THE SOUTHERN NEVADA MAGAZINE OF THE ARTS

ALLIED ARTS COUNCY JULY/AUGUST 1990 VOLUME 10, NUMBER

Patrick & Cynthia Gaffey 7265 Palmyra Las Vegas, NV 89117

artist/studios:

A photo-essay by Lee Zaichick

ARTIST JOSE BELLVER

The Nevada State Museum and Historical Society

Presents

Vario San Jose: Photographs by Miguel Gandert

Scenes from an urban Chicano experience August 4 to September 23



Cholo, Albuquerque, NM, 1983

Eliot Porter: Master Photographer

Photographs by America's preeminent color photographer July 21 to September 23



Abandoned Farm, South Coast, Iceland, 1972





Both photographic exhibits are funded by a grant from the First Interstate Bank of Nevada Foundation, with additional funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, and the Nevada State Council on the Arts.

Nevada State Museum and Historical Society / 700 Twin Lakes Drive in Lorenzi Park / 486-5205 Museum and Museum Shop open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., daily.



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

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The Allied Arts Council is funded, in part, through a grant from the Nevada State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency; and funded mainly by our members and business supporters.



A member of Arts for America, the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies

The Allied Arts Council of Southern Nevada is a member of the National Alliance of Local Arts Agencies (NALAA).

Arts Alive (752690) is published bi-monthly at the subscription price of \$10 a year, only as part of regular membership dues, by the Allied Arts Council of Southern Nevada, 3710 Council of Southern Nevada, 3710 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89119-5619. Second class postage, Las Vegas, Nevada. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to: *Arts Alive*, 3710 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89119-5619.



Painter Jose Bellver is one of the artists pictured in a photo essay by Lee Zaichick on page 16.



UNLV Performing Arts Center director Rick Romito is profiled on page 20.



Drummer Billy Higgins was one of the highlights of Jazz Month 1990. For more highlights, see page 23.

DEADLINE: The deadline for the September/October issue of ARTS ALIVE is July 21.

Inside



Arts in July.

7 Arts in August

10 NEA update

10 City Hall Art

10 Junior League

11 Virko Baley film

11 LV Symphony

12 McHugh Awards

12 CCCC Theatre

12 Jazz Ensemble

12 New West

12 Ken Kesey

14 Summer Arts

14 Masuoka Show

14 Brass Quintet

15 Nev. State Museum

16 Artist/Studios

19 If Festival

20 Rick Romito

23 Jazz Photo page

24 Carmen

26 Vanishing Point

27 None of the Above

28 Sierra Wind Review

29 Allied Arts news

30 Nevada Museum

30 New Members



Photo by Lee Zaichick. See page 16. Artists/Studios.

"Tell me thy company, and I shall tell thee what thou art."

Miguel de Cervantes

Those who support the arts do so not only for themselves, but for the pleasure it brings others.

At the Vista Group, our recognition of individuals and organizations through awards to outstanding young artists at UNLV as well as service on numerous advisory boards affords us an intimate involvement with the arts.

Our enthusiasm for the arts in Las Vegas remains as strong as ever. Because only through steadfast commitment can the arts flourish and make the community we share a richer place to live and work.



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EXHIBITS

01 SUNDAY

Art-A-Fair Winner's Circle, selections from juried competition. Through August 6, Spring Valley Library. 435-0919.

Cartoons by Mike Smith, Las Vegas SUN editorial cartoonist. through July 18, Charleston Heights Arts Center. 386-6383.

Contemporary Nature, contemporary artists interpret Arizona landscape. Through August 1, Reed Whipple Cultural Center. 386-6211.

Couples, abstract oils by Susan Forestieri. Through August 28, Clark County Library Main Gallery. 435-0919. Environment theme paper pieces, by Sue Cotter. Through August 5, various locations in Las Vegas Library. 435-0919.

Heritage Collection, historical photos. Through July 17, Clark County Library Photographic Gallery. 435-0919.

John Buck and Hiroki Morinoue, prints

and sculptures. Through August 18, Mark

Masuoka Gallery. 366-0377.

Mid-West Life, landscapes by Regina Kurzinich. Through August 7, West Las Vegas Library. 435-0919.

Painted Ladies, photos by Phoebe Wrighter. Through July 19, Sunrise Gallery. 435-0919.

Recent works by Susan Bryan. Through August 7, Green Valley Library. 435-0919.

Sculptures, works on loan from numeralus Nevada artists. Through Soptom ous Nevada artists. Through September 30, Las Vegas Library Mountain and Desert courtyards. 435-0919.

Senior Citizens' Exhibit, work by Henderson seniors. Through July 30, James I. Gibson Library, Henderson. 564-5672. Western theme tapestries, by Kim Kennedy. Through August 5, Las Vegas Library Multi-Purpose Room. 435-0919.

06 FRIDAY

Kathleen Peppard, ceramic paintings and drawings. Through August 7, Allied Arts Gallery. 731-5419.

16 MONDAY

BFA Exhibit, work by graduating UNLV art students. Through August 17, Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery. 739-3237.

19 THURSDAY

City Wide Slide, results of contest sponsored by Nevada Camera Club. Through August 28, Clark County Photographic Gallery. Reception: 5 to 7 p.m., July 19. 435-0919.

21 SATURDAY

Color Photography by Eliot Porter. Through September 23, Nevada State Museum and Historical Society. 486-5205. It's a Small World, large format b/w photos by Jerry Metellus. Through September 12, Sunrise Library. 435-0919. John Komisar, watercolors. Through August 22, Charleston Heights Arts Center. 386-6383.

EVENTS

04 WEDNESDAY

Fourth of July Family Pops, concert by Las Vegas Symphony Orchestra. 2 p.m., Cashman Field Theatre. 739-3420.

10 TUESDAY

Dave Ringenbach, vibes. Jazz at the Hob Nob. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Hob Nob Lounge.

Dixie Dooley, magician, part of Children's Summer Concert Series at Winchester Community Center. 2 p.m. \$1 admission. Sponsored by Clark County. 455-7340. Great Books Discussion Group, 7 p.m.,

Clark County Library. Topics: The Rocking Horse Winner, by D.H. Lawrence and My Father, by Virginia Woolf. 733-3613.

11 WEDNESDAY

42nd Street, film starring Ginger Rogers. Classic Images Film Series, sponsored by

Library District. 6:30 p.m., July 11, Rainbow Library. 6:30 p.m., July 12, Spring Valley Library. 2 p.m., July 13, and 1 p.m., July 14, Clark County Library. 6:30 p.m., July 16, Sunrise Library. Free. 733-3613. Bonnie Phipps and the Elastic Band, musical ensemble. 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., Charleston Heights Arts Center. Also, 2 p.m., July 13, Reed Whipple Cultural Center. \$2 adults, \$1 children under 15. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6383 Grease, the musical. Presented as part of *Super Summer 90* at Spring Mountain Ranch State Park. July 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27 and 28. Gates open at 6 p.m., performance begins at 8. For ticket information, call 594-PLAY.

12 THURSDAY 42nd Street. See July 11. Agnes of God. See July 13. Grease. See July 11.

continued

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EVENTS

13 FRIDAY

42nd Street. See July 11.

Agnes of God, the drama by John Pielmeier, presented by the Las Vegas Playhouse. 8 p.m., July 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 and 28; 2 p.m., July 15, 22 and 29, at the Reed Whipple Cultural Center. \$7. Free seniors' performances, 8 p.m. July 15, 22 and 29, at the Reed Whipple Cultural Center. 12 and 15. Directed by Charles Strasser.

Bonnie Phipps and the Elastic Band. See July 11.

Grease. See July 11.

14 SATURDAY

42nd Street. See July 11. Agnes of God. See July 13.

Grease. See July 11.

lce Cream Feast, annual fundraiser for Nevada School of the Arts. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., continuous cones, sundaes and floats. All you can eat. \$2.50 advance tickets, \$3 at the gate. Children three and under are free. 739-3502.

Lord Arthur Savile's Crime, Melodrama in the Parks. July 14: Jaycee Park. July 15: Lorenzi Park. July 21: Angel Park. July 22: Freedom Park. July 28: Lorenzi Park. July 29: Jaycee Park. All shows begin at 8 p.m. and are free. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6383.

Moonlight and Music, outdoor concert by Serenata Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m., Starlight Pavilion, Clark County Library.

733-3613.

Young Adult Theatre Workshop, kids age 11-15 can learn all facets of theatre. Instructed by Betty Cleary of Las Vegas Little Theatre. 11 a.m., Spring Valley Library. Free. 733-3613.

15 SUNDAY Agnes of God. See July 13. Lord Arthur Savile's Crime. See July 14.

16 MONDAY

42nd Street. See July 11.

Laurindo Almeida, guitar. Alan Grant's Monday Night Jazz at the Four Queens. 7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 p.m., French Quarter Lounge. \$3 cover. Recorded for later broadcast on KNPR 89.5 FM. 385-4011.

17 TUESDAY

Las Vegas Marimba Quartet, part of Children's Summer Concert Series at Winchester Center. 2 p.m. \$1 admission. Sponsored by Clark County. 455-7340. Tom Gause, trumpet. Jazz at the Hob

Nob. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Hob Nob Lounge. 734-2426.

18 WEDNESDAY

Grease. See July 11.

Las Vegas Poetry Group. 7 p.m., Clark County Library. 733-3613. Out of My Mime, mime David Barker. 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., July 18, Charleston Heights Arts Center; and 2 p.m., July 20, Reed Whipple Cultural Center. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. \$2 adults, \$1 kids under 15. 386-6383.

19 THURSDAY

Agnes of God. See July 13. Grease. See July 11.

20 FRIDAY Agnes of God. See July 13. Grease. See July 11. Out of My Mime. See July 18.

21 SATURDAY

Agnes of God. See July 13.

Business and the Arts Tour, trip to Utah Shakespearean Festival sponsored by North Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. Hosted by Angie Wallin. For further information, call 642-9595.

Grease. See July 11.

Lord Arthur Savile's Crime. See July 14. Young Adult Theatre Workshop. See July 14.

22 SUNDAY

Agnes of God. See July 13.

Cultural Exchange. Discussion forum featuring poetry, literary discussions and the fine arts. 3 p.m., West Las Vegas Library. 733-3613. Lord Arthur Savile's Crime. See July 14.

23 MONDAY

Shorty Rogers and Bill Perkins. Alan Grant's Monday Night Jazz at the Four Queens. 7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 p.m., French Quarter Lounge. \$3 cover. Recorded for later broadcast on KNPR 89.5 FM. 385-4011.

24 TUESDAY

Baba Yaga, musical Russian folk tale, presented by Tears of Joy Puppet Theatre. Children's Summer Concert Series. 2 and 7:30 p.m., Winchester Community Center. \$1 admission. Sponsored by Clark County. 455-7340.

Flying Down to Rio, film starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Classic Images Film Series sponsored by Library District.

6:30 p.m., July 24, Sunrise Library. 6:30 p.m., July 25, Rainbow Library. 6:30 p.m., July 26, Spring Valley Library. 2 p.m., July 27 and 1 p.m., July 28, Clark County Library. 6:30 p.m., July 31, Green Valley Library. 6:30 p.m., August 1, Las Vegas Library. 733-3613.

Great Books Discussion Group. 7 p.m., Clark County Library. Topics: Royal Beatings, by Alice Munro and the Originality of the Old Testament, by Herbert Butterfield.

733-3613.

Randy Brunegardt, drums. Jazz at the Hob Nob. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Hob Nob Lounge. 734-2426.

