Concert Association of Las Vegas to bring an annual series to this city, then a little more than 30 years old. And in 1938, the first concert season of classical music began in the Las Vegas High School Auditorium.

Now, the group holds its five concerts a year at UNLV's Artemus Ham Concert Hall, as it has done since the hall's opening in the Fall, 1976. Though feeling the pinch of competition from the Master Series, the Las Vegas Symphony Orchestra and the Nevada Dance Theater, the group still boasts about 1600 members.

The organization is unique in that it sells no individual tickets to single events. Rather, to attend, one must become a member and subscribe to the whole series, this year for the still remarkable price of \$20 or \$10 for students. The subscription is a stipulation of the national, parent organization, Columbia Artists Management, Inc., which is specifically dedicated to bringing high quality music to smaller communities at a nominal cost.

This year's president, Bill Madara, explained that often what an organization has to pay for an artist or group of performers depends on its total budget. In other words, there is a sliding fee schedule depending on ability to pay, and a representative from Columbia Art-

ists has, in the past, visited the local association to help it do the best possible within its budget. Madara regrets that major symphonies are just too expensive and that often, when a guest artist has been exceptionally popular and Community Concerts would like to invite him or her back for a second engagement, an elevated fee makes that impossible.

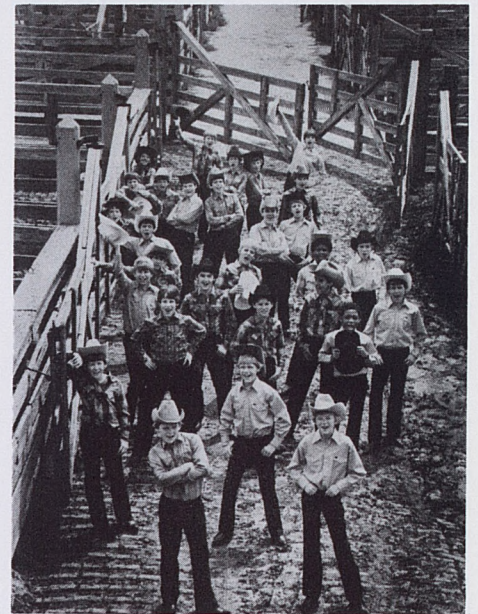
If the organization doesn't sell out this year—last year it was several hundred short of the Ham Hall capacity—then the plan is to go to four instead of five concerts.

The emphasis in programming is always on variety, with a mix of classical, semi-classical, folk music and dance. The forthcoming season, for example, begins with the Leonid Hambro Piano Quartet on November 3. Led by Hambro, himself a virtuoso pianist, the four keyboard artists play works ranging from classical to pop in an entertaining, often humorous, manner.

The Empire Brass Quintet takes the stage on November 25. Formed in 1971 after five young musicians were introduced to one another by conductor Leonard Bernstein, the quintet has performed throughout the world.

On January 18, 1985, California-born violinist Ida Levin will appear. Levin began violin study at age three, and at age ten, appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. She has performed at the White House and made her debut recital at the Kennedy Center in March, 1982, in addition to winning several prestigious competitions.

Following Levin will be the Texas Boys Choir, which will perform on February 22. Now in its fourth decade of concerts, the 26-voice group has made more than 3,000 appearances, and its performances have included works as diverse as old church music, Elizabethan mad-



rigals, Broadway show tunes and folk songs from Texas ranches.

Finishing the 1984-85 season on March 22 will be American-born organist Carlo Curley, who has performed hundreds of inaugural concerts on new organs in concert halls, churches and cathedrals throughout the world.

In the past, Community Concert audiences have shared the talents of such well-known artists as singer William Warfield, cellist Leonard Rose and pianist David Bar-Illan, often before the soloists became really famous. Las Vegas has also been host to such large groups as the National Ballet of Canada, the Paris Chamber Orchestra and the Joffrey Ballet.

Community Concerts is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. Proceeds from membership fees are used to pay the artists, print the programs, rent the hall and hire the stagehands and ushers. And sometimes



pay for the unexpected. Like the time a Steinway piano had to be rented and transported for a Steinway artist who declined to use the available Baldwin.

The board of directors chooses the artists, but they do solicit membership preferences with a yearly questionnaire. An added bonus of membership comes from the reciprocity between organizations. A Las Vegas ticket entitles its owner to attend any Community Concert anywhere, providing there is seating available! That's a ticket to almost 3,000 concerts in 700 cities throughout the U.S. and Canada. Quite a buy for that \$20 investment! A schedule of some of these concerts comes with the ticket at the beginning of the season.

A national organization over 50 years old, Community Concerts is a significant fiber in the cultural fabric of the whole country and of the local community. With all its members and all the concerts counted, it provides three million personal concert-going opportunities. At the local level, it offers professional quality music and dance, presented under the auspices of a financially secure, non-profit plan. For the artists, it means places to perform. And for the members, it makes live music and dance available at an extremely reasonable price.

For ticket information about next year's season, phone membership secretary Pat Madara at 648-8962 or write Southern Nevada Community Concert Association, 1620 Stonehaven Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89108. AA



Empire Brass, upper left; Carlo Curley, lower left; Ida Levin, above.

Esther Weinstein is a piano instructor at UNLV and the Nevada School of the Arts. She holds an A.B. magna cum laude from Barnard College and an M.A. in musicology from New York University. She has she won a competitive fellow-

ship to the nationally known Music Critics Summer Institute based on her work as a classical reviewer for KNPR 89.5 FM. She is currently music critic for the Las Vegas SUN. AA

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Ask Miss Music

1983 Miss Music



Dear Miss Music,

You gotta help me cause there's something I just don't understand about chicks. Don't get me wrong, it's not that I have any trouble meeting really great chicks. It's just that every time I get to a certain point with them, it's the same old story. For instance, right now I'm going with this girl, she's a cocktail waitress who works at this club I used to play at. Miss Music, this chick is practically perfect. She's real tall and thin (don't get me wrong, she's not taller than me or anything) and she's got my absolute favorite kind of body. Plus she's got long blond hair which she always wears down which is the way I really dig it. She even looks almost as good with no makeup. So by now you're probably wondering, "So what's the problem?"

Well, it seems like every time just when the relationship is getting good, I mean like when you've been going with her long enough that you know she's not seeing any other guys and you don't have to send flowers or anything anymore, they start in with this bit about how you love your horn more than you love them, and then they want you to go out with them instead of practicing, and the next thing you know she's telling

you you have to choose between her and your horn. Well, that'll be the day that I give up my horn for some chick, I don't care how good looking she is.

Miss Music, I just figure since you used to be a chick maybe you could explain what's wrong with chicks that they act like this all the time.

Born to Blow

Dear B.B.,

Miss Music can indeed empathize with your mystification. However, she believes that you are in error in assuming that the male and female genders always occupy the same positions in the dynamics of relationships such as those you are describing. Whatever light Miss Music might hope to shed on your situation is, in fact, resultant of her having been, at one time, in the role parallel to your own.

Miss Music is referring to her relationship with her third husband, whom she met at a club at which she was appearing, and at which he was employed as a busboy. Within the realms of physical attributes, Miss Music would have to say that he was undoubtedly the most gifted of any of his predecessors or successors. Romance blossomed, but within just a few months after the marriage, the problems began to arise.

The club at which they were both employed frowned upon such relationships between employees so, naturally, he was asked to resign. Miss Music still does not quite understand why this upset him so, as she herself was earning a handsome salary and it was totally unnecessary that her husband should have to work. Nevertheless, he became rather sulky, began taking to soap operas, and to neglect his physical appearance, not to mention his household duties and the food preparation. (Miss Music should add that when they first met, he was an absolutely marvelous little cook!)

Shortly thereafter, he began to be jealous of the time she spent practicing, and to refer to her harps as if they were actually other men. It was but a small step from there to the accusations that Miss Music was more devoted to her

art than to him; these followed by the ultimatum that she choose between the two. Just as in your own situation, there was little doubt in Miss Music's mind as to what that choice would be.

In retrospect, Miss Music believes that perhaps the marriage would have fared better had the young man had an interest in his own life equal to hers in music. Probably the soundest advice she can offer you is that you follow her example for the next relationship, and get involved with a nuclear physicist. You may have to sacrifice something in the way of physical charms, but these relationships tend to work out better because while you're practicing, she'll be busy.

Dear Miss Music,

Why are musicians so wierd?
Allegro Curioso

Dear Al,

Perhaps it was best said by the eminent British writer, E. M. Forster, in his novel *A Room With A View*, "...that musicians are incredibly complex, and know far less than other artists what they want and what they are; that they puzzle themselves as well as their friends; that their psychology is a modern development, and has not yet been understood."

In other words, no one really knows just why musicians are so wierd.

Dear Miss Music,

I don't know that much about music, but every time an orchestra comes to town I usually go. Every time I ever went to one I always noticed the same thing. There would always be like a big group of violins over on the left side of the stage and they would all just be sitting there playing along, and then there would be this one guy kind of over to the side and in the back who would be moving around, kind of swaying or dancing around in his chair in time to the music all the time while he was playing. My question is, who is that guy and how come he keeps moving around like that? I always want to punch him.

Just Wondering

Dear J.W.,

That is the guy who, if there were justice in the world, would be sitting in the chair right out in front just to the left of the conductor. He keeps moving around like that because he feels the music so much more deeply than do the others, and we would all like to punch him.

—CLIFF SEGERBLOM—

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The Musical Arts Chorus.

Martha Peterson's legacy

Martha Jeanne Peterson, supervisor and program director of the Charleston Heights Arts Center died May 1 this year after a seven year battle with cancer.

Born February 26, 1929, in Muncie, Indiana, she had lived here since 1967. In 1982 she received the Allied Arts Council **pART**ner Award, and the March/April issue of *Arts Alive* profiled her upon her receipt of the Governor's Arts Award.

Active in the Southern Nevada Musical Arts Society, she served as its executive director and program coordinator since 1968, and was a frequent soloist with the Musical Arts Chorus and the Musical Arts Singers.

She was president of the University Musical Society from 1978-84 and president of the Las Vegas Opera Association from 1981-84. She was staff advisor to the Friends of the Charleston Heights Arts Center and a member of the Allied Arts Council Advisory Board. She was executive director of Young Audiences in Las Vegas from 1972-8.

The Musician's Union of Las Vegas, Local 369, recently made her an honorary member for her years of service to live music. She was a sponsor of the Musical Arts Orchestra, the University Musical Society Orchestra and the Las Vegas Chamber Symphony Orchestra. Mrs. Peterson was a founder of the Las Vegas Symphony.

She received her bachelor's and master's degrees in music at Northwestern and Ball State universities. She was a vocal soloist and public school music teacher for eight years, and taught voice

at UNLV from 1971 to 1974. She sang under the batons of Rober Shaw, Robert Wagner and Helmut Rilling.

She is survived by her husband, Dr. Douglas Peterson, UNLV professor of music, her daughter, Carolyn; and her sons, David, Robert and John.

Speaking at the funeral services, Rev. Jerry Blankinship said that following Mrs. Peterson's initial cancer surgery seven years ago, "The physicians were very pessimistic. They thought she had a very brief period of life left. They told Doug this and as he went to Martha's room, she would have none of it. She refused to believe it; she charged Doug not to believe it, and not to tell anyone of this diagnosis." She continued working full time until her admittance into the hospital a few days before her death.

Violinist Russ Cantor, delivering the eulogy, said that in Southern Nevada, "just about every group, every single musician, every single performer, has been touched by Martha." **AA**

Choral group wins honor

The 23 voices in the Musical Arts Singers must have been raised in a cheer when the group received notice that it will be performing in Salt Lake City next March at the prestigious American Choral Directors Association National Convention. The Singers are a part of the Southern Nevada Musical Arts Society led by Dr. Douglas R. Peterson.

The invitation is an honor and a tribute to Dr. Peterson and his group, as well as deserved recognition for the arts in Southern Nevada. The Musical Arts Singers were juried into the convention by the convention steering committee which heard tapes of the group. According to Hugh Sanders, convention chairman, "These tapes have been received by me and reviewed favorably by our...committee. It is with immense satisfaction that I extend to you and your excellent choir an invitation to perform.... Congratulations!" **AA**

Best Wishes to Allied Arts Council

ELECT

**Myrna
Williams**

ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 10
DEMOCRAT

Laura

Her act is together

by Esther H

Many of us, I think, dream about what it would be like to get our act together and take it on the road. Local keyboard artist Laura Spitzer did more than just dream this past Spring and found her tour an exhilarating experience.

During the nine days from March 29 to April 6, Laura covered approximately 1500 miles through Panaca (near Pioche), Elko, Battle Mountain, Austin, Hawthorne, Virginia City and Fallon for a total of eleven recitals. While the pace is admittedly brisk, it was not altogether unusual. But what was a bit out of the ordinary was the fact that Spitzer took her own six-foot Steinway and Piano Technician Lorelle Nelson with her, traveling in the always noticeable red truck donated by Ace Truck Rental Company.

PHOTOS: DAVID BROWN

Laura Spitzer, left, and Lorelle Nelson.



Spitzer

er and on the road

erman Weinstein

Spitzer obtained a \$1000 grant from the Nevada State Council on the Arts to help cover expenses, and each town pledged to raise \$250 as well as donate room and board. Taking her own instrument with her served a two-fold purpose. It eliminated the problem of getting a piano donated and then paying insurance for it. And it eliminated an unavoidable dread of the unknown that afflicts most concert pianists on tour.

Squeaking pedals, malfunctioning keys, strident registers, poor tonal quality and missing strings lie in wait "out there" to play havoc with a conscientious artist's careful preparation. Laura found knowing what piano she would have to deal with one of the most gratifying aspects of the entire tour. "For the first time in my life really, it was a question of keeping in shape rather than dealing with an adjustment period, a luxury most other instrumentalists take for granted. Each hall was different acoustically, of course, but that is just not as crucial as a trill for not working or a run not coming out evenly because of the instrument," she said.

The itinerary encompassed a concert and a master class in Panaca (Lincoln County High School Auditorium), two concerts in Elko (Northeastern Nevada Museum), one in Battle Mountain (Battle Mountain Civic Center), two in Austin (Austin High School Auditorium), one open rehearsal and one concert in Hawthorne (Hawthorne Convention Center) and one in Fallon (Fallon Community Convention Center).

Her program included works by J.S. Bach, Gershwin, Ravel and Chopin in the first half, and pieces by Debussy, Beethoven, Joplin and Liszt after intermission. For children's concerts, she played about half her material and encouraged questions, most often indicators of unspoiled enthusiasm. "Do you have to work hard?" students queried in Austin. "Do you move around because it helps the music? Which is stronger, your right or your left hand? Do you have to cut your nails? Do you get nervous before you play? Are you nervous now? What happens if you forget?" All are great questions for talking about important concepts of piano playing, and functioned as perfect springboards for discussion.



Pianists are not unlike athletes in their near-fanatic focus on their performing apparatus, in their training regimens and in their almost superstitious adoption of seemingly unrelated routines. Laura regularly practices five hours a day, but ten is not unusual. During the five hours of preparation time the day of a concert, she doesn't like to leave the piano even to eat, but prefers to have a sandwich,

perhaps, at the piano.

Spitzer sometimes practices with four-pound wrap-around weights on each wrist to strengthen tendons and ligaments, and each key of her piano normally carries one and a half sets of added weights (removed for the trip). All this in pursuit of strength, endurance and flexibility.

And then there is the Edgar Cayce



formula that wound up on Lorelle's hair by mistake. With arthritis on both sides of her family, Laura doesn't even want to think about the possibility of her hands becoming affected. And so she feels it can't hurt to rub on the glycerine, rosewater, lanolin and peanut oil concoction Cayce recommends to ward off the disease. The only problem was that for

this trip, it was stored in a hair conditioner bottle, which Nelson nonchalantly grabbed as she showered one morning. It took about three days for her hair to dry after that.

Mishaps are inevitable on any trip, and the two women had their fair share. Most seriously, Spitzer left her wallet on

a gas pump in Ely. Though she did get back credit cards and driver's license intact, \$140 in cash disappeared.

But the difficulties are remembered as small snafus in an otherwise rewarding venture. The two have many pleasant memories of specific details of the trip. Like the wild turkeys by the side of the road en route to Virginia City. And the signs of a dancing cow to indicate open range country up north, where a cow hit is a cow to be paid for.

And they met many warm, generous people. There was Beverly Gaffin in Panaca who went knocking on doors to make sure there would be an audience. And Anne Schiechl of Austin who made up a financial loss out of her own pocket because she wanted the concert to happen.

Laura found the tributes of standing ovations, flowers, homemade cookies, an original poem (Hawthorne) and even a tankful of gas very touching. On a recent return visit to Virginia City, she was overwhelmed, too, by the enthusiastic approach of several students who had remembered her performance.

In looking back on the tour, Spitzer said "I got a feeling of mutual need with the people of these towns. If I play New York, Los Angeles or San Francisco, which I eventually hope to do, it isn't because those cities need me. They have more than enough able pianists. It's because I need the big-time exposure and big-city reviews. But in these towns, some of my audience may never have even seen a grand piano, much less heard a professional classical pianist play one. And I think they felt genuinely enriched by something that would not have otherwise happened."

The whole venture, in fact, left both Spitzer and Nelson with such good feelings that already they are thinking about two tours for next year, to different cities.