25 WEDNESDAY

Baba Yaga, musical tale from Russian folklore, presented by Tears of Joy Puppet Theatre. 2 p.m., Charleston Heights Arts Center. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6383.

Grease. See July 11.

Petrouchka, presentation of by Tears of Joy Puppet Theatre, featuring music by Stravinsky. 10:30 a.m., July 25, Charleston Heights Arts Center; and 2 p.m., July 27, Reed Whipple Cultural Center. Presented by city of Las Vegas. 386-6383.

26 THURSDAY Agnes of God. See July 13. Grease. See July 11.

27 FRIDAY Agnes of God. See July 13. Grease. See July 11. Petrouchka. See July 25.

28 SATURDAY

Agnes of God. See July 13. Grease. See July 11. Lord Arthur Savile's Crime. See July 14. Young Adult Theatre Workshop. See July 14.

29 SUNDAY

Lord Arthur Savile's Crime. See July 14.

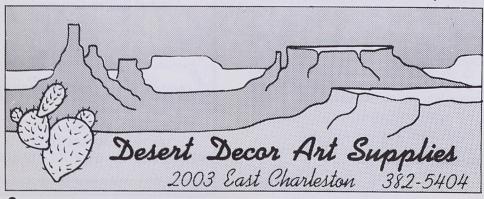
30 MONDAY

Azymuth, Brazilian jazz ensemble. Alan Grant's Monday Night Jazz at the Four Queens. 7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 p.m., French Quarter Lounge. \$3 cover. Recorded for later broadcast on KNPR 89.5 FM. 385-4011.

Childrens' International Folk Festival, featuring top names in childrens' folk music. 7:30 p.m., Artemus Ham Concert Hall. \$5 general admission, \$3 children. Sponsored by Clark County and the UNLV Performing Arts Center. 455-7506.

31 TUESDAY

Jay Cameron, saxophone. Jazz at the Hob Nob. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Hob Nob Lounge. 734-2426.



AUG

"A Knight at the Fights," August 3.

EXHIBITS

01 WEDNESDAY

Watercolors by 25 Southern Nevada artists. Through August 30, James I. Gibson Library, Henderson. 564-5672.

04 SATURDAY

Vario San Jose: Photographs by Miguel Gandert. Through September 23, Nevada State Museum and Historical Society. 486-5205.

05 SUNDAY

National Watercolor Society exhibit. Through September 5, Reed Whipple Cultural Center. 386-6211.

07 TUESDAY

M. Shane Reynolds, surrealistic collages and wall pieces. Through August 28, Spring Valley Library. Reception: 5 to 7 p.m., August 7. 435-0919.

09 THURSDAY

Jackie Reese, wildlife wood sculptures. Through September 17, West Las Vegas Library. Reception: 5 to 7 p.m., August 9. 435-0919.

10 FRIDAY

Maryanna Latham, still life paintings. Through September 4, Allied Arts Gallery. 731-5419.

27 MONDAY

UNLV Faculty Show. Through September 30, Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery. 739-3237.

29 WEDNESDAY

Stephanie Brady, miniature and box environments using found objects. Through October 9, Spring Valley Library. Reception: 5 to 7 p.m., August 29. 435-0919.

30 THURSDAY

It's a Small World, large format b/w photos by Jerry Metellus. Through October 9, Clark County Library Photographic Gallery. 435-0919.

Putting out the Darkness, mixed media paintings by Jim Briare. Through October 9, Clark County Library Main Gallery. Reception: 5 to 7 p.m., August 30. 435-0919.

Grant's Monday Night Jazz at the Four Queens. 7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 p.m., French Quarter Lounge. \$3 cover. Recorded for later broadcast on KNPR

89.5 FM. 385-4011. 07 TUESDAY

Philip Wigfall, saxophone. Jazz at the Hob Nob. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Hob Nob Lounge. 734-2426.

08 WEDNESDAY

A Friend of Scott Joplin, presentation by pianist Dennis Kobray. 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., Charleston Heights Arts Center. \$2 adults, \$1 kids under 15. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6383.

Hello Dolly, the musical. Presented as part of *Super Summer 90* at Spring Mountain Ranch State Park. August 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24 and 25. Gates open at 6 p.m., performances begin at 8. For ticket information call 594-PLAY.

09 THURSDAY

Hello Dolly. See August 8.
Ludwig Van Beethoven, presentation
by pianist Dennis Kobray. 7:30 p.m.,
Charleston Heights Arts Center. \$2 adults,
\$1 for under 15. Sponsored by City of Las
Vegas. 386-6383.

10 FRIDAY

Hello Dolly. See August 8.
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, presentation by pianist Dennis Kobray. 2 p.m.,

continued

EVENTS

01 WEDNESDAY

Chamber Magic, performances by magician Richard Hatch and violinist Rosemary Kimura. 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., August 1, Charleston Heights Arts Center; 2 p.m., August 3, Reed Whipple Cultural Center. \$2 adults, \$1 children under 15. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6383.

03 FRIDAY

A Knight at the Fights, an evening of fight choreography marking the end of the 11th Annual Stage Combat Workshop at UNLV. 8 p.m., Judy Bayley Theatre. \$4. 739-3662

Chamber Magic. See August 1.

Las Vegas Saxes, outdoor concert, 8 p.m., Starlight Pavilion, Clark County Library. Free. 733-3613.

05 SUNDAY

Cultural Exchange. See July 22. New World Brass Quintet, concert featuring wide-ranging repertoire. 3 p.m., Allied Arts Gallery. \$6 general admission, \$4 Allied Arts members. 731-5419.

Yesterday's Country and Scenic Route, country/bluegrass bands. Sundown-Hoedown Concert Series. 7:30 p.m., Jaycee Park. Free. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6511.

06 MONDAY

The Harper Brothers jazz band. Alan

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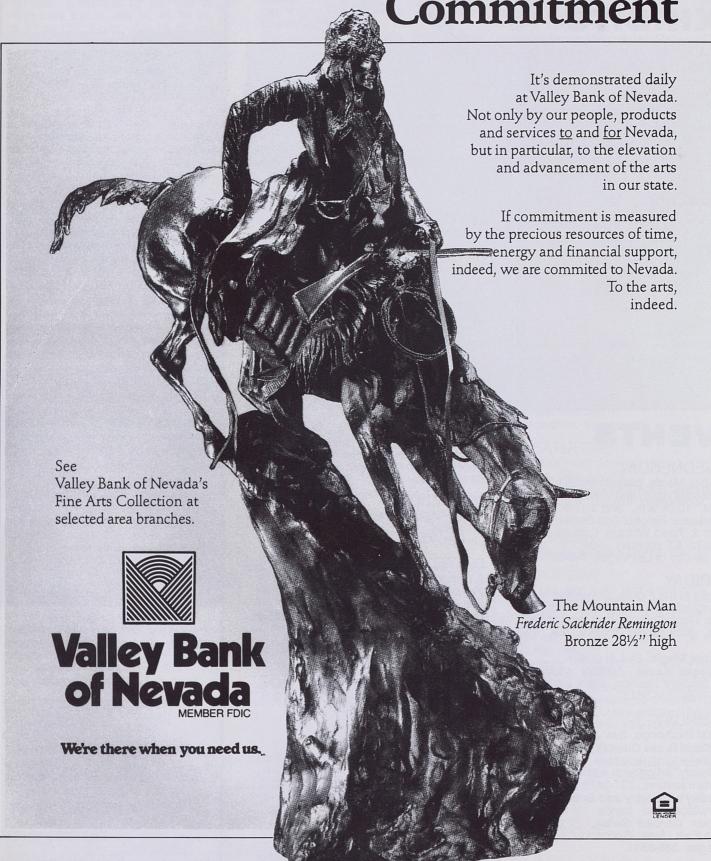


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The Fine Art of Commitment





The New World Brass Quintet will perform August 5.

Reed Whipple Cultural Center. \$2 adults, \$1 for under 15. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6211.

11 SATURDAY

Academy of Nevada Dance Theatre Summer Concert, 1 p.m., Artemus Ham Concert Hall. For more information call 739-3838.

Hello Dolly. See August 8.

Moonlight and Music. Outdoor concert by Serenata Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m., Starlight Pavilion, Clark County Library. Free. 733-3613.

12 SUNDAY

Country Gazette, bluegrass band. Sundown Hoedown Concert Series. 7:30 p.m., Jaycee Park. Free. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6511.

13 MONDAY

Mark Murphy, vocals. Alan Grant's Monday Night Jazz at the Four Queens. 7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 p.m., French Quarter Lounge. \$3 cover. Recorded for later broadcast on KNPR 89.5 FM. 385-4011.

14 TUESDAY

Great Books Discussion Group. 7 p.m., Clark County Library. Topics: *The Bear,* by William Faulkner, and *The Town Dump,* by Wallace Stegner. 733-3613.

Rocky Lombardo, trumpet. Jazz at the Hob Nob. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Hob Nob Lounge. 734-2426.

15 WEDNESDAY

Hello Dolly. See August 8. Las Vegas Poetry Group. 7 p.m., Clark County Library. 733-3613.

16 THURSDAY Hello Dolly. See August 8.

17 FRIDAY
Hello Dolly. See August 8.

18 SATURDAY Hello Dolly. See August 8.

19 SUNDAY
Cultural Exchange. See July 22.
Warburton Family and
White Water String Band, bluegrass ensembles. Sundown-Hoedown Concert Series. 7:30 p.m., Jaycee Park. Free. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6511.

20 MONDAY

Tom Ferguson, piano, and Friends. Alan Grant's Monday Night Jazz at the Four Queens. 7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 p.m., French Quarter Lounge. \$3 cover. Recorded for later broadcast on KNPR 89.5 FM. 385-4011.

21 TUESDAY

Calvin Eagle-I Shields Big Band. Jazz at the Hob Nob. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Hob Nob Lounge. 734-2426.

The Jolson Story, film biography of Al Jolson. Classic Images Film Series sponsored by Library District. 6:30 p.m., August 21, West Las Vegas Library. 6:30 p.m., August 22, Rainbow Library. 6:30 p.m., August 23, Spring Valley Library. 2 p.m., August 24 and 1 p.m., August 25, Clark County Library. 6:30 p.m., August 27, Sunrise Library. 6:30 p.m., August 28, Green Valley Library. 6:30 p.m., August 29, Las Vegas Library. 733-3613.

22 WEDNESDAY

Hello Dolly. See August 8. The Jolson Story. See August 21.

23 THURSDAY

Hello Dolly. See August 8. The Jolson Story. See August 21.

24 FRIDAY

Hello Dolly. See August 8. The Jolson Story. See August 21.

25 SATURDAY

Hello Dolly. See August 8. The Jolson Story. See August 21.

26 SUNDAY

Celebration of Theatre, featuring presentation of the John McHugh Theatre Awards. 4 p.m., Artemus Ham Hall Lobby. \$5 general admission, \$3 Allied Arts members. 731-5419.

Laurie Lewis and Grant Street, bluegrass performers. Sundown-Hoedown Concert Series. 7:30 p.m., Jaycee Park. Free. Sponsored by City of Las Vegas. 386-6511.

27 MONDAY

Richard Groove Holmes, organ. Alan Grant's Monday Night Jazz at the Four Queens. 7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 p.m., French Quarter Lounge. \$3 cover. Recorded for later broadcast on KNPR 89.5 FM. 385-4011.

The Jolson Story. See August 21.

28 TUESDAY

Great Books Discussion Group. 7 p.m., Clark County Library. Topics: *Everything That Rises Must Converge*, by Flannery O'Connor and *Darwin's Middle Road*, by Stephen Jay Gould. 733-3613.