Currently, Spitzer performs extensively in Las Vegas, giving solo recitals, playing with the Las Vegas Chamber players and appearing as soloist with the Las Vegas Symphony Orchestra. In the past, she has given concerts in Europe, recorded for Austrian National Radio and won several prizes. She is also on the faculty at UNLV.

Lorelle Nelson has had a variety of careers in music, including public teaching, folk singing and serving as Cultural Specialist for the city of Las Vegas. Her stint as Program Director for the Nevada State Council on the Arts led her repeatedly through rural Nevada and gave her an intimate knowledge of the territory that was so valuable for this trip. AA

Theater arts Workshops

Marguerite Hall, artistic director of Theater Exposed, will be opening workshops in theater arts in the near future. Included are musical and non-musical workshops, for all ages and all ranges of experience, from beginners through professionals. Hall says she won't be teaching basic "method acting" per se, but a common-sense combination which will show students how to develop and improve sense memory and spontaneous reactions and interactions within a character. Students will also learn to research character to better understand what is needed to complete a character. "There is more than just digging into your own past experiences to understand what is necessary to a role," says Hall.

Workshops in directing and auditioning will also be given. Fees for each workshop are \$15, or \$50 for four sessions. There will be discounts for any student who wishes to combine private "one-on-one" lessons with a workshop.

Hall, who has been teaching voice privately to many Strip performers, wants to help improve the level of quality in theater. Those who have attended local productions will best remember her from her performances in ULNLV's *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, and in Theater Exposed's own *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* and *Dark Party*. She is currently directing a fourth time for Theater Exposed: Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which will have a limited run at Spring Mountain Ranch in August.

Assisting Hall in teaching will be Jeff Granstrom and Edward Stone. Granstrom will best be remembered from two Exposed productions—as Cowboy in the critically acclaimed *Boys in the Band* and as John Merrick in *The Elephant Man*. Stone, who holds BA in theater, has spent four years with the Firebird Theatre Co. in Los Angeles and has also appeared in Exposed productions most recently as Emory in *Boys in the Band*.

For further information and to reserve a space in any of the workshops being offered, call Marguerite Hall at 386-0649.

WEST NEVADA WALTZ

*I learned how to listen
for a sound like the sun
going down...*

—Rodney Crowell

It isn't so much a matter of not looking a gift horse in the mouth, but, rather a matter of not looking any horse in the mouth.

Out here valleys are measured in miles across and no matter how long it takes out there, in the middle under the sun you, like Fall, always seem to arrive just barely in time.

After a while there's no longer enough left to waste on crossing the damn things just to see if it's any better over there, after all, are folks who have pretty much decided the same thing.

Somewhere along the line even though there are those times when, like a horse tethered in one place too long you reach the end of your rope, you begin to settle in.

Begin to forget the cherry orange cherry combinations which didn't pay off and noticing only how easily the bright yellow leaves all around this so-called oasis let go and start to waltz towards the ground you, believing that she just might show up again,

Begin to wait for the moon.

Which like an expected check always takes too long shows up late stumbling across the black ice of the sky like a tipsy blonde in high heels full but still, in the 1981's, only worth a quarter.

She's not much what with her makeup smeared and all, often looking the next day like noontime neon—showing only a hint of what she was the night before.

But right now, up there shimmering almost dancing across that nimble three-quarter time blue sky, she looks like the damndest schooner you ever did see, and of course,

there are the clouds.

—Kirk Robertson
Fallon

We depend on the SUN

Arts Alive was created over three years ago when the *Las Vegas SUN* agreed to typeset and print what was then a double-sided calendar sheet. That donation of services made Arts Alive possible. The continued support of the *SUN* has made the Arts Alive's growth possible, into an award-winning magazine; the only arts magazine in Nevada.

Though Arts Alive has outgrown the *SUN*'s capacity to print it, all typesetting for the magazine is done free of charge on the *SUN*'s equipment, and all Arts Alive calendar listings are handled on the *SUN*'s computers. Without this on-

going donation of services, printing costs for Arts Alive would more than double, and the Allied Arts Council could not afford to produce it in its present form.

Thanks go especially to Danny Greenspun, who arranged this community service and oversees it, sometimes spending hours at a time working on Arts Alive computer programs. Thanks go also to Rex Taylor's composing staff, who are always extremely helpful, to Paul Estrella's engraving staff, to Mike Mateko's art department, and to David Lee Waite's photography department.

AA

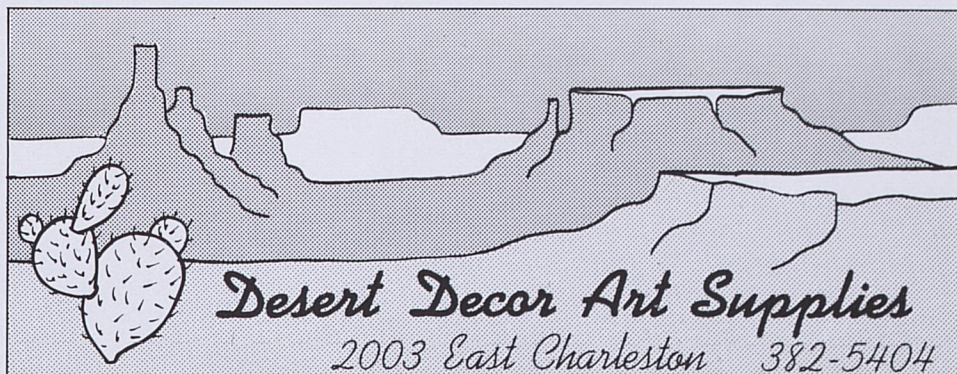




PHOTO: DON FLOKE

Artists on the picket line

by Lisa Coffey

A friend told me a story about an old man who lived on an island off the coast of Maine. The man's name was Fred Jenkins; blacksmith by trade. My friend claims she met him, and she insists the story is factual. I think it smacks of traditional Mainiacal truth-tampering, but so what?

It seems Fred Jenkins and several other local residents got the notion that a little music might liven things up pretty nicely around those parts. They decided to start a band. Fred, who apparently is not a man to sit on a good idea once he gets it, wrote to Sears and Roebuck:

Dear Sears and Roebuck:

Some friends of mine and I have decided to start a band and I would like to learn to play the saxophone. Please send me one saxophone.

Thank you,
Fred Jenkins

Promptly came the response:

Dear Mr. Jenkins:

Thank you for your recent order for one saxophone. Since you have never played the saxophone before, we are sending you our Intermediate-size saxophone, as we feel it will be easiest for you to handle.

Thank you,
Sears and Roebuck

Fred wrote back:

Dear Sears and Roebuck:

I am a blacksmith. I am six feet five inches tall and I weigh two hundred and eighty five pounds. If I could get my mouth up to a horse's ass I could blow the bit out the front end. Send me the biggest saxophone you got.

Thank you,
Fred Jenkins

There's a saying that underlying everything we laugh at is a tragic truth. I'm not convinced that's always the case, but I do like to dig down into humor just to see what I can find.

As a musician who's been on strike for the past two months, I discovered that a picket line is a great place for doing a bit of mental gymnastics on topics such as this. I got to thinking about old Fred one night, and wondered if there might not be a seed of tragedy buried somewhere in his story.

If you want to find out what makes a joke tick, you have to take it apart, piece by piece, till you find the fragment that contains the key to its humor. At first glance, it seems that Fred's astonishing description of his lung capacity is the comedic ingredient here. It has the feel of a punch line. But the same words in the mouth of a professional saxophone player, although they might evoke a snicker, wouldn't pack the comedic wallop they did when Fred Jenkins penned them to Sears.

The essential element in the humor of the anecdote is actually located at the beginning—in the image of a man who realizes that he needs some music in his life, and thinks he can get it on a whim, from a Sears catalogue.

Anyone who has ever been involved in the development of the musical arts

in a community is bound to get a good laugh out of that one. But in Southern Nevada, the issues that resulted in the musicians' strike have made those of us who care about music sadly more able to recognize the tragic truth that does indeed lie beneath our laughter. That the fate of music on a tiny, distant island should lie in the hands of a charmingly naive bumpkin is pleasantly amusing to us city slickers. But when the cultural development of a city is jeopardized by sophisticated insensitivity—well, that's not so funny.

The economic climate of Las Vegas has attracted and supported a community of good professional musicians. Most of them have made a living in the entertainment industry here. When they weren't doing that, they were playing chamber music, or great jazz. They were teaching at the university, building a music department with a growing reputation for excellence. And when someone got the notion that a symphony orchestra might liven things up a little around these parts, he didn't have to start with a Sears catalogue.

But to get back to the jokes—did you hear the one about the guy who wanted to learn to play the saxophone, but when he found out how hard it was, he decided to go to a hotel management school instead? **AA**

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Musicians Union President Mark Tully Massagli holds music while Russ Cantor and his string quartet perform on the picket lines in June.

Lights

Theater in the square

by Jonathan Smead

The success of any college theater department must be measured in relation to received opinion of what constitutes "good theater;" that being, in part, a metaphorical stage whereupon the immediacy of spectacle is matched by the vivacity of a collective voice. Accordingly, this "success measuring" is by turn an empirical and inductive process something akin to making a new acquaintance: We start with what we can observe about this new acquaintance, and then we discover, through our intuitive effort, the depth of a being whose life blood belies its surface appearance.

Its surface appearance intact, the UNLV Department of Theater Arts (DTA), has met the challenge of a chance encounter for over two decades with plays from Shakespeare to Saroyan, Goldsmith to Inge, and Jonson to Graczyk. A seemingly even wider theater spectrum has been represented by Aristophanes' famous, anti-war *Lysistrata*, the anonymous *Everyman*, Wycherly's comedy of domestic infidelity *The Country Wife*, Goldsmith's ribald *She Stoops to Conquer*, Ibsen's haunting, early-feminist *A Doll's House*, and G.B. Shaw's *de rigueur* *Don Juan In Hell* (as excerpted from *Man and Superman*). An illustrative list of DTA's modern and contemporary plays might include the Italian *The Queen and the Rebels* by Ugo Betti, the Irish *Juno and the Paycock* by O'Casey, the English *The*

Homecoming by Pinter, the French *Waiting for Godot* by Beckett, and the American *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* by Edward Albee.

In addition, the DTA has had a hand in producing original plays by Brian Kral, who (along with the extremely talented UNLV *costumier* Ellis Pryce-Jones) has recently won the Governor's Art Award, Jerry Crawford, the gifted writer/director/professor on staff at the university who has been produced off-Broadway, and most recently Brighde Mullins, a DTA student who this year has been accepted into the Drama School at Yale.

Other former UNLV students have gone one to promising careers in the theater. Tori Padellford will enter The Circle in the Square Theater School and Workshop this year. Paul Harris, Jr., co-founder of Las Vegas' most successful experimental theater company, Theater Exposed, has found work in New York, as has Lanyard Williams. Mr. Williams was the 1983 Audelco nominee for Best Actor for his role in the off-Broadway production of *Parting*, and his most recent role as Private Tony Smalls in *A Soldier's Play* has won him an award performance at the 1984 Olympic Festival of Plays in Los Angeles. And, while some alumni have gone slightly awry (such as the current porno star, Veronica Hart), others, including the present Chairman of DTA, Robert Burgan, continue to serve their craft with an air of distinction.

Indeed, since its humble beginnings within the confines of the stifling Grant Hall twenty odd years ago, the UNLV Theater Arts Department has come a long way. The Little Theater in Grant Hall is still there today, but it is used mainly for small scale student experimentation. The Black Box Theater located in the new Fine Arts complex is a versatile production house whose chameleon-like staging area make its possibilities seem limitless. And then there is the Judy Bayley Theater. Sit-

uated at the North end of the campus across the square from Artemus Ham Concert Hall, the JBT has all the appearance of what Bob Burgan calls a "Lincoln Center West." Considering its ample seating capacity, excellent design, and large proscenium stage, the Judy Bayley Theater serves as infinite tribute to the magnanimity of the hotelier/philanthropist whose namesake it is. When Judy Bayley died, the whole town turned out to mourn.

But memories, like monuments, have a Jungian connection to their past...and beneath their surfaces lie the foundations for freedom. Artistic freedom can be neither bought nor sold. It is earned. Ideally, the artistic freedom nurtured within a college theater department should include among its many attributes the right to experimentation at will (given that that experimentation has direction), the will to inject a little of the Shavian "Life Force" into a too often moribund art form, and the inalienable right to be a non-participant in what Brustein has called "the hit-flop system." And if it is the aim of educators to maintain that ideal (given the intellectual life fostered within the university *vis a vis* an all too often dull season sponsored by the DTA) is the community being rightly served?

The catholicity of play selections alluded to above seems upon deeper investigation to be a smoke screen for a theater system trying to please all of the people all of the time. In fact, a close examination of the productions mounted on the JBT stage will reveal an ideological and performance history that parallels Broadway—there is no risk taking here! Most productions that are avant-garde, experimental in nature, or even remotely removed from the mainstream are usually relegated to the confines of the Little Theater, or, with a little luck, promoted to the new Black Box.

Next year's season, as so many seasons past, will rely on quintessentially safe standards: the British comedy revue *Beyond the Fringe*, by Moore, Miller, Bennett and Cook; A.R. Guerney Jr.'s equally light *The Dining Room*; Thornton Wilder's zany farce *The Matchmaker*, etc., etc. Throw in a Broadway smash (*Equus*) and a musical (*Cabaret*) and you will have what Brecht probably meant by "culinary" theater—easily eaten, easily digested, and with no bad aftertaste: The success of a standard. But "standards" as Irving Howe has said, "are best defended by a tense engagement with the culture of one's times; standards derive from our encounters with new works of art...which, we like to think, we now understand."

What is needed is a renewed dedication on the part of the DTA to insinuate itself into the lifeblood of the community; the community, of course must respond in kind by re-dedicating itself to our collective cultural growth.

UNLV's *Terra Nova*; scenic and lighting design, Tom Prewitt; costume design, Ellis Pryce-Jones.

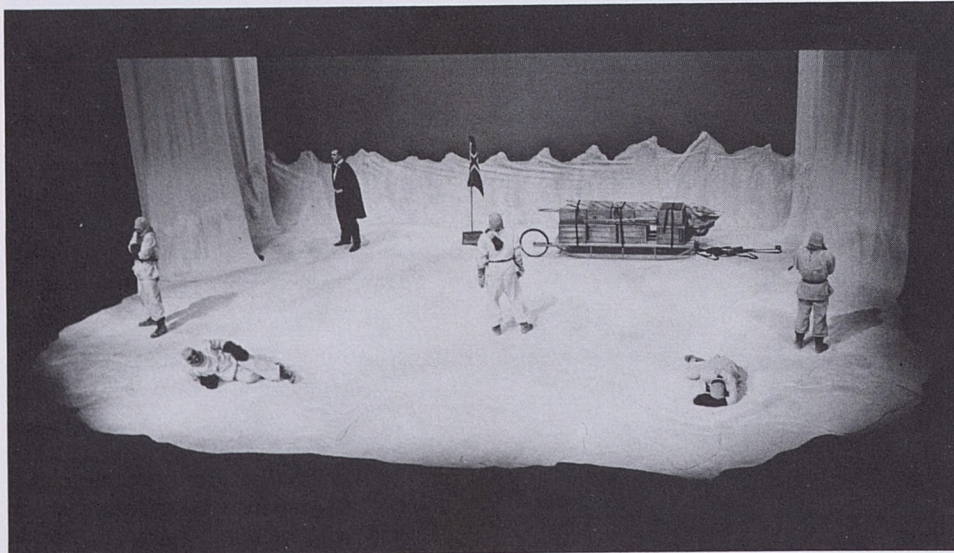


PHOTO: GINGER BRUNER

Bob Burgan has seen the mutually beneficial results of that community intercourse in places like New York City where the inspired theater department at New York University has become a virtual "revolving door" for the off-Broadway theaters. "This in turn," states Burgan, "leads to the growth of resident companies." For evidence Burgan points out the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. "Look at the Actor's Theater in Louisville, the Actor's Repertory in Seattle. And then there's always the Guthrie in Minneapolis."

Moreover, Burgan feels that the university provides the best potential for the success of a heightened artistic awareness. "What we have here (at the DTA) is an interesting mix of artists, students and teachers. And while I've had great administrative and institutional support, I would like to see that support spill over into the community. But you have to realize too, that you have failed to create theater if you can't find an audience."

But is the question really finding an audience? Las Vegas is ripe for cultural growth. This is easily evidenced by the box office receipts at the Bayley, as well as the apparent profit margin experienced across the square at Ham Hall. I think the question more correctly centers around the existing institution.