Jimmy Gulinn, trombone. Jazz at the Hob Nob. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Hob Nob Lounge. 734-2426.

The Jolson Story. See August 21.

29 WEDNESDAY

The Jolson Story. See August 29.

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"Flamenco" Limited Edition Serigraph

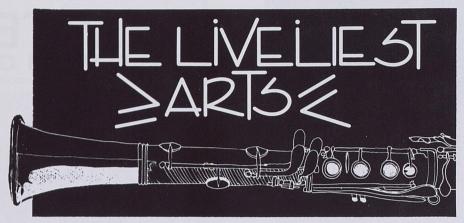


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NEWS OF THE ARTS IN SOUTHERN NEVADA



by SCOTT DICKENSHEETS

n June 20, the Las Vegas City Council approved a complex light and shadow, computer and water artwork by Colorado artist William Maxwell for the curved south wall of Las Vegas City Hall.

Maxwell's piece was chosen by the City Arts Commission from among five nation wide finalists, and will cost an estimated \$75,000 to install, which is the commission the city offered.

Maxwell, soft-spoken and articulate, described the project with bubbling enthusiasm. "I wanted to do something specific to the state of Nevada," he said, explaining the intricate cycle of symbols involved in his piece. Simply put, designs will appear and disappear on the curved wall, depending on the position of the sun. The central motif, Maxwell explained, will be a circular target shape. This design has numerous interpretations. It resembles a nuclear warning symbol, "which has to do with the nuclear testing," he said. "I want the piece to talk about issues that should be debated." It also looks like a radar screen. And it refers to the Indian "ghost dance," which was part of the culture in Nevada.

As the circles come and go, images of desert creatures will also appear and disappear. "I wanted to tie in the nature of this place, the flora and fauna," Maxwell said. These images will probably be lined with florospar, a reflective mineral, to make them glow at night. "I also wanted the piece to tie into the state's mining history.'

These shapes will either be sandblasted into the wall, or will be achieved by affixing strips of colored plastic to the wall.

Meanwhile, computers will generate animal shapes in the water at the base of the wall. Water will empty from the shapes, and they will fill with light, then quickly vanish. Also, shallow animalshaped impressions will be blasted into the nearby sidewalk, which will fill briefly with water when it rains. These slight pools will reflect the sky, "thus engaging the natural weather cycle of the site," the artist said.

Sound complicated? Nah. Maxwell has done this kind of work before. "The hard part is having an idea and implementing it. But once you've solved the problem, it's simple. Actually, I have a team of artists and engineers I work with. I get an idea and I can call them and say, 'How do I do this?'"

The project will take a year to install, with completion projected for November, 1991. aa



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JR. LEAGUE

by PATRICK GAFFEY

t its annual spring meeting in Toronto, the Association of Junior Leagues International requested that its officers send letters to Congress and President Bush supporting reauthorization of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The NEA, by law, must be reauthorized every five years or dissolve.

NEA reauthorization is currently jeopordized by a national lobbying group claiming the Endowment has funded "pornographic" artworks. The resolution to back reauthorization, proposed by the Junior League of Las Vegas, was supported overwhelmingly by Association members in attendance, representing Junior League chapters from across the United States and around the world. A proposed amendment asking for content-related restrictions on NEA granting was resoundingly defeated.

Adele Koot, outgoing president of the Las Vegas chapter, presented the resolution and supporting materials to the international gathering. Acknowledging that the city does not have a worldwide cultural reputation, the chapter devoted a page to answering the question, "Why is Las Vegas, of all places, bringing this issue forward?" It noted the extraordinary growth of the Nevada arts community in the last few years, the large proportion of Nevada arts funding which comes from the NEA to support such institutions as the Las Vegas Symphony and the Nevada Opera Theatre, as well as the involvement of the Junior League of Las Vegas with many cultural projects.

Currently the Las Vegas chapter is in partnership with the Allied Arts Council and the Clark County School District to establish Class Act, a program of arts presentations in local schools. The chapter also worked with Allied Arts to create Discovery, the children's museum which will open in the fall in the brand new Las Vegas Library building.

The Junior League of Las Vegas listed 32 examples of current projects undertaken by chapters in 18 states in partnership with organizations funded by the NEA, including symphonies, arts centers, museums, dance companies, opera companies, theatre companies, arts councils, and, in San Angelo, Texas, a direct partnership with the NEA to benefit the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts.

The NEA, which has awarded over 80,000 grants in its 25 year history, has been attacked by North Carolina Senator

Jesse Helms and others for funding an exhibit of 120 photographs by Robert Mappelthorpe, of which five involved homosexual imagery and two were of nude children, though without any sexual content. One work by Andres Serrano in a Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art exhibit was also denounced in a well-funded media campaign organized by Helms and Christian fundamentalist groups led by Pat Robertson and Donald Wildmon. Helms is currently involved in a re-election campaign which observers have rated as too close to call.

Charges that the NEA funded a public performance by X-rated film actress Annie Sprinkle have been denied by Bush appointee John Frohnmayer, current NEA chair. He declared that Sprinkle and her performances have never received any funding or other support from the Endowment.

Congressional sources have said reauthorization of the NEA is seriously threatened. Tallies of messages to Congress on the subject had shown those opposing the NEA leading by five to one until mid-June, when supporting calls, letters and telegrams suddenly increased, balancing the numbers from the two sides almost evenly.

Arts supporters are concerned that "compromise" restrictive language added to the NEA's charter could be as fatal as failure to reauthorize the agency. Even the extremely soft restrictions added to this year's funding bill has caused some of the most respected members of American culture to turn back NEA grants, including noted director/producer Joseph Papp (who returned \$50,000 granted New York's Festival Latino) and choreographer Bella Lewitzky (\$72,000 awarded her dance company). Lewitzky said current restrictive language is so vague that in the current political climate she fears that if she put two men onstage at the same time, someone might call it obscene and she might be legally threatened.

Other arts advocates point to the arrest of a museum director when the Mappelthorpe exhibit was shown in Cincinnati and to the arrest of a record store clerk for selling albums by rap group 2 Live Crew in Florida as examples of serious liabilities now threatening arts professionals.

Junior League of Las Vegas past president Dede Nave said, "We presented this proposal to our international organization because we think the arts and creativity are of the utmost importance to everyone, and the NEA has been the most positive force for the arts in the history of this country." aa



Baley and film

film co-produced by Las Vegas Symphony artistic director Virko Baley received a pair of awards at the 1990 Cannes Film Festival in May. Swan Lake the Zone received the Young Film Critic's Award for Best Foreign Film, and the International Critics' Prize for best film outside the official competition. It was also selected for the prestigious Directors' Fortnight series.

Baley, who also scored the film, is particularly pleased by the International Critics' Prize. "As far as I'm concerned, it's the most important prize after the Palm d'Or (the grand prize, won this year by David Lynch's *Wild at Heart*)," Baley said during a Las Vegas press conference. "I am more than happy with this award."

"I have always been interested in film," Baley intoned. "At one point, it was a choice between film and music. So it has sort of been in my daydreams. I'd say, 'When I'm 50, I'm gonna make a movie."

This interest led Baley to form the company Video Ukraine in 1988, in order to produce and distribute professional video cassettes and feature films from the Russian province of Ukraine, Baley's homeland. Swan Lake the Zone is the company's first feature.

The film was directed by Yuri Illienko, who also directed the 1965 Russian film, A Spring for the Thirsty, which was banned in the U.S.S.R. for years. "When I saw that film I was thunderstruck by its originality," Baley recalled.

The film was backed by a Canadaian financier, and much of the post-production work was done in Canada.

To hear Baley describe it, Swan Lake

the Zone is a curious film, with only eight minutes of dialogue, and maybe 15 minutes of music. It concerns anescapee from a Soviet prison who hides in a huge hammer and sickle sculpture, which serves, Baley said, as the main visual metaphor in the film. He eventually falls in love with a woman, but is discovered and sent back to prison. After a series of crushing disillusionments, the prisoner commits suicide.

Spurred by the success of his first film, Baley has lined up two more movie projects, including another collaboration with Illienko.

At least partly as a result of the awards, "Swan Lake the Zone" is being shown in Denmark, Sweden, England, Holland, Germany and Taiwan. As of yet, no American distribution has been negotiated, though Baley indicated talks are in progress. Today, the world; tomorrow, America. aa

MU S&C

he Las Vegas Symphony Orchestra will again present its popular"Fourth of July Family Pops Concert" at 2 p.m., July 4, in Cashman Field Theatre. The program will feature a selection of patriotic favoritesand classic show tunes.

Tickets for the event, which is cosponsored by Target Stores and Sierra Health Services, are \$10, \$14 and \$17.

The Symphony will perform excerpts from *Oklahoma* and *Music Man*, as well as works by Aaron Copland and John Phillip Sousa. They will be joined by the Desert Chorale for *Battle Hymn of the Republic* and *The American Dream*.

Nevada Senator Richard Bryan will be on hand for the concert.

Virko Baley will conduct the Symphony, while the Desert Chorale will be directed by Nancy Musgrove.

For more information, call 739-3420.

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NEWS OF THE ARTS IN SOUTHERN NEVADA

Theatre



he Clark County Community College Theatre will open its 1990-1991 season on October 5, with Tom Stoppard's The Real Inspector Hound. Hillary Dekker directs.

Mark-Louis Walters will direct the second offering, Christopher Durang's The Marriage of Bette and Boo, which opens November 30.

Dario Fo's The Accidental Death of an Anarchist will follow, directed by Joe Kucan, opening in February.

In April, Cynthia Casey will helm the Andrew Bergman comedy, Social Secu-

General admission for each production is \$6, and \$4 for students, seniors nad handicapped. Clark County Community College Theatre is located at 3200 East Cheyenne. For information, call 644-PLAY. aa

McHugh's

he Allied Arts Council will present the annual John McHugh Theatre Awards on August 26, at 4 p.m., in the lobby of the Artemus Ham Concert Hall. Tickets for the event are \$5 general and \$3 for Allied Arts members.

Sixteen awards will be handed out in recognition of excellence in local community theatre, in such categories as artistic acheivement, technical support, administration, continuing service and excellence in production support.

The awards, named after a prominent member of the Las Vegas Theatre community, were designed to spotlight the high points in community theatre, and to recognize those whose effort and commitment rose above the average.

Advance reservations can be made by calling 731-5419. Theatre companies are invited to display production materials and promotional information. Make arrangements to do so by August 10. aa



s of April 28, UNLV has more than one national championship team. That's the day the school's 19member Jazz Ensemble took first place at the annual Music Fest USA in Oakland, California, sponsored by Down Beat magazine.

The band, led by director Frank Gagliardi, quashed competition from such colleges and universities as the University of Southern California, Princeton, UC Santa Cruz and others noted for strong jazz programs.

The Rebels qualified for the competition by winning first place at the regional Fullerton Jazz Festival.

"The band was sensational," gushed Gagliardi. "A large audience of strangers just flipped. They gave us a standing ovation, and the judges stood also."

Trombonist Neil Maxa, a UNLV grad student, was named Outstanding College Performer, and received a \$1,500 cash prize. He was also named to the stage band all-stars.

The band's winning performance included four tunes: "Slightly Off Ground." "Mr. Paddington," "Imagine What a Change Will Do," and a new Don Menza arrangement of "Cherokee."

"Cherokee was fast and furious and it killed 'em," Gagliardi said. aa



UNLV Jazz Ensemble.



he New West Stage Company will open its 1990-1991 season on September 21, with Beth Henley's comedy-drama Crimes of the Heart. Barbara Brennan will direct this look at three Mississippi sisters betrayed by their passions.