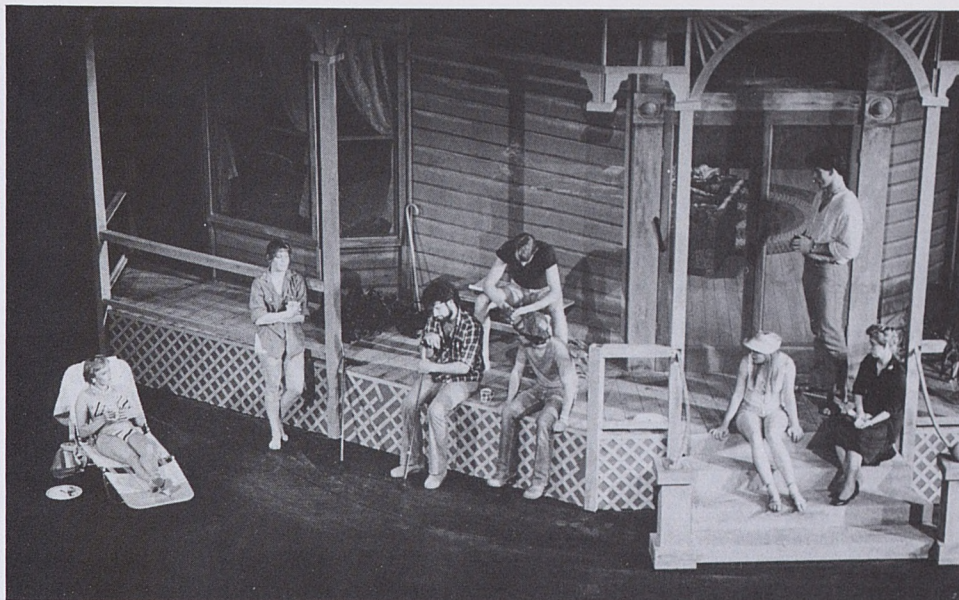
The UNLV Academic Master Plan clearly states in its preface: "Efficient and effective organizations do not happen by chance.... They determine their mission first and then proceed to set proximate and long-range goals, repeatedly monitoring their progress to insure that the goals themselves and the efforts to reach the goals are worthwhile and necessary." To this end the Master Plan advises: "...to respond to changes within the larger society which mandate university involvement." And lastly, one concrete solution to the question of DTA is posited that "...the university must give special attention (priority order) to the development of...masters degree programs in Theater Arts."

And this is one good way to get the ball rolling, but there are many. The DTA should change its goals to uplift and educate its audience. We should mount productions that reflect the best new writing. There should be more modern classics. And why are so very few original plays mounted on the JBT stage?

The measure of success is not as well recorded in the market-place, as it is in the wellsprings of human endeavor. And we should all strive to make our community theater a true reflection of our collective hopes, dreams and aspirations lest it become what Sir Philip Sidney called it some four centuries: "An unmannerly daughter...shewing a bad education, that causeth her mother Poesy's honesty to be called into question."

AA

PHOTO: GINGER BRUNER



UNLV production of *Fifth of July*; scenic design by Frederick L. Olson, costume design by Ana Anglada.

DTA 1984-85 Season

BEYOND THE FRINGE

(Professional Touring Company), presented in the Judy Bayley Theater, September 28 through 30.

THE DINING ROOM

By A.R. Gurney, Jr., presented in the Black Box Theater located in Ham Fine Arts Building, October 12 through 28.

THE NATIONAL THEATER OF THE DEAF

(On tour.) Judy Bayley Theater, November 12.

THE MATCHMAKER

By Thornton Wilder, Judy Bayley Theater, November 23 through December 9.

EQUUS

By Peter Shaffer, Judy Bayley Theater, March 1 through March 17, 1985.

THE SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS

By Carlo Goldini, Black Box Theater, April 5 through April 21, 1985.

CABARET

Songs by John Kander and Fred Ebb; presented in the Judy Bayley Theatre, May 3 through May 19, 1985.

For more detailed information about dates and times of performances, call 739-3801.

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—Bill Willard, *Las Vegas Review-Journal*.

"A key to the success of this production is Director M. Hall."
—Wilbur Stevens, the *Las Vegas Sun*.

Marguerite Gowan Hall Artistic Director Theatre Exposed

"ARTISTS WHO DO NOT GO FORWARD GO BACKWARD." —Stanislavski

New playwright competition

The Allied Arts Council Theater Division is sponsoring the First Annual Original Playwriting Competition funded by the Hearst Foundation. A cash prize of \$800 will be awarded to the winner whose work will be produced if funding becomes available.

Southern Nevada residents who have written an original play which has never been produced or published, have until August 31, 1984 to dust it off or spruce it up and submit it, along with an entry fee of \$15 for each script to the Allied Arts Council. A copy (not original) of the manuscript must be typed and double spaced, and should include name, address and phone number of playwright. Complete competition rules are available at the council offices.

The judges for the competition are

Paul Harris, Ph.D., professor of theater arts at UNLV who has been producing and directing plays for many years; Eddie Foy III, director of entertainment for the Sahara Hotel, former Hollywood casting director, and head of the summer theater program for UNLV, Limbo Theater; and Mary Van Kirk, experienced professional actress, who has done many community and educational theater shows and has adjudicated script competitions for the Old Globe Theater in San Diego. Mary, a 17 year Nevada resident, founded and managed the Sparks Civic Theater and is a past president of the Nevada Theater Association.

The judges' final decision will be announced at a gala theater event in October.

For further information call the Allied Arts Council at 385-7345. **AA**

"Midsummer" at Red Rock

Public demand for a return of Shakespeare to Spring Mountain Ranch State Park will be satisfied from a somewhat unlikely source beginning August 9, when Theater Exposed presents *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Exposed, or TX, as it is variously known, has been Southern Nevada's most adventurous little theater group in the last few years, presenting plays by David Mamet, *Elephant Man*, and, most recently, a revival of *Boys in the Band*. The group has long planned a production of *Julius Caesar*, but an opportunity to perform at Spring Mountain caused *Julius* to be shelved in favor of the more traditionally outdoorsy *Dream*.

Marguerite Gowan Hall will direct a cast of 25 in *Midsummer*, which will be presented by the State Parks Cultural Arts Board and funded in part by U. S. Homes.

Midsummer precedes the regular TX season which this year will consist of mainstream plays beginning with William Inge's *Come Back Little Sheba* at UNLV Grant Hall Little Theatre, October 4 through 14.

A Midsummer Night's Dream will run August 9, 10, and 11 at 8 p.m. The Ranch gates open at 6 p.m. and close at 8 or when the parking lot is full.

Advance tickets are available for *Midsummer* and for *Barnum*, which opens July 12, at Rebel Britches and the Ski Chalet. For more information, call 875-4141. **AA**

'Barnum' in the park

Barnum will be the major production this summer at Spring Mountain Ranch, site of many a successful program organized by the State Parks Cultural Arts Board. As a part of "Super Summer '84," it will run for three consecutive weekends (Thursday, Friday and Saturday), beginning July 12.

The play, based on the life of America's greatest showman, P.T. Barnum, traces Barnum's life from 1835 to the year he joined Bailey to form The

Greatest Show on Earth. Lively music, dances and songs will be performed within an exciting circus atmosphere.

Jody Johnston, one of the community's best known and highly respected directors, directs in the award-winning musical.

Advance tickets are available now for *Barnum* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, also to be shown as part of "Super Summer," at Rebel Britches and Ski Chalet. Call 875-4141 for information. **AA**

Theater Notes

The Joseph Bernard Acting Studio recently announced the formation of the Joseph Bernard Acting Company, debuting with its production of Tom Topor's *Nuts* at Clark County Community College in May.

Although the second production has yet to be announced, the Studio, in its new location at 3871 S. Valley View #63, is presenting a monthly series of actors' showcases, which are free to the public, although reservations are suggested since space is limited. Dates of the July showcase will be announced shortly. For more information, call 367-4938.

• • •

Actors for Actors is presently holding auditions for an intensive film, scene and commercial workshop. Enrollment will be limited. For an appointment, call Rusty Feuer at 739-7361. **AA**

Sweetflower melodrama

Sarah Sweetflower has inherited Cactus Bob's Saloon in the ghost town of Elbow's Bend. Will she open Sarah Sweetflower's Sarsaparilla Saloon and Bridal Shoppe with the help of our hero, Stanley Stoutheart? Or will the villainous Sly Scavenger and his accomplice Miss Twinkle Toes ruin her dreams by stealing Cactus Bob's lost gold mine with the help of professional gunfighter Big Bad Granny? Can they do away with Sarah, or will the town's only permanent resident, Tumbleweed (who doubles as town judge and constable) get her out of it?

You'll shudder at the mine explosion,

cheer for Stanley Stoutheart, but most of all you'll laugh at the antics of this hilarious crew of zanies in the melodrama *A Golden Fleecing*.

The melodrama by R. Eugene Jackson, will be directed by Iris Newman and presented free to the public at various times and places during the month of July, all at 7 pm.: Saturday, July 14, Rotary Park; Sunday July 15, Lorenzi Park; Saturday, July 21, Baker Park; Sunday, July 22, Rotary Park; Saturday, July 28, Lorenzi Park; Sunday, July 29, Hadland Park. Call 386-6211 for information.

AA

Cliff Segerblom.

Segerblom: 50 year chronicler of Nevada life

Marking his 50th year of painting in Nevada, Cliff Segerblom, Boulder City artist, will be featured in a one-man show opening August 18th at Burk Gal'ry in Boulder City.

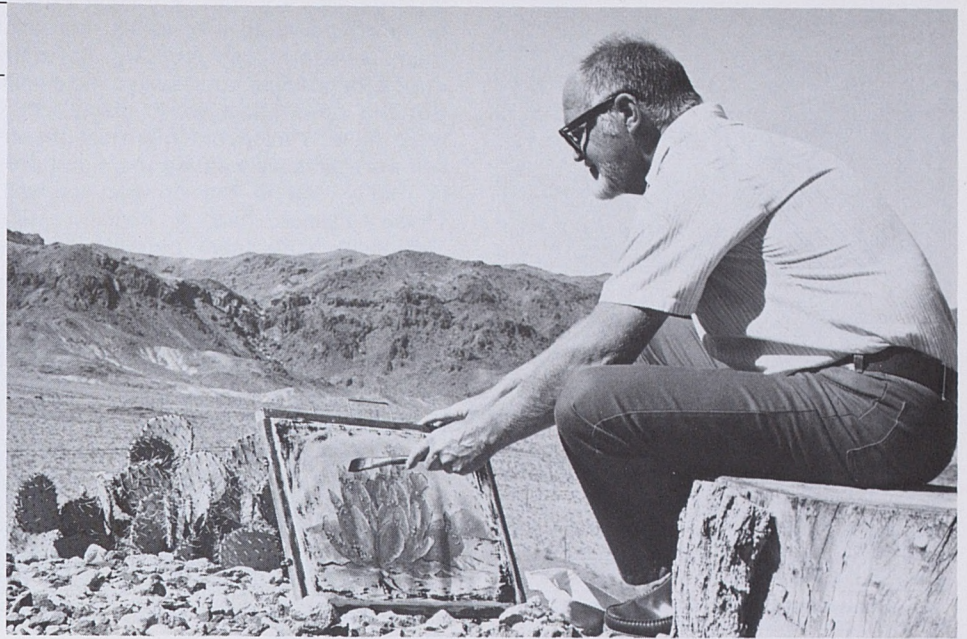
In honor of his sharing of his talents during this time, Segerblom recently received the 1984 Governor's Arts Award for visual art.

Seegerblom, a native of Southern California, took his degree in art from University of Nevada, Reno and has been drawing, painting and photographing Nevada since 1934.

His work has been exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New York and he has had many one-man shows in Southwest galleries.

At the invitation of the Secretary of the Navy, Segerblom attended the Apollo 12 splashdown doing an art series for the Navy's official art collection. Representing Nevada, he was one of two artists selected for the historic task.

Seegerblom received a bicentennial grant for an oil painting of the old Union Pacific Depot in Caliente and served as artist-in-residence in the Boulder City schools. He has taught at UNLV, the



Las Vegas Art Museum, the Clark County Community College and has conducted workshops in Mexico and outlying Nevada for UNLV Continuing Education.

Cliff also has had a successful career in photography, becoming the chief photographer for the government during construction of Hoover Dam. His photographs appear in *Sports Illustrated*, *Life*, *Time* and *National Geographic*. He founded the UNLV photographic department.

"I've been painting and photographing the real Nevada—the ranches, farms and towns, for the past 50 years, hoping to preserve the architecture and way of life," Segerblom says. "I am a visual historian of early Nevada." **AA**

New director for museum

The Las Vegas Art Museum has hired Robert Meldonian, recently of San Francisco, as its new museum director. After a brief period in which Peter Duer was interim director, Meldonian began work June 18 for the museum, housed in an historical building in Lorenzi Park.

The new director earned a BA in art history at UCLA and an MA in art history at UC Berkeley. His specialty is post-impressionist art; his master's thesis was on Paul Gauguin and pre-Columbian art. He studied with Herschel B. Chipp and Peter Selz, among others. He spent two years as an education specialist at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and has been assistant professor of art at Arizona State and California State University at Dominguez Hills.

Meldonian likes the prospect of Las Vegas. "This is a growing, budding town. It's wonderful here. It's fresh. With advantages other cities would die for, Las Vegas has a chance to really become a cultural center." **AA**

Allied Arts relocates

The Allied Arts Council has left Heritage House and is now located on the fabulous Las Vegas Strip, tucked appropriately behind the Santa Anita Sports Book. Unless a last minute snag appeared, the move took place while this issue of *Arts Alive* was being printed.

The 2900 square foot former home of the Variety Club, across Las Vegas Boulevard South from the Fashion Show Mall was offered by Summa Corporation for the Council's use early in the year, but the details of arranging the move consumed the months since.

Allied Arts hopes to be able to subdivide the mostly open space into a number of offices, both for its own use and for inexpensive rental to other local non-profit groups.

"We're very happy to be out on the Strip," said Executive Director Patrick Gaffey. "Now we're trying to arrange to

put up a monstrous neon sign."

The Council's new address is: 3207½ Las Vegas Blvd. So., Las Vegas, NV 89109. The new telephone number will be **731-4291**.

For information on Heritage House, call 382-7198. **AA**

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Muse

Lost and Found

by Wayne La Fon

I lost my red sunglasses out in Boulder City on May 5. The loss of a single pair of sunglasses, even red ones, may seem less than important, especially in

"No Pictures, Please," self-portrait by Wayne La Fon; 30" x 44", colored pencil (1983).



an area where at the very least dozens or more pairs of sunglasses, some of them probably even red, are lost daily at or around local hotel swimming pools. But the ones I lost were special; they were mine. I even did my most recent self-portrait while wearing them, not only in reality, but in the drawing as well. These glasses had a history. Mike McCollum wore them once to have a photograph taken. And now they are lost somewhere out there in Boulder City, and quite possibly might even have fallen into untrained hands.

The reason I can pinpoint the date and the place is because the loss of my sunglasses, my red sunglasses, directly corresponds with the first day of the Black Canyon Juried Art Show and my visit to the event. If the missing glasses are the bad news, then the good news is the spirit and outcome of the Third Annual Black Canyon Juried Art Show and Sale.

There are a lot of reasons for the success of the event, none of which have anything to do with my phantom red sunglasses, so in an effort to keep my loss in perspective, I will try to point out a few of the reasons that made my trip to B.C. more than worthwhile.

Certainly there was high quality artwork on display. The thirty-three artists invited to participate in the competition seemed for the most part to work in a Southwestern style and were all professional working artists. In fact, many of the artists taking prizes in the various categories may be quite familiar to you.

Brent Thomson took best of show. Top watercolor honors went to Bill Verrill, second place to Tad Cheyenne Schutt and third to Charlotte Baklanoff. The first place painting award was given to Anne Bridge and the second place to Walter Pfyl. Drawing honors were awarded number one to Tad Cheyenne

Schutt and number two to Andre' Licardi. And in the bronze category, first place went to Panom Suwannath and second to James McCartin. The People's Choice Award went to Endre Peter Darvas. If you're a patron of Southwestern art, I'm sure a lot of those artists and their work are well known to you. But it wasn't just the artists and their work that made the overall success of the Black Canyon Juried Art Show.

A large part of the success centers around Boulder City itself and the community of people that make it up. Even if it is the city that swallowed up my red sunglasses, sunglasses that a certain car dealer in town once offered to take in trade on a new and unspecified automobile, Boulder City does have a certain spirit that couldn't help but lend an air of success to any such event.

Margie Fisher, executive director of the Boulder City Chamber of Commerce, headed up the art show committee. She and her fellow committee members probably even helped to make the meal that was served at the awards dinner and auction, proceeds from which, by the way, were earmarked towards the building of a cultural center and museum in their already active arts community.

But I guess the spirit of the event that most seemed to affect me was the involvement of the committee and, in fact, the community in general at the auction. One such involved citizen of Boulder City, a Mr. Al Radig, should be singled out as one of their finest supporters of the arts. He purchased piece after piece of artwork that evening, I'm sure because he liked the work, but also, I'm sure because he wanted to give to the community and he wanted to keep the auction going. Mr. Radig wasn't the only patron of the evening, but he was one of the more noticeable ones. Committee members bought work, artists bought work; in fact, almost everybody in the room bid at one point or other during the evening. The only two things that were noticeably missing from the evening and from the show in general were more people attending from outside the community and, of course, my red sunglasses.

The Black Canyon Juried Art Show and Sale is over for this year, but if you can remember and you get a chance to go next year, do it. It may just show you what community spirit is all about. And while you're out there, if you should happen to trip over a pair of red sunglasses, well, just drop them in an envelope to Allied Arts, and somebody there will get them to me. Who knows, maybe they'll turn up; good things have happened to me in small towns before. I was born in one. Heck, I even won a ribbon for making cinnamon biscuits once at a fair in Victorville. Anyway, visit Boulder City if you get the chance, and keep an eye out for me. **AA**

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Billboard art goes national

The annual billboard art competition co-sponsored by the Allied Arts Council and Donrey Outdoor Advertising becomes a national art competition this year, to be juried by Southern California artist Edward Ruscha.