Next up will be August Wilson's acclaimed Pulitzer Prize-winner Fences. Kathryn Sandy O'Brien will direct, beginning November 9. Fences is the story of a former Negro baseball star who feels fenced in by the world.

For a change of pace, New West will

stage A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum starting January 25. Jim Semmelman will direct this classic romp, featuring words and music by Larry Gelbart and Stephen Sondheim.

The final show of the season will be Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman's You Can't Take It With You, directed by Robert D. Dunkerly. It open April 5, and is co-sponsored by the Lady Luck Casino.

All performances will take place at the Charleston Heights Arts Center. Ticket prices will be \$10 adults, \$6.50 for students, seniors and handicapped. Season tickets are \$32 general, \$25 for seniors, students and handicapped.

For more information call 876-NWSC.

Kesey Come, Kesey Go.

by SCOTT DICKENSEETS

He flopped heavily on the cement bench outside the lecture hall, a reeking drunk cowboy in blown-out jeans, a shirt of world-class ugliness and a ratty cowboy hat pressed over his long stringy hair. "Ever done any really *good* acid?" he asked, then sighed. "Here I am, drunk in Vegas, waiting to hear Ken Kesey." He shook his head at the irony of it all.

It was about an hour before Keseyauthor of One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest and Sometimes a Great Notion. chief psychedelic lester of the sixtleswas scheduled to give a late April reading and talk at UNLV. The cowboy had just flown in from Texas to see it. He claimed to be a correspondent for the Dallas Times-Herald and said he was looking for "the UPI and AP guys." "Kesey is just a great goddamn writer," he said. Shortly, a man with a sandwich in his mouth appeared. The UPI guy, apparently. Neither could have passed the dress code at the Village Voice, let alone a major newspaper or wire service, but together they set off in search of the AP man.

It brought to mind an essay in Kesey's 1986 collection, *Demon Box*, in which he describes the human flotsam that occasionally washes up unannounced on his Oregon farm, bent pilgrims seeking enlightenment from the Great Author. The cowboy was clearly among their number; he had simply found a way to meet Kesey half-way.

Kesey's life story is one of the core myths of the sixties. He was a contender for literature's heavyweight title after Cuckoo's Nest burst like a phosphorus bomb in 1962, followed by Sometimes a Great Notion. A couple more big books, and...but Kesey was already into a new thing. "I'm leaving literature behind," he announced, and moved into a multi-media sensurround phase incorporating music, film and whatever else seemed right, seeking an experience with more dimensions than mere printed words. He and his Merry Pranksters drove a garishly painted bus, freaking people out and filming the whole crazy trip.

Some of these experiences involved drugs, and eventually Kesey was busted. He fled south, where his legend grew in the warm Mexican sun. Eventually he made his fugitive way back to the U.S., and after a few weeks of wagging his tongue at the law, was captured. The judge called him a "tarnished Galahad" and sent him to jail. Since his release, he has mostly laid low on the farm, where occasional magazine articles have

portrayed him as a contented gentleman farmer.

Taking the stage, Kesey looked like a former wrestler gone somewhat to seed, which he is, round and friendly and brimming with humor. White hair curled out from under his Greek cap. During his brief stay in Las Vegas, Richard Wiley and Chris Hudgins of UNLV's English Department (which sponsored the lecture) spent time with Kesey, and both found him to be charming and knowledgeable.

He opened his talk—titled "Art, God and the NCAA"—by reading the introduction to *Caverns*, a novel gang-written by Kesey and his University of Oregon writing students last year.

He interrupted the reading to attack the NCAA, calling it a "shadow govern-



Ken Kesey.

ment" that exploits student athletes by making millions from collegiate sports while hypocritically denying the kids even a tiny cut. The audience, about 150 people whose hearts mostly pumped Runnin' Rebel red, was sympathetic. Much of Kesey's bitterness toward the NCAA lies in the death of his son, a collegiate wrestler who died in the 1985 crash of the creaky bus used to transport minorsport athletes.

Getting back to literature, he recalled talking to his students about the "job of the writer," meaning something beyond the simple production of words. One day, he told them, you'll see God



on a streetcorner and he'll beckon you over and promise you knowledge and secrets and power if you'll just give him a nice write-up. And if you're a writer, it's your job to say, in the most profane and gutteral way possible, "Fuck you! I'm a writer and I kiss NOBODY'S ass!"

The middle of the program was dedicated to the inevitable Q and A. Thus, the Bear Bryant Memorial Toss-Around Question and Answer Football, a red felt oblong with a microphone built in. Have a question? Speak into the football, please. "I usually use a basketball," Kesey said.

He must have seen the first question coming like a long train on the prairie: "In this era of 'Just say no,' what was the relationship between LSD and your earlier writing?"

"Just say thanks," a flippant Kesey replied, dodging it nicely.

After a few more questions along that line, he mused briefly about his celebrated acid use, which started under the auspices of a government testing program. It was like they were exploring some new kind of space, he remembered. "They needed volunteers, and I said, "I'm your man!" Laughter. "After a while they said, 'Don't let them go up there anymore, we don't like the look in their eyes.' So we had to take over the experiment on our own." He made easily ironic references to "the smoking vistas of my poor fried mind," and called himself a "fry-brained hippie."

"Why did you turn your back on writing, on this thing you do so well?" someone bellowed from the back row, without benefit of the football. The literary correspondent from Dallas. Kesey shrugged. "I'm not as good as I used to be." It sounded honest enough, but an answer like that rarely satisfies a drunken cowboy litteratteur. "That sounds like a cop-out to me," he shouted back. "Be straight with me."

Kesey pinned him to the wall with a sharp stare. "I simply refuse to be hemmed in by people's expectations," he said. The applause drowned out the cowboy's response. Obviously bugged, Kesey returned to the subject later. "I'm still writing some pretty good shit, man," he said, pointing at the cowboy. "Just because it ain't reaching you doesn't mean it's minor league!"

Pondering the future, Kesey said literature must come to terms with the VCR. "Somewhere out there is a kid with a camera on his shoulder that's every bit as good as Hemingway," he

continued



NEWS OF THE ARTS IN SOUTHERN NEVADA

said, not explaining how you can run with the bulls or reel in a marlin with a videocam on your back.

He mentioned he'll have four books coming out in the next year (Kesey's wife Faye later wrote to fill in the blanks: Caverns counts as one, another concerns beatnik legend Neal Cassady, one is an Indian fable, and one is an illustrated kids' story) and noted that head Talking Head David Byrne is sifting through the infamous Prankster footage with an eye toward working it into a film.

The chat session petered out son after that, but not until someone asked Kesey to compare himself to Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. Alas, Kesey declined.

He finished the evening by reading "Little Tricker the Squirrel Meets Big Double the Bear," a talking-animal fable, to an audience that was likely expecting some white-hot nuggets of new fiction, preferably Another One Flew Over that Cuckoo's Nest. But no, a bear and squirrel story, written in a hill dialect so authentic it might have been handcarried out of the Ozarks by a barefoot messenger. Reading it, Kesey let the ham in him come all the way out, doing different voices for each character and filling the stage with big gestures and theatrical movement. By the time Little Tricker had finished off Big Double, the audience was firmly with him.

At the end, Kesey asked everyone to join him in singing "the national anthem:"

Sometimes the light's all shinin' on me, Other times I can barely see, But lately it's occured to me, What a long, strange trip it's been

Ah, yes, still a prankster after all these years. aa

summer ar

evada School of the Arts Summer Arts Program continues July 9 -13 with classes in printmaking, clay, drawing/mixed media for adults and chamber music. The clay class is open for students aged 8 to 14; printmaking classes are offered both for students 9 to 12 and students 13 to 18: chamber music is open to intermediate and advanced high school and junior high students.

July 16 - 20, the Simply Synthesizers class begins, for junior high and high school keyboard players. Also, students 15 and up can attend an Organ Workshop.

July 23 - 27, Nevada School of the Arts presents The Art of Singing, with classes for students 12 to 17 and another for 18 and older.

July 30 - August 3, three and four year olds (with a parent), can attend a "Suzuki" Art class. Also July 30 - August 3, string, piano and flute students can attend a Suzuki and Orff Seminar, for students in Suzuki Books 1 through 4.

For complete information on all NSA Summer Arts Classes, call 739-3502. aa

he Mark Masuoka Gallery will host an exhibit of prints and sculptures by John Buck and Hiroki Morinoue, through August 18.

Working in the relative isolation of Montana, Buck has been weaving together a variety of diverse influences into a unique body of sculpture. In the 1970's his work consisted mainly of



freestanding painted wood pieces influenced by American folk sculpture. In the last decade, however, Buck's concern for enviornmental issues and his interest in politics has changed the emotional tenor of his work. His art now often embraces social commentary on a wide range of social and political problems.

Buck was/is one of the finalists in a state-sponsored competition to design public art that will accompany a government building in Carson City.

Sharing the gallery with Buck will be Hawaiian artist Hiroki Morinoue, who will show a selection of his prints and sculpture.

Morinoue is one of the island state's most popular artists. He blends American and Japanese influences into images usually related to the earth or sky. When he began printmaking, he was not satisfied with the results, so he went to Japan to study traditional carving and printing methods. "I made 1,500 images before I was satisfied," he said. Now he uses a combination of Japanese tools so precisely honed that only the original toolmaker in Japan is allowed to sharpen them, and American implements such as X-acto knives and fishing line.

Both artists have a tie beyond sharing an exhibit: Buck and his family live part of the year in Hawaii. For more information, call 366-0377. aa



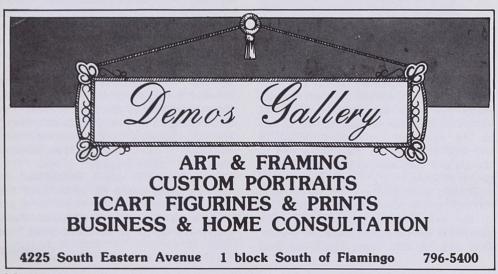
he Allied Arts Council will host a performance by the New World Brass Quintet in the Allied Arts Gallery at 3 p.m., August 5. Tickets are \$6 general, \$4 for Allied Arts members.

The Quintet is comprised of Walter Blanton and Thomas Gause, trumpets; Lynn Huntzinger, horn; James Huntzinger, trombone; and Garry Russell, tuba.

The group will display its versatility by playing in a wide range of styles, from Renaisance to jazz, as well as selections from New World Brass' album Bach for Brass and a suite of Duke Ellington tunes arranged by Blanton and Gause.

New World Brass flourished in the mideighties, receiving national attention. The ensemble briefly disbanded in 1986, but reformed last year.

For more info, call 731-5419. aa



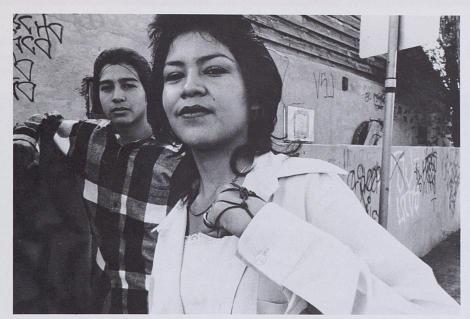


Photo by Miguel Gandert.

n.s.museum

selection of two decades worth of work by one of America's preeminent color photographers, Eliot Porter, will be shown in the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society July 21 through September 23. The exhibit illustrates various stages of Porter's development as he helped give color photography the kind of serious artistic status as black and white.

Porter had experimented with a box camera as a child, but was a professor of bacteriology at Harvard when his photo work came to the attention of Alfred Stieglitz. Porter soon gave up

micro-organisms for photography. He currently lives in New Mexico.

Vario San Jose: Photographs by Miguel Gandert," will hand in the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society from August 4 through September 23.

Gandert is a still photographer and T.V. news production manager in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The exhibit features photos taken in an Albuquerque barrio.

"I began by concentrating on the youth, their costumes, the way they moved, the way they carried themselves, and all the different icons that went along with it—the tatoos, the cars. They're kind of ignored. You see a *cholo* on the street and you don't look at him. Nobody ever really looks him straight in the eyes. So I wanted to make photographs of these people so that when a viewer came upon them, they were confronted by these people, and they were forced in a way to look him in the eye."

A selection of the photos has recently been displayed in the Smithsonian Institute. First Interstate Bank provided some funding for both shows. For more information call 486-5205. aa

Mark Masuoka Gallery

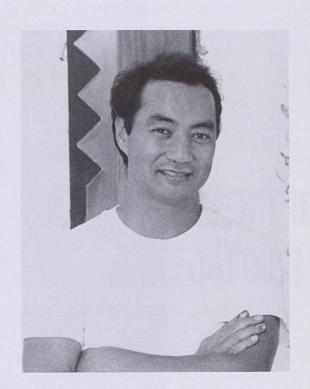


JOHN BUCK

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VICKI richardson

by KAMY CUNNINGHAM

Las Vegas' award-winning Rainbow Company Children's Theatre hosted its first bi-annual IF Festival May 10-13. Brian Strom, artistic director of the company, came up with the idea for the festival, envisioning it as a forum for "the performance and discussion of new Plays for young audiences that are nontraditional or non-realistic.'

My first task was to figure out what "IF" meant. Joe Kucan, the company's educational director, said it stood for "inner fringe, not outer fringe, because the fringe is elsewhere." This sounded good but was too cryptic to be illuminating, so I tried someone else, and she came up with "Imagination Festival." Yet another seemed surprised by the question because the answer was so obvious: "IF means 'what if,' of course, as in 'let's pretend.' What if I were a fairy tale princess? Or a sand castle? Or a bucket on the beach?"

The festival brought together playwrights, actors, directors and scholars from around the country. Dr. Roger Bedard, a noted children's theatre scholar, gave the opening address and asked one of the prevailing questions of the festival: "What is children's theatre, or theatre for young audiences? What is inherent in it? How is it different from theatre for adults?

"What are the distinctive features of children's theatre? Does it depend on the style of production? Must there be broad acting, chase scenes, lots of excitement? How about the visual aspects? Do the sets have to be done in bold primary colors and cartoon shapes? Does the company have to arrive and leave all in one van (kind of like a travelling vaudeville show or a minor league baseball team)?"

Although half-joking, Dr. Bedard's questions point to some of the difficulties of putting on innovative and experimental theatre for young audiences.

'School administrators," Dr. Bedard continued, "want non-controversial 50minute diversions," and "parents are looking for fairy tale plays with familiar titles."

"We must," he said, "reorient our work in the art of theatre rather than in the business of theatre. We must concentrate not on filling seats but on having something to say."

These concerns were echoed in a panel discussion the next day. Kim Kovac, of the John F. Kennedy Center, mentioned the difficulty of "maintaining your artistic integrity and of doing meaningful work in the face of economic pressures"; and Peter Brosius, of the Mark Taper Forum, asked, "How do you keep a sense of fire, a sense of yourself as an artist, in a country where everything



has to be economically justified?"

Well, setting all difficulties aside, a sense of fire and of artistic integrity were evident in the plays of the festival. The first, Robinson & Crusoe, performed by the Mark Taper Forum's Improvisational Theatre Project of Los Angeles and directed by Brosius, is originally an Italian play by Nino Introna and Giacomo Ravicchio of the Teatro dell'Angolo, a famous Italian youth theatre company.

In the play, two men who don't speak the same language are stranded on a rooftop in the middle of the ocean. More through the power of imagination than through the power of words, the two men come to understand each other. It's a play about friendship and caring.

Similar themes surfaced in the next night's play, the California Theatre Center's production of Beach of Dreams. Four people are stranded in an airport waiting room. Their common bond (other than being stranded): the sea. The play blends fantasy and reality. A huge piece of green silk, pulled from a trashcan, becomes a piece of the sea in the waiting room. In the most striking visual feat of the play, the green silk bellows and shifts its shape, a counterpart to the characters' imaginations as they change and grow.

The themes of the play are kind ones—friendship, sharing, compassion—and the imagination, which makes all this possible.

In a panel discussion the next day, the actors talked about the evolution of the play. Originally the creation of Graziano Melano, one of Italy's foremost directors of children's theatre, Beach underwent a considerable transformation during its trip to California. Melano likes to work improvisationally-and playfully-so he sent the actors a synopsis and said, "Here, you write your own characters, you make your own play." (There may be a pun here: Beach is about making your own play also in the sense of being as playful as possible, of saying "let's pretend" and seeing what happens.) His main direction was just that the actors stick to the sea in some way.

The festival also offered acting workshops. I attended an improvisation Master Class conducted by Virgina Koste, author of Dramatic Play in Childhood, the purpose of which was to loosen up the body and the imagination. We got to play tag and roll around on the floor and in general act silly and ridiculous, behavior not ordinarily sanctioned in adult life.

A workshop in the Suzuki Technique of Actor Training taught us how to focus our attention, control our bodies and make sharp, dramatic movements. I got to pretend I was a samurai warrior charging down a hill in Ran.

Most of the participants in the festival were out-of-towners, and it was enjoyable to watch their reactions to our playground, Las Vegas, First of all, the oddity of a children's theatre festival here, in this capital of distinctly adult entertainment. Next, almost everyone wanted to go see a show with "Nudes" in the title because, as one person said, "We don't have this sort of thing back in Hilldale." I suggested Folies Bergere instead, explaining there would be ample nudity for all, and that we'd see a more lavish show for our money.

Well, most, I think, headed off to something with "Nudes" in the title, because there was only a small contingent at the Folies. Afterwards, we gazed in unabashed awe at what has to be Las Vegas' grandest monument to "let's pretend," the Excalibur rising impressively from the desert across the street.

All in all, it was a "let's pretend" weekend. But not a weekend that offered any easy answers to the questions raised earlier (what is childrens' theatre? How can you keep your artistic imagination alive in unimaginative times?).

I did, however, find some indirect answers. Watching the plays, letting them move me and teach me how to play again, answered the question of "what is childrens' theatre" far better than any academic discussion could. Staying in touch with the imagination of children might be one answer to the second. I noticed that after the plays the actors invited questions from the children in the audience, sometimes dangling their feet over the stage. This casual interaction continued afterwards too: while the adults were standing around discussing, a lot of the kids were sitting on the stage, talking to and playing with the actors.

The themes of children's theatre are hopeful ones-friendship, caring, understanding, imagining as a positive act. The rainbow is a symbol of hope. In Carl Sandburg's words, "Children are born with rainbows in their hearts...you'll never reach them unless you reckon with rainbows."

Kamy Cunningham teaches English at UNLV and is currently working on a novel. aa

f one moment has come close to defining Rick Romito, it may have occured late in the afternoon of May 2. Romito was one of a handful of people, mostly volunteers, readying the Allied Arts Gallery for a Jazz Month concert by trombonist Carl Fontana. Romito was setting up the sound system, but had other things on his mind, and he hustled about like a man with several places to be. Which he was. Exasperated, he finally

said, "If I ever schedule a Barrick lecture

on the same night I have to be in a

play, on the same night as a Jazz Month

concert, will someone please shoot me?" You can extract a lot of information about Romito from that moment: first, he's extremely busy. Also, you'll note, he's in the position to schedule a Barrick lecture, which is one of his duties as director of the UNLV Performing Arts Center. You'll notice he has close ties to the theatre; that particular night he played a lead role in a university production of Stephen Sondheim's A Little Night Music. And he volunteers his time to various freebie causes, such as KNPR public radio, on-campus activites and Jazz Month in particular. Later in the month, he was one of several volunteers who worked 15 hours straight to set up, monitor and tear down an outdoor jazz concert. Early that afternoon he was overheard saying he needed to take a break and wash his hands. By midnight, when the last amp was packed away, the last microphone cord coiled, the last

Romito's title doesn't really hint at the juggling-knives-and-fire nature of his job. As director of the UNLV Performing Arts Center, the Charles Vanda Master Series, the city's most prestigious cultural performance program, is in Romito's hands. Built from the ground up by the man whose name it now bears. the series brings to Las Vegas some of the world's top symphony orchestras. Romito, who took over after Vanda died in 1988, has expanded the series to include other types of cultural performances, like dance and theatre.

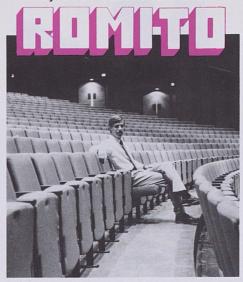
speaker laboriously hauled off, he still

hadn't had a chance to clean up.

On top of that, Romito is charged with overseeing the use and maintenance of UNLV's three main performing facilities, the Artemus Ham Concert Hall, the Judy Bayley Theatre and the Black Box Theatre. Their management was consolidated under the Performing Arts Center roof in 1984, and since then, the demand for their use has increased so dramatically that there is hardly a night when something-a performance, play, recital, concert, fundraiser, reception or rehearsal for one of the above-isn't going on in several of the facilities.

Romito is assisted by seven full-time employees, two part-timers, and a small army of ushers, ticket-takers, program hander-outers and technical crews.

by SCOTT DICKENSHEETS



"The thing I find most satisfying about this job is to stand in my office, with the lights off, and no one can see in, watching an audience of 1,500 or 2,000 people leaving after a major performance, and see their smiles, see them enjoy themselves, and knowing I had something to do with that evening and their enjoyment, and that maybe I helped enrich their lives a little."

Like many accountants, Romito's father moved around a lot. "Until I went to college, I never lived in one place for more than three years," Romito recalls. His father was a trouble-shooting accountant for a major chemical company, sent to straighten out a new plant every few years. "I lived in Cleveland, Chicago, New Jersey, and Metropolis, Illinois, the birthplace of Superman. Oh, all kinds of places."

Discounting an uncle who made violins, Romito had no family connection to the arts, no tradition of cultural involvement. He had his first real taste of the performing arts while a high school junior in Buffalo, New York. "I played Emile DeBeque in South Pacific," he says. In his junior and senior years, he played in 12 musicals.

"I went to the State University of New York in Geneseo to major in music theatre, intending to be the next great operatic baritone," he says. "What I learned was that there were a lot of next great operatic baritones floating around."

He was majoring in musical theatre, but was working his way through school by toiling in the school's scene shop, building scenery. His interest in the technical side of the business grew as his chances of being a great baritone waned. "I found that it was something I was good at, and I could make a few dollars at it."

Some of his acquaintances in the Geneseo theatre department were Glenn Gordon Caron, who created the Moonlighting t.v. series, and one of the guys who plays a crash dummy in the wellknown auto safety commercials. "He works about four weeks a year and makes a lot of money," Romito says wistfully, possibly contemplating the possibility of running the Performing Arts Center on a similar schedule. He graduated in 1975.

Upon graduation he married his wife Maureen, and headed for a job as technical director at Monroe Community College in Rochester, New York. Bad timing. Upon his arrival in Rochester, he learned that a budget cut had eliminated his position. "So I spent a year selling paint, carpeting and wallpaper in a home improvement store in Rochester, New York," Romito says, chuckling, though it didn't seem so funny then.