Held previously in Fall 1982 and Spring 1984, the competition will be moved to Fall again and be repeated this year, to become an annual Fall event. In its first incarnation, as "Art in the Great Outdoors," winners Jean Logan Bayless, Jed Olsen, and Myra Knapp saw their work recreated as 48-foot billboards and displayed around the Las Vegas Valley for over eight months. The second set of winning billboards, by Regina Holboke, Orpah Backus and Donna Beam, is currently on view.

There will be three winners in the next competition, to be called the "Las Vegas National Billboard Art Competition," but they will not necessarily be local artists. "We think this change will be great for Southern Nevada, and especially for Southern Nevada artists," says Allied Arts Council Director Patrick Gaffey. "The chance to compete against the best artists in the country and to be juried by Ed Ruscha is exciting and will draw out many more of our local artists. Of course, there is no way to know whether local artists will win, but Ruscha will jury a show from the entrants, which will be exhibited locally for a month, and even being juried into the show will be a real honor. Further, whoever wins, we'll have art juried on a national level exhibited in Southern Nevada for months in the most prominent way possible.

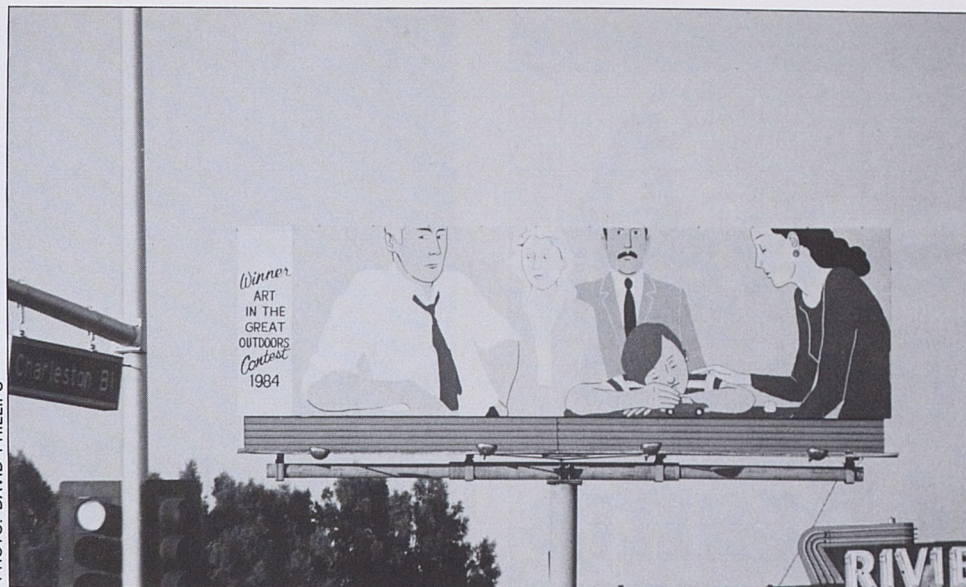
"Billboard art is a peculiarly American art form, and it is disappearing as billboards are legislated against in state after state. Nevada is in many ways the last refuge of the billboard, and since Las Vegas is a city known for its skyline of signs, we think artists nationally will respond to the idea of displaying their art hugely here."

Any easily reproduced medium that will be effective on an outdoor board is acceptable for entry. There will be a \$10 fee per entry, with a limit of three entries per artist. The three winners whose works are displayed as billboards will each receive a \$300 cash award.

The entry deadline is November 1, 1984. The competition is open to any resident of the United States. For an entry form and rules, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Billboards, Allied Arts Council, 3207½ Las Vegas Blvd. So., Las Vegas, NV 89109.

AA

PHOTO: DAVID PHILLIPS



Donna Beam's winning billboard competition entry "A Day in the Life of Bobby K.," over Charleston Blvd.

Las Vegas National Paperworks Show

"Local artists need national exposure, and they need to be exposed to more national-level art. That's why we've begun this series of Las Vegas National art shows; four for this year. With the national billboard competition in November, that will be five," says Kay Focht, Exhibits Director for Allied Arts Council.

The first show in the series is "Works on Paper," a self-explanatory title. Slides for the show are due no later than August 1, 1984, and the exhibit will take place from September 12 through 26 at a location to be announced. The billboard art competition Allied Arts has co-sponsored with Donrey Outdoor Advertising for two years will become the Las Vegas Billboard Art Competition, culminating in November and December (see accompanying story).

Those shows will be followed by a sculpture show in January, a photography show in March, and a paintings show in June.

The annual Directory Cover Art Competition co-sponsored by Centel is planned to remain a competition among local artists.

The sole juror for "Works on Paper" will be Pat Place Caldwell, chairman of the Clark County Community College art department. Any resident of the United States may enter, and Southern Nevada artists are particularly encouraged to do so. Any media on paper is acceptable for entry. The entry fee is \$10. each, with a maximum of three per artist. First, second and third place winners will receive cash awards.

Artwork can be for sale; Allied Arts will receive a 40% commission on all sales. Entry forms and instructions may be picked up at the Allied Arts Council or may be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Works on Paper, Allied Arts Council, 3207½ Las Vegas Blvd. So., Las Vegas, NV 89109. AA

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Sylvana Barrett Abrams in her studio.

Sylvana Barrett Abrams

Art historically

PHOTO: DAVID BROWN



Sylvana Barrett Abrams may be a little fuzzy on exact dates in her life, but she has a very clear philosophy which sustains her interest and her energy in painting. Abrams has lived for seven or eight years in Las Vegas ("My husband says it's been eight years," she says.), having been a Californian before that.

Abrams exhibits some of her latest work in a one-woman show at the Allied Arts Council-sponsored Gallery at First Western Savings from July 2 through August 2, where she also exhibited in the "New Works" show of the CCCC faculty in June.

Abrams earned her credentials in fine arts under what some would consider trying circumstances, as a result of following her husband wherever his career led. Perhaps that's why she is vague about the exact date of her graduation, "I must have graduated in '77 or '78. Let me think." (She was nevertheless clear about another important event in her life: "My son was born in '79.") She had completed all of her fine arts credits at UCLA when love reared its head; she met and married Daniel Abrams whose pursuit of a doctorate degree in clinical psychology took them to Auburn, Alabama before she had obtained her degree from UCLA. Auburn wouldn't transfer all her arts credits from UCLA so Abrams switched majors, ending up with a sociology degree from Alabama with a minor in fine arts.

Returning to California, her pursuit of a graduate degree in fine arts from Cal State, Fresno, in painting, was fraught with more difficulties. Her husband had landed a job in Las Vegas, working for the State of Nevada, so she found herself moving here before she could exhibit her work in the final requirement for her graduate degree: A one-woman show. So, for a year she shuttled back

and forth once a month between Las Vegas and Fresno, packing her large canvases with her, finally achieving her Masters Degree. During the same year, Abrams had begun to teach painting, drawing and art appreciation at Clark County Community College, which she has continued to do through the present, in addition to teaching classes at UNLV. "Those of us at CCCC who also teach at UNLV are 'extra;' what they [UNLV staff] do not want to teach, we teach," she says.

"I saw the garden out my studio window—I wanted to paint the cactus. That's all. There is no smart or sophisticated reason for doing it."

Her show, entitled "From the Neo-Gothic Garden," reflects a playful sense of irony. "Right now—" she says, "if you read art journals—everybody is into Neo-Expressionism; abstract...harsh colors. The trend lately has been neo-this or neo-that, so the title of my show is a sort of pun on neo-expressionism because it's so faddish. My favorite periods are Gothic or Byzantine; Gothic altar pieces usually have a large central figure with smaller ones on the side. In color

and composition, my work reflects that.

"I've been using oil and gold leaf on canvas just since I've been in Las Vegas. In graduate school I used to do dark and somber paintings. My professors suggested to me that moving to Las Vegas might influence the look of my work," she says. Skeptical then that a move to the desert would have any effect on her work, she now concedes that "something" provoked a change in her palette. Her once sombre works have been succeeded by paintings which glow with yellow and orange. "And I hate yellow and orange," she says. The gold leaf which is the hallmark of Abrams' work tends also to bring her palette into a brighter realm. Still, she sees that as a response to and a reflection of the antique periods of Western European art which are her favorites, rather than a conscious response to the brightness of the Southern Nevada desert.

Abrams' work is not without politics. Inevitably the issue of women and women's roles crops up in the subjects of her paintings. "That's how I got into the Gothic period," she says. Iconoclastic in her approach, Abrams parades naked madonna-like figures across some of her canvases in images that may shock (and have shocked) some viewers, violating the traditional portrayals of the ideal woman. "I saw them [traditional depictions of women] as unrealistic and extreme images," says Abrams. "And as a result of this sort of portrayal, people in real life are expected to live up to something that can't be done.