Ironically, in 1976 he came to UNLV to work on his masters in technical theatre, but found the program not to his liking, "I settled on Yale instead,"

Yale was no picnic. Rick and Maureen lived in a ghetto in New Haven, Connecticut. "Maureen swears she saw a rat the size of a pig," Romito says. "Our apartment was broken into three times. I mean, we're two grad students. There was no one in the ghetto poorer than us. One time, we had a pair of peachfaced loved birds, and somebody stole them. But they didn't take the cage."

Rick finished his degree courses in two years, and spent the third year of his masters program on a travelling fellowship, studying technical operations at regional theatres. Since the theatres were in the west, and since Maureen didn't care to spend long stretches of time alone with livestock-sized rats, they made Las Vegas their home base in

"My assumption was that what I really wanted was to be a production manager for a regional theatre," he said. But in 1980 he was offered an interim position as UNLV's technical director. He shrugs. "Sure, why not?" The job was firmed up a year later, and, in Romito's words, "we carted our buns out to the desert" for good. And the guy who had never lived anywhere for more than a few years has been here since.

When he took over the Performing Arts Center, Romito discovered that his hodgepodge of work experiences and mobile childhood had actually been excellent preparation for the job at hand. "I've been both cursed and blessed with being okay at a lot of things," he said. "It all made sense with this job, which requires managing spaces, mounting productions, dealing with the public. Working in theatre, the scene shop, even selling hardware, every bit of it seems to make perfect sense.

"And all of my childhood moving around has turned out to be the single best thing that could have happened to me. Each move meant new people and new experiences. After that, I didn't get frightened by new situations. I mean, at

the time I hated it, but I could not have had better preparation."

When Vanda died in 1988, Romito-was already handling management of the three theatres. He was subsequently given the reins of the Master Series. Following Vanda must have been a lot like batting after Babe Ruth. Vanda was a bona-fide legend in Las Vegas, lionized for his improbable achievement of bring topnotch symphonies to this garish, uncultured gambling town.

"No one ever has or ever will replace Charles," Romito says. "It's impossible." He is sitting in his corner of the Performing Arts Center's sunny warren of offices in the lobby of the Artemus Ham Hall. The shorts and t-shirt he's wearing are not usual Performing Arts Center director garb; later that morning he will help set up yet another Jazz Month concert. Discussing Vanda can bring strong emotions to the surface, and Romito's usual glib manner is replaced by something more measured and thoughtful.

"Charles was unique in every sense of the word. No one else could have done this."

By "this," Romito means the Master Series, which now bears Vanda's name. Vanda began the series in 1974, at a time when no one thought he had any chance of bringing world class ensembles to what was widely regarded—even

by its residents—as a cultural vacuum. The key to his success, one observer has noted, is that he had top-drawer talent from the very beginning.

"Charles laid a foundation for someone else, like me, to continue the tradition without having to convince the world that it could be done. All I have to do is keep up the quality. I don't pretend for a minute to be able to do what he did. I'm going to do some new things. I'm looking at it with new eyes and a younger perspective; I'm 50 years younger than he was. But people have been very kind not to compare me to Charles."

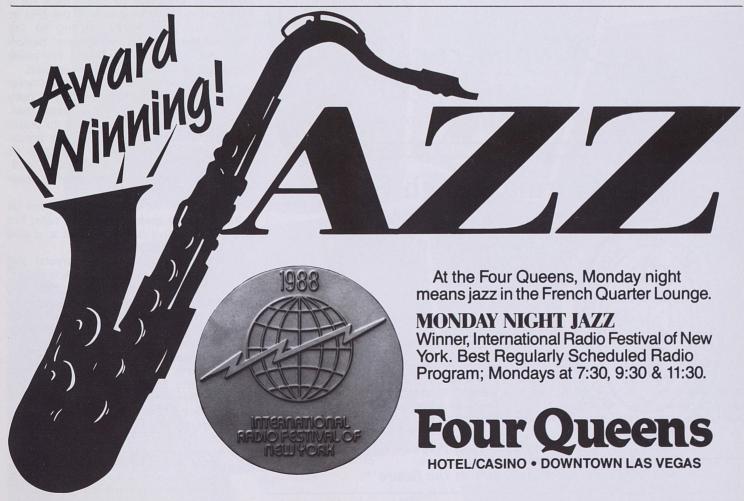
Some comparison may be inevitable. but is largely beside the point. The series under Romito is different than it was under Vanda. The older man's vision was of a program of mostly symphonic performances. "He felt that was its niche," Romito says. Under his successor, the Master Series embraces a wider range of performing artists. "For instance, P.D.Q. Bach is coming in the 1990-1991 season. Now Charles would not have programmed him, but I'm willing to." Romito concedes that he's caught some flak from traditional Master Series supporters for allowing the broad range of performers he does, but defends the practice by saying that a few people who attend for a dance or theatre event might come back for a symphony. And for the most part, Romito says Vanda's strongest supporters have stood by him as well.

"Under Charles, the series was a growing child, and it was ready to mature. It was a coincidence that I took over just as it was time to mature."

With maturity come growing pains. Most have to do with money. After all, it's not cheap to run a Master Series. "In 1976, the Master Series budget was \$78,000, and that included the Philadelphia Orchestra," Romito says. "The Philadelphia now costs more than that by itself." On the average you'll have to lay out \$50,000 or \$60,000 for your basic symphony orchestra. And rarely, he sighs, do you make that much back in ticket sales. "It's grotesquely expensive," Romito says, "and it's a matter of striking a balance." For instance, he can schedule the Vienna Choir Boys for a relatively low rate; they usually fill the house, and the resulting profit helps recoup the losses incurred for, say, the Radio Symphony of Berlin.

"This makes me nervous every year," Romito says. "Right now, I'm booking the 1991-1992 season, and I'm basically booking in the blind." You never know what combination of performers will result in black ink on the books.

Most of the Master Series' \$350,000 annual budget comes from private donors and ticket buyers. "They're the mainstays," Romito says, "but we're



starting to look into corporate underwriting. Charles wasn't interested in that. I'm very interested.'

At this point in the conversation, Romito cups his hands around his mouth and shouts, "THE MASTER SERIES IS NOT FUNDED BY THE STATE!" Relaxing, he says, "If there's one thing I want to get across, it's that." As a government agency, the Center is limited to \$5,000 annually from the Nevada State Council on the Arts. In addition, state funds are used to pay the salaries of Romito and the Performing Arts Center publicist.

Of course, it's not all money headaches. Growth brings respect as well. "Musicians around the world know about it, and artists want to come out here, they want to be on the series." He recalls that Vladamir Ashkenazy, renowned pianist and conductor of the Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin, actually berated Romito for not having him perform here sooner. "Nobody would have believed it 15 years ago. 'You want us to play where?' Las Vegas is no longer a joke in the cultural community. Not even a snicker."

The Master Series represents a little less than half of the Performing Arts Center budget, which totals \$750,000. While the series is the most visible of the center's programs, Romito says it amounts to only about 20 percent of his workload. The rest consists of managing the three theatres, scheduling events and rehearsals, marshalling the technical crews, overseeing ticket sales and acting as a consultant for faculty users. The overwhelming majority of facility users are university performing groups or academic departments. Only about 10 percent are outside users, such as rock promoters.

The pace of cultural growth in Las Vegas is reflected in the accelerated use of Ham Hall, Judy Bayley Theatre and the Black Box. "In 1984, we had 80 or 90 ticketed performances in the three halls," Romito recalls. "In 1990-1991, we have 420 scheduled." Most of those are cultural events, though a variety of acts have passed through those venues. "We've had almost everything here, from body building events to grand opera. About the only thing we haven't had is mud-wrestling, and I'm thinking about that. No, no, I don't mean that. We've had some criticism for allowing as broad a range of stuff as we've had. But look at it this way: once a person comes here for someone like the Beastie Boys. then he knows where the place is, he knows where the ticket booth is, he knows where to park. If they've been here, they're more likely to come back for an arts performance. Granted, not many of the people who come to the Beasties are likely to come back for a symphony, but I'm willing to bet that at least one will. We're starting to see something new at symphony performances: families with teens. We never saw that." Thus are audiences built.

Also, Romito points out, the Center has to have strong legal footing to deny a promoter use of an available hall. "There has to be some threat to public safety," he said. The operating procedures also have a clause having to do with "public morals," Romito said, adding, "It's a clause I'm happy we've never had to translate."

"The First Amendment precludes us from making many judgement calls, but we really don't have much of a choice as a public space."

Asked to gaze into his crystal ball and describe the Performing Arts Center in five or 10 years, Romito offers two perspectives. "If we don't have any new facilities built, then not much will be different. More summer programming, maybe. But we're completely maxed out. Without new facilites, there will be little new growth." He says some groups, such as Nevada Dance Theatre or the Las Vegas Symphony Orchestra, could expand their seasons, if there were enough performing spaces. "We have enough seats, we don't have enough physical theatres." He suggests that with or without new buildings, the Performing Arts

Continued on page 30.

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So you think it's easy to mount an opera?

by JEROME HOROWITZ

Nevada Opera Theatre gave Las Vegas a spellbinding performance of Bizet's Carmen on 3 June. In my review in the Las Vegas Review-Journal, I mentioned that the company and its artistic director, Eileen Haves, had overcome incredible obstacles to mount that production, and I detailed a few of them. Artemus Ham Concert Hall is an excellent venue for concerts, but it is not an opera theatre. The stage is much too small; there is almost no space for storing and handling scenery; the lighting system is woefully inadequate; facilities for costumes, hairdos, makeup, and changing are hasty improvisations. But the problems of transforming a concert hall into an opera theatre are only a splinter off the log of woes. Some of the others are even more pointed. Since I did not have space for them in my review, let me recount them now.

First and worst, there was a lastminute cast change in the title role. Leslie Richards Pellegrini had been awarded the part a year ago, but shortly before Carmen went into rehearsal, her agent notified Eileen Hayes that the rehearsal schedule was inconvenient. Without obtaining Eileen's permission in advance, the agent allowed Pellegrini to replace an ailing singer in Quebec, even though this would require her to miss the first four days of Carmen rehearsals in Las Vegas. Such things are not done. Eileen immediately conferred with Henry Holt (conductor) and Giorgio Tozzi (stage director) and the triumvirate agreed that Pellegrini would have to go. (The fault, by the way, is the agent's, not the artist's.)

It is not sufficient for Carmen to sing her notes. She must make the role come alive on the stage, and to do this she must work closely with the conductor and his assistants. She must collaborate with the stage director to arrive at a shared conception of the part. She must learn the choreography and all the stage business. She must be fitted for costumes, wigs and all the other paraphernalia of the theatre. She cannot do all this and miss the first four days of re-

With rehearsals due to begin in a few days, a new Carmen had to be found immediately, and she had to be a good one. Nevada Opera Theatre is hardly four years old (its first performance was November 1986). It is still building community support and a faithful following. It simply cannot afford a flop. One or two shabby performances and it risks losing the friends it has worked so hard to gain.

Holt and Tozzi, who were busy elsewhere, could not help Eileen in the daunting task of finding a suitable replacement. Luckily, Eileen knew a reputable agent for a mezzo who had Carmen in her repertoire and who was immediately available: Odette Beaupre, a star of Canadian opera and (wouldn't you know it?) from Quebec-the very place where Pellegrini was singing when she should have been in Las Vegas for

Beaupre was available, all right, but she could not legally work in the United States without proper authorization. She is Canadian, a foreign national. Through the intercession of Congressman Barbara Vucanovich (you can imagine Eileen's frantic phone calls), the paperwork was expedited, the red tape cut, and the rest is history. Although Mme Beaupre does not have the most fabulous voice of our day, she certainly is one of the greatest Carmens. She is an inspired actress, a good dancer, and can twist men around her little finger-a trick she may have acquired early in life at the restaurant her mother ran in a tough backwoods logging district of Quebec.

Carmen deals with destiny, among other things, and this production was drenched in it. On 2 June, the night before the performance in Las Vegas, Leslie Richards Pellegrini lost her mother-in-law. Shocked by the loss, she might not have been able to sing at all. It is hard to imagine that she could have been in the proper frame of mind for the proud vixen and sultry siren Carmen must be to make the opera work. Bizet himself, by the way, died unexpectedly on 3 June 1875.

Another death nearly upset the production. Henry Holt was conducting Don Giovanni for Utah Opera and was going into rehearsal when the artistic director of that organization, Glade Petersen, passed away. Holt suddenly had to assume many of Petersen's duties and (to make a long story short) had to be in Utah when he should have been in Las Vegas. Eileen had Stephen Sulich (the young conductor who made such a good showing here in La Traviata this February) step in to cover for Holt, but Sulich had other commitments on 27 May, the last Sunday before the performance.

Those who saw what happened next will never forget it.

Hans Ashbaker, who really does have one of the most fabulous tenor voices of our day, was an unforgettable Don Jose in this Carmen. Of mixed German-Swedish family, Hans grew up on a ranch in Soda Springs, in southeastern Idaho, and was (among other things) a rodeo bulldogger before taking up opera. But his grandfather was director of the Nuernberg Opera in Bavaria and Hans has been conducting since his teensfirst at Idaho State (Pocatello), later as assistant conductor of the Idaho Symphony. He has studied formally with Max Rudolph at the Curtis Institute and with Sir Neville Marriner. A tenor who can conduct while singing? Yes indeed. On 27 May I actually saw him conducting with his right arm extended behind him while he embraced Beaupre passionately in his left. The entire cast saw it, so there are at least five dozen witnesses. You don't have to take my word for it.

But Ashbaker was destined to do a good turn for Holt, the man he owes his career to. In 1985 Ashbaker had just decided that he wasn't really a baritone. A tenor for only three weeks, he traveled to Seattle to audition for Holt, who liked what he heard and suggested that Ashbaker learn Don Jose. Ashbaker didn't really believe it-he thought the great conductor was just being kind. Not at all. A few weeks later, Holt phoned Ashbaker in Soda Springs to verify that Hans had really mastered the part. Yes, he had. Shortly thereafter, Hans was singing Don Jose (his first professional role) under Holt's baton in Baton Rouge, and has since performed it all over the world, including a memorably successful engagement at the Paris Opera last year.

Baton Rouge brings to mind another little-known connection between America and Carmen. At his untimely death in 1875, Bizet had left Carmen with long stretches of spoken dialogue. For its Vienna premiere, it was decided that Carmen should be transformed into a grand opera, so someone had to convert the spoken lines into sung, accompanied recitative. That person was Ernest Guiraud (1837-1892), born in New Orleans, trained in Paris, and a bosom pal of Bizet. Guiraud's version is the standard Carmen we all know. There has always been a Louisiana connection, it seems.

Eileen Hayes is artistic director of the Nevada Opera Theatre, but that fancy title doesn't begin to suggest what she actually does. Of course she is responsible for all the artistic decisions. It was Eileen, after all, who engaged Holt and Tozzi and found Beaupre to replace Pellegrini. But she also had to find a set that would fit the tiny sliver of usable

Continued on page 30.

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by Patrick Gaffey

as that the Lambada? Arts patrons boogied all over the Mirage dance floor as the Allied Arts Masque Ball 1990 drew to a close, and those unable to quickly manage the torrid Brazilian "forbidden dance" simply jitterbugged. Or mashed potatoed. Or watusied. They did the boogaloo and the shigaling, sometimes simultaneously. But they absolutely enjoyed themselves.

The Ball was a stunning success, thanks to ball chairs Roger and Andrea Thomas and to an outstanding steering committee: Maureen Barrett, Cari Bernstein, Nitsa Filios, Mark Fine, Wenlee Gentile, Pam Hammer, Joel Kazar, Judy Kropid, Janet Line, Beverly Neyland, Jane Neilson, Sandy Peltyn, Paula Quagliana, Jane Radoff, T.J. Schoeman, Jane Schorr, Dan Shaw and Beatrice Welles Smith. And thanks to the spectacular Mirage Hotel. Not only were nearly 600 people in attendance, but the Ball smashed last year's all-time

fundraising record by netting well over \$70,000.

The auction of masks made specially for the event by artists raised more than \$20,000 alone. Roger Thomas both created the mask auction and made it a success by drawing in artists like Ronnie Cutrone and Charles Arnoldi as well as outstanding local artists like Jose Bellver and Steven Molasky.

Roger is an officer of the Golden Nugget corporation and, with Jane Radoff, runs Atlandia Design, the design firm for the Nugget and Mirage. A former Allied Arts board member and a current member of its advisory board, he has poured time and energy into the arts in Southern Nevada, playing expecially important roles with the Nevada Institute for Contemporary Art and the McCarran Art Advisory Commission, as well as the Nevada Museum of Art, which was started by Allied Arts in 1982 and which ultimately failed, but not without making some big ripples on the national art scene. Roger assembled and continues to curate the Valley Bank art collection, one of the most important corporate collections in the state.

That Roger and Andrea accepted the chairmanship and made the Ball an unprecedented success is just another example of their determination that Las Vegas become a real metropolis with the full range of first class cultural amenities for everyone

Most unfortunately, after all their work on the Ball, a sudden and tragic death in the family took them out of town on the day of the event.

Two heroes quickly emerged: Elaine Wynn and Mark Fine. Just as he arrived, Mark agreed to MC the event, and Elaine, also without notice, agreed to deliver Roger's speech. As everyone who knew what was happening expected, both were terrific and the evening was not just smooth, but smashing.

It took many, many people to create this success. Larry Ruyo of Southern Wine and Spirits donated the wine for the occasion. The Sahara Hotel put up the Loisada Empire Band and dancers who came from New York. Local party band The Press, led by Marty Mahoney, lived up to its reputation. Barrett and Associates designed the invitations. Ryan Galleries and Frame Corner and Gallery provided framing for some of the artists' masks. Westar Development provided transportation. Geri Gaydosh brought 58 masks made by elementary school students, which were outstanding and were used to decorate the area. Angela Barbara of the Mirage and Judy Pritchett of Atlandia Design both made essential contributions.

Artists who made and contributed the masks which attracted so much attention and which were so important to the Ball's success were: Rita Deanin Abbey, Beth Arney, Charles Arnoldi, Tim Baker, Larry Bell, Phillip Bell, Jose Bellver, Jeff Ephard, Gary Bukovnik, Tom Coleman, Barry Conyers, Ronnie Cutrone, John H. Fincher, Clair Freeman, Tim Gates, Leonard Harris, Hunter Hogan. Tom and Jacqueline Holder, Carolyn Hoyle, Wayne Lenertz, Christopher Makos, Carlos Marchiori, Debra Marten, Joseph McLaughlin, Steven Molasky, Jane Neilson, Rick Parks, Greg Perna, Janellen S. Radoff, Daniel L. Orr, Bryan Ramm, Lee Sido, Donna Snitzer, Theodore Waddel, Billy Walsh, Stacey Weiss, Amy Wilson, Rhonda Zwillinger and several anonymous Mexican native craftpersons.

The Masque Ball is the Council's one big fundraiser each year. The Council thanks everyone who helped, who attended or who sent their good wishes. This success will keep the Council's work moving forward in the next year. aa



INONE the Muse the Muse stangering

by Patricia McConnel

When my daughter Diana was four years old, she became an artist. She was so avid that I bought her an easel, a huge drawing tablet, brushes of different sizes and poster paints in pint jars instead of the thimble size. I turned our empty garage into a gallery for her permanent collection. I was hoping to forestall, for a few years at least, her running away to New York to rent a loft and take LSD and be an artiste in black tights.

She was in her butterfly period, and the walls of the gallery were soon covered with many joyful renditions of butterflies against a backdrop of houses, lawns, trees, flowers, and, of course, the sun. She did not trouble herself with perspective or relative sizes of things. Whatever was most important to her was biggest. If her style had been representational, then a visiting Martian might conclude that that on Earth, butterflies are two or three times the size of an average dwelling. But I think Diana would have been classified as a fantastic realist.

Things went along fine for a couple of years. Then she went to school. Within a few days she brougth home a painting of a large and gorgeous you-know-what in a composition that included our house and our cat and me. I was very pleased and said, "This is a beautiful painting."

All parents are familiar with a certain scathing look of contempt their children fix on them from time to time while they are growing up. The first time is the most devastating. It usually comes soon after the child starts school, because that's when she finds out that Mother is completely ignorant—or worse, has been deliberately lying to her since birth—because everything you have told her up to this point is wrong. She knows this because Teacher says so.

I got this look when I told Diana her painting was beautiful. She said, "No it's not. My teacher says it's wrong because the butterfly is bigger than the house."

Diana never again painted at home. If she continued to paint at school, she never brought her paintings home. Over

the years she gave me "handmade" gifts for Mothers' Day, Christmas and my birthday. Kits, all of them. Paint-bynumbers, ballerinas that came in pieces to be glued together.

The-painting-is-wrong-because-the-butterfly-is-bigger-than-the-house incident must have been only the first in a long series of deadly critical remarks made by creativity-crippling teachers, because nothing I could say to my daughter ever convinced her that her own original efforts, no matter how clumsy, were more beautiful, more precious to me than these mass-produced monstrosities. Her Muse had been murdered

No one has ever managed to kill off my Muse, but many have tried. There have been times in my life when she has been so severely battered that she lay in a coma for months, sometimes years.

Case in point: in my early twenties I took a Spanish literature course in college. Our term project was to read a Spanish novel and write a paper on it. I no longer remember which novel I chose, but I do remember that after reading all the critics' opinions about an interpretation of a certain symbol in the book (they all saw it exactly the same way), I came up with a different interpretation that seemed fresh and original.

I soared on the excitement generated by the birth of an original idea. I worked hard. I supported my new interpretation so carefully with well-reasoned arguements and analysis of the book that I was confident I had earned an A.

But when my paper came back it was marked C. I thought there must be a mistake. After class I asked the teacher why I got a C. "Because your interpretation doesn't agree with the critics," she said

"But that's why I think I deserve an A. I came up with a totally original interpretation!"

"That's not what the critics say." Her tone was terse and impatient and I knew there was no use in arguing.

I never took another literature course.

In fact, I never finished college, discouraged by too many incidents of this kind.

But the things that happened to me in college are trivial compared to what happens to me at the hands of editors. One rejected a story with a note saying, "Who the fuck told you this is a story?" It was early in my career and I was so devastated that I didn't write again for a year, and I didn't send that story out again for a long time. When I did, it was accepted, and then it was selected one of the Ten Best PEN Short Stories of 1984, and then it was chosen as one of the top three of the ten and I was invited to read it at the Library of Congress.

Such experiences are not rare. The stories writers tell over their wine at writers' conferences convince me that artists who are original, talented, creative and intelligent often threaten those who aren't. A certain breed of mediocre person hates the gifted, and sometimes these people get in positions where they have the power to destroy artists. They can become editors, reviewers, art critics, teachers, politicians, and most unfortunately of all, parents. There are many in these categories who do nurture and support creativity, of course, and without them we might not have any artists at all. But there are far too many of the other kind.