"Ideally, I wish that feminism were not an issue but that's not how things really are. I feel awkward with it. But it's generally true that women have a more difficult time being accepted and taken

seriously than men with the same credentials." Abrams described a couple of examples of pay inequities at CCCC: She found that her salary was lower than that of a man with the same credentials who had been hired after her. When she lodged a complaint, the college rectified the problem right away. Likewise, Patricia Caldwell, when *chairman* of the department at CCCC, discovered that a male colleague hired years after her was given a higher salary than her own. Once again, the college corrected the deficiency when Caldwell complained. In spite of having to deal with the issue of feminism at some level or another, Abrams is first and foremost an artist, and that is what occupies her thinking.

She identifies a lack of any true criticism as the biggest problem in the Las Vegas arts community. All who are qualified locally to review shows, she points out, are friends of all the other artists. Nobody would dare to give a deservedly scathing review of one's friends even "if they had put on a rotten show," partly not wanting to hurt the friend, partly to avoid being ostracized in an admittedly small community. Abrams feels that mediocrity results from the lack of real criticism, so that artists end up using a show simply as a resume item, unlikely to be spurred on to greater artistic efforts by an honest review.

"A lack of true criticism is the weak point in Las Vegas art."

"That is *the* weak point in Las Vegas art," she says. "I criticised—mildly—the Las Vegas National Works on Paper. I said that it had the look of a good student production rather than a fully professional show." The response to that was absolute outrage. But Abrams feels that there are some good artists here, citing most of the faculty of both UNLV and CCCC and some other local artists. "It's not that there is a lack of work here, but that it's not always daring, not pushing limits."

The relatively small size of Las Vegas' arts community brings other problems for artists who are looking for a testing ground for their talent. There is no graduate art school, no final crucible for developing and training. And then there is Las Vegas' glitter image, hard for outsiders (and some insiders, too) to see

through. Certainly Las Vegas is not perceived as an art center which attracts aspiring and inspiring artists. Abrams feels the size of the visual arts community is too small to respond to, because "there's not a unified theme," no large idea.

And themes and ideas are what Abrams responds to in her work. Almost every one of her paintings has an art historical allusion: A row of female figures based on the Venus de Milo in one work; ancient Greek torso remnants in another; male figures based on the ancient Discus Thrower or figures from Italian wall frescoes in others; Gothic composition and color. "That's what attracted me to painting," says Abrams, "a long history of artists responding to other artists' work."

"Once in a while one new idea comes along and everybody works on it until it is exhausted. That's why there are movements and why they end. 'Dumb and ugly' is one of those periods now going on which has become mannered and faddish. 'Dumb and ugly,'" she explains, "arose from the idea that there is no challenge in simply repeating what you did in graduate school;" that in order to push your limits, you go beyond the finesse and ease of what you have learned to the awkward edge of the unknown: The real sophistication therefore is not 'smart and pretty' art, but 'dumb and ugly.'

"Now it's time to move on. Things have been pushed and pulled about as far as they can go. Time to go on to the reasonable next step—for instance neo-expressionism was a good reaction to the photo-realism of a few years back. That's why I have changed subjects in my own works. Everybody is figure painting. I got tired of 'the figure,'" she says. And for the upcoming show at The Gallery at First Western, Abrams made a last minute decision to paint something other than her well known Venuses. The decision, which left precious little time to prepare for the show, forced her to concentrate with an intensity that she feels would have been lacking without the deadline. "For me it's a motivation," she says. "If it weren't for shows, I could still be painting my first canvas."

"Artists get trapped in one idea," she says. "Too involved in being consistent. I was in my studio one day thinking about the show and I realized I was bored. I saw the garden out my studio window—I wanted to paint the cactus. That's all. There is no smart or sophisticated reason for doing it. I think the cactus have the same sort of presence as the figure. I am painting them more realistically than I painted figures."

Abrams will show two 5x7 canvases and two smaller ones, "and maybe a couple of drawings" in the July exhibit.

—Cynthia Gaffey AA

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Luisa Triana

by Morag Veljkovic

Dark, vivacious and warm, Luisa Triana embodies the spirit of the country in which she was born. Born in Seville, the daughter of famed Spanish dancer Antonio Triana, Luisa made her dance debut at an early age.

She made her professional debut in Buenos Aires where she was introduced to dance aficionados by the legendary Argentinita. At age eight, she was signed by Sol Hurok and introduced to the American public as a child prodigy of Flamenco dance. She danced her way around the world, culminating in her Carnegie Hall debut. By sixteen, Luisa had become the youngest artist ever to interpret the title role of *Amor Brujo*, a gypsy ballet, performed at the Palace of Fine Arts, in Mexico City. By the age of sixteen she was running her own company, choreographing and dancing in the finest theaters all over the world. Her name was spoken of with awe and respect in the dance world.

She's danced at the Hollywood Bowl, at the Dorothy Chandler Pavillion, Los Angeles, at the Redlands Bowl and crossed into the world of cabaret when she brought her group to Las Vegas. At the International Hotel (now the Las Vegas Hilton) and at the Desert Inn Hotel, she opened for Danny Kaye and Andy Williams. While all of it was memorable, one engagement thrilled Luisa

above all others. It was the time when she was invited to dance in her home town and was honored by the mayor.

When she returned to Spain to dance for her countrymen after having made her life in America, Luisa was greeted by rave reviews, love and curiosity. "They were always asking me what Americans were like, even before they asked me about my dancing."

Spanish dance has enjoyed periods of popularity and periods of near oblivion. Much of that has to do with the artists who present it, says Luisa. Jose Antonio, Carmen Amaya, two names that come to mind, whipped up an excitement because they merged real talent with a touch of the commercial.

"It's no good being too commercial, because then you offend the knowledgeable audience and yet to survive you must have popular support so the successful performers are the ones who have blended the two facets together."

Luisa Triana was invited by Dr. Carol Rae to teach at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and she also teaches at Backstage Dance studio. Is it hard to Learn Flamenco dance?

"It depends on how much you want to learn," says Luisa. She rises and demonstrates the intricacies of the hand and foot rhythms. Back arched, head proudly held, knees bent, she digs her heels down and takes off over the tiled floor of her huge Spanish motif sitting room. It looks easy to me; sort of a cross between ballet and tap.

"Ballet, yes. It's there in the arms and certain technical aspects, but ballet begins with a held straight spine. We hold from the knees and thighs so that the hips are free to sway. Our lift comes from the front of the rib cage." She demonstrates and her body lifts to a natural arrogance.

"Tap is different. They loosen the ankles and bounce off the top of the floor. We dig down and resist the floor."

Flamenco begins with a good guitarist, a singer and the dancer who interprets the sound, says Luisa. When the chemistry clicks, enchantment begins...but that fiery spirit—can it belong only to the Latin soul?

"It is in us and I found I didn't have to teach it in Spain, but I have taught American born dancers, admittedly many of them of Latin heritage, to become respected performers in their own right. What I do say to the young Spanish dancer, who has mastered the technique is 'Go to Spain; absorb the ambience; it's there in the way people walk down the street, argue, or talk in groups. It's that intangible something that can't be taught.'"

How does a famous dancer come to terms with the fact that time is not the dancer's friend? Luisa has undergone two years of knee surgery and rehabilitation. She has moved with her husband to a city where her international reputation is virtually unknown. She's teaching the young while wondering if she can ever do it all herself. Is she resentful?

In her lilting voice, Luisa explains.

"I always taught. I'm a good teacher. When I married and stayed in this country I no longer had access to my choice of dancers from Spain, so I trained the people who became my company members. My knees? Yes that was frightening; I've been angry, scared, resentful, all of those things, but I think I probably did it myself. I used to leap in the air, land on my knees and leap up again in a series of jumps. It brought the audience to its feet because women didn't do that then, or now. I thought a great deal about what I would do if I couldn't dance and I decided that I'm lucky. I paint and that too is a creative outlet." (An accomplished and trained painter, Luisa's works grace the walls of her home.)

"On the subject of recognition, I've been a wife and mother most of my professional life and it has always been a challenge. Las Vegas is interesting and I like it more the longer I'm here. Other cities take their arts for granted because they're there. Here, there is a band of people actively working to create a cultural climate. Artists need arts more than anyone and they're usually at the core of artistic progress. I decided to get involved. I've formed a company—I teach—and on July 4, I'll be performing with the Las Vegas Symphony at the Tropicana Hotel. By nature, yes, I'm an optimist: Probably to a fault, but I do think that people like me can be received and supported by Las Vegans. I've done it before and I'll try very hard before I ever give up. The broader our artistic range, the better it will be for this community." **AA**



Luisa Triana.

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