Muses are not always murdered out of malice. Sometimes it is simply that a person of influence and power lacks the imagination to recognize and appreciate creativity, and is insecure when things aren't done by the rules.

Since I believe that everyone is born with creative potential, I think both types are people who themselves have had their Muses murdered. Just as abused children become child abusers, murdered Muses become Muse murderers.

I grieve for my daughter's butterflies. I grieve for my artist friends who have become alcoholics, drug addicts or suicides. We call such people "self-destructive," but I say they were destroyed by a society that too often punishes people for being creative. At certain stages of my life, I came close to being destroyed by the same means, so I know.

I don't fully understand how my Muse survived, but she did—though with more battle scars than a skid row tomcat. I do know this: if she didn't survive, I wouldn't either.

Patricia McConnel, author of the book Sing Soft, Sing Loud, says this column represents only one-tenth of what she has to say on the topic. If you ever see her, you might ask about the rest. aa

GOOD PLAYERS, EXCELLENT SOUND, BAD MUSIC

by JEROME HOROWITZ

The Sierra Wind Quintet is comprised of some of the best wind players in Las Vegas: Stephen Caplan (oboe), Lynn Arnold Huntzinger (horn), Yoshiyuki Ishikawa (bassoon), Richard Soule (flute), and Felix Viscuglia (clarinet). They hold the principal chairs in the Las Vegas Symphony and all are at UNLV (Soule is head of the music department). This release contains three newly commissioned works and Alvin Etler's 1957

The playing is excellent and the recorded sound is exceptional. The repertoire is Contemporary American Academic, and I confess that it is not my cup of tea. I found the music mildly interesting at best, positively repugnant at worst. Wind players and audiophiles may very well want a copy, but I cannot imagine that most music-lovers will find much to please them.

Because I disliked so much of the music on this CD, I hoped others might like it more, so I played it for several

friends. Without exception, all the ordinary music lovers hated it and made me stop it or speed it up: they could not abide it.

I also asked two of the best professional musicians in Las Vegas to listen to it. One of them admired the fine playing and excellent recorded sound but found little to say for the music. The other one enjoyed the Etler quintet most (so did I), admired its craftsmanship, and predicts that it will remain in the repertoire-if only because so little else is in it. He found the Powell quintet worthy of further study so he can discover how it is constructed. He had little to say for the title piece (Barney Childs' "A box of views")-a work I disliked intensely when I heard this group play it in concert in April; with repeated hearings I have learned to loathe it. He had mixed reactions to the Albright work, but greatly enjoyed one of its sections ("Play by Play"). I can see why he liked it, but it didn't do much for me.



Mel Powell has just won a Pulitzer Prize, I must tell you, and all the composers represented here are Famous Academics. I suspect a certain amount of academic pandering in the selection of music. After all, Don Hannah, (to name just one) is a wonderful composer, but (alas) he is just a local, closely associated with the Strip and with no academic affiliation more impressive than UNLV. The quintet might not have gotten grants from the Nevada State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts for works commissioned from the likes of Hannah. But I can promise ordinary listerers and aficionados of fine composition alike that they would surely find more to enjoy in a new work from Hannah than from anything in this sorry collection.

Jerome Horowitz reviews classical music and other performing arts for the Las Vegas Review-Journal. aa

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ALLIED ARTS NEWS

ew Allied Arts officers and board members were elected at the Council's annual General Membership Reception on June 28. The Dave Ringenbach Jazz Quartet provided the music and noted artist Mike McCollum donated an extravagant handmade pot as a door prize. McCollum has been on sabbatical this year, but will be back in the UNLV art department by September.

Officers

President Judy Kropid is beginning the second year of her two-year term. Returning board member Janet Line was elected 1st vice president; Fred Cover, 2nd vice president; Cliff Beadle, treasurer; and Mary Scodwell was re-elected as secretary.

Board members

Eight vacancies on the Board of Trustees were filled. Elected were: Jean Curren (outgoing co-chair, Class Act); Eva Flores (Circus-Circus); Sherman Frederick (Las Vegas Review-Journal); Karen Galatz (First Interstate Bank, current board member); Janet Line (former board member); Dane Madsen (Shearson, Lehman, Hutton); Sandy Peltyn (Martin, Peltyn and Associates); and Dan Shaw (DKS Development, current board member).

President Kropid reported on the accomplishments of the past year, including the tremendous growth in the Class Act program of school performances and the success of the Masque Ball. On behalf of the Council, she thanked the four outgoing board members, Cari Bernstein, Vivienne Morris, Paula Quagliana and Cheryl Rogers, each of whom served with distinction.

In a drawing for the door prize, Mary Scodwell won the Mike McCollum pot. aa

ecent drawings and ceramic paintings by Kathleen Peppard will be shown in the Allied Arts Gallery from July 6 through August 7.

"My work isn't political or social," Peppard says. Instead, "it addresses the formal concerns of line, space, light and dark." Peppard says she tries to visualize shapes that aren't there, then render them before they vanish. "In most cases, this original shape is moved around,

erased, redrawn, and in some cases, obliterated. I work intuitively, allowing my visualization of the form to be influenced by the medium. Having a piece of work unfold at my fingertips is exciting."

Peppard has executed work in a wide range of sizes for the show, from 5x6 feet to 6x9 inches, with prices to match.

Peppard graduated from UNLV in 1986, and earned an MFA from Mills College, in Oakland, in 1989. For more information, call 731-5419. aa

Artist Maryanna Latham will exhibit still life paintings in the Allied Arts Gallery August 10 through September 4. There will be an opening reception from 5 to 7 p.m. August 10. aa

he Allied Arts Council will cosponsor an arts program for the noon luncheon of the Women's Council of the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, on August 8, at the Holiday

AAC board member Mary Ruth Carleton will moderate a discussion on the arts in Southern Nevada and the Allied Arts Council. The main focus of the talk will be Class Act, a live arts in the schools program jointly administered by the Council, the Junior League of Las Vegas and the school district. Speakers will include Helene Follmer of the Junior League, and storyteller Marsha Cutler, one of the participants in Class Act.

For more information call 731-5419. aa



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NMA

he Nevada Museums Association. representing historical, natural history, children's and other museums across the state, has unanimously endorsed reauthorization of the National Endowments for the Arts (NEA) and Humanities (NEH) and the Institute of Museum Services (IMS) without restrictive language. The Association took the action at its annual meeting, held in Tonopah in June.

Copies of the resolution have been forwarded to all four of Nevada's Congressional representatives.

The NMA also elected officers for the next two years. Arthur H. Wolf, director of the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society, was elected president. Other officers are: Cheryl Fox, Nevada Historical Society, Reno, 1st vice president; Lynn Rubel, Northeastern Nevada Museum, Elko, 2nd vice president; Sean Pitts. White Pine Public Museum. Ely, treasurer; Kathryne Olson, Lost City Museum, Overton, secretary; and Patricia Marchese, Clark County Cultural Affairs, state representative to the Western Museums Conference, Linda Steele of the Lied Discovery Children's Museum, Las Vegas, was named newsletter editor.

The Association is the third largest in the nine-state Western Museums Conference, representing more than 60 Nevada museums and support organizations and a like number of individual museum professionals.

Wolf noted that "Nevada institutions are fast becoming contenders for Endowment and IMS funds," implying that this would be an ironic time for Nevavda to see those funds disappear. Though most public fire in the last year has been directed at the NEA, those leading the campaign have made it clear their intention is to close down all federal agencies dealing with the arts, culture and the humanities.

The NMA resolution reads:

"Be It Resolved That: The Nevada Museums Association (NMA) endorses the reauthorization of the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities and the Institute of Museum Services without restrictive language. In recognition of the vital contributions and the leadership role these agencies have played in the enhancement of museum services statewide, the NMA urges its Nevada Congressional delegation to support the unrestricted use of federal dollars for these agencies which benefit the citizens and cultural growth of Nevada." aa

CARMEN from page 24.

stage space at Ham Hall; she had to finalize arrangements, have the set shipped and tracked all along its route from New York, and then have it packed, shipped back and tracked during its re-

She had to arrange for costume rental, get cast measurements, verify them, send them to the rental agencies, and account for the costumes once they were here. She had to hire the technical crew, the singers, the chorus, the rehearsal staff, and the supporting artistic staff (lighting designer, choreographer, understudies). She made travel arrangements for artists from out of town, mailed them their tickets, arranged for hotels, rental cars, pickup and drop-off at the airport. She had to decide what cuts to make in the score (no one performs all of it), coordinate them with the other principals, then arrange for the printed scores, music stands and lights to be available on time.

She oversees the program book, sells ads for it (a big source of revenue), and arranges the publicity. She distributes tickets to outlets around town, collects the proceeds, accounts for them, and picks up the unsold residue. And, of course, it is she who raises the money and devises the budgets that make all of this possible.

But some of her supporting activities in Carmen surprised even me. Las Vegas is dry, and singers are always in holy fear of dry throats and dust. When I visited Eileen in her tiny office two days after the performance, I was surprised to see several boxes of garden sprayers stacked around the filing cabinets. The sprayers were for dust control backstage at Ham Hall. What I thought were PC's turned out to be humidifiers for the hotel rooms of the principal singers. Who got them? Guess who.

Why is Eileen doing all this? Because she has only token clerical staff and no one else. If she doesn't get a production manager to relieve some of the pressure. she is a prime candidate for exhaustive collapse. Las Vegas needs her too much. Next season already promises wonderful

Ashbaker and Holt will be returning for La Boheme. Holt will also be here for the Western States Opera Auditions Conference (need I report that Eileen is the chairman?). Eileen plans to cast supporting roles for the coming season with outstanding singers at the auditions: since three hundred have signed up, there will be plenty of talent to choose

With a wildly successful Carmen just over, was Eileen resting on her laurels? Not a bit of it. She was bubbling with enthusiasm about a "popera" for the coming season, "Larr Bear and the Teddy Town Kids" (a specially commissioned light opera devised for the young

from.

and the young at heart). An optimist and an inveterate opera activist, Eileen has already channeled her enormous energies into her next project. She has no time for postludes.

Jerome Horowitz reviews music and other performing arts for the Las Vegas Review-Journal. Rumors hint that his real name may be Jim-Bob Ralston. aa

ROMITO from page 22.

Center could do more outreach events to areas UNLV is not central to. "For instance, if the Master Series is bringing in a symphony, we could split off a small chamber group and have them perform somewhere else."

Romito's juices really get flowing, though, when he starts speculating on what could happen if new theatres were built and existing ones enhanced. "We need to have a fully-rigged stage house on the back of Artemus Ham," he said, meaning facilities for storing and moving stage sets, as well as changing rooms, and so on. "We also need another theatre that's a carbon copy of Judy Bayley, and, personally, I would like to see a very good 200-300 seat recital hall. Don't get me wrong. What we have right now are wonderful spaces. There is just too much going on."

When the cultural grind gets to be too much, Romito, an avid pilot, climbs into a plane and flies somewhere where there aren't any performing arts. But he won't fly too far. Romito's been in Las Vegas for 10 years now, "2.5 times longer than I've lived anywhere else," and he doesn't plan on leaving soon. "I could live in Las Vegas for the rest of my life," he says. "It's a very exciting town. But we will definitely live in the Southwest for the rest of our lives." There are drawbacks to living here, of course, chief among them the brainmelting heat. But he won't be heading back east. After all, as Romito says, "You don't have to shovel heat." aa

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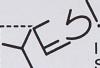
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