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A'n'E

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Student Artists Shine at Salon

Selected works of Iowa’s most creative art students are on display at ISU.

The 19th annual Iowa College Salon is approaching and this year it will feature 23 Iowa State students’ works. The Salon, which is being held in the Brunner Art Museum, is a show representing art works in all forms of mediums from students across the state of Iowa. Students in a four-year art program in an Iowa college or university are eligible to enter the competition, and up to three works may be submitted per student.

As an annual juried competition, students must send slides of their work to the designated juror, who is never a native Iowan. This year’s juror is Patricia Warashina, professor and artist at the University of Washington, Seattle. Out of the approximately 527 works submitted, Warashina chose 71 works from 70 different artists. Of these, 23 Iowa State students were chosen.

“I’m happy to get in because this is a really big deal,” said Justin Eccles, a junior in graphic design and drawing, painting and print-making, whose work was selected to be displayed.

“It’s the biggest show in Iowa.”

Eccles’ piece is a sculpture made from clear computer grids and has a yellow light inside which shines and makes the piece look “turned on—like it’s working,” he said. The sculpture is appropriately titled “Alive.”

Megan Saville, a senior in graphic design, also had her work selected for the show.

“I’m very happy to get in [the Salon] because I’m a graphic design major, and there wasn’t that kind of a category, so I’m glad that I could contribute something in the fine arts area,” Saville said. Her piece is an untitled calligraphy book in the form of a loop book (pages connected to the book’s spine in an accordion fold).

An awards ceremony for Best of Show was presented at the opening reception on March 16.

The award for Best of Show is $1000, and there are two honorable mentions at $250 each. The selected works will be on display at the Brunner Art Museum from March 16 until May 4, 1997.

Next year will mark the 20th anniversary for the Iowa College Salon. Works of previous Best of Show winners will be submitted for a supplemental show in addition to the annual show.

by Sara Weber
Fritz Jünker’s “Ordinary Iowa” is definitely out of the ordinary for these parts. How many television talk show hosts actually shed blood for the sake of entertainment?

In a recent episode of the Iowa State-produced television show, Jünker earned laughs at the expense of his bleeding mouth (a wound earned during a staged beating), had a human condom on the show in honor of Condom Week, and featured a live eyebrow piercing. He also endured a violent thrashing of the set when a cast member attempted to “beat” Jünker and, instead, accidentally jumped through the set floor.

Wacky is one way to describe the production put on by Jünker and company.

Jünker, a junior in liberal studies, said he wanted to have an “open slate for creativity.” He listed “random acts of insanity and confusing things” as part of their program mission.

The show’s format is best described as a “We want to shock people, to make them thoroughly confused,” he said.

Jünker came up with the show’s concept in September of 1996. He said his idol, Shemp Horowitz (the quieter of the Three Stooges), has been an inspiration for his show. Jünker admires the way the Stooges worked for the success they achieved in the entertainment business. Hence, the name of the “Ordinary Iowa” production company is Shemp-O-Rama Productions.

The idea for this show may have flashed into Jünker’s mind as instantaneously as television’s pixels flash before the eyes of a viewing audience, but months of planning and hard work preceded the show the audience now watches.

Initially, Jünker said he did not know how he would materialize his idea or where it would happen. He had only “heard of STV-9” and did not really know if the student-run station even existed.

After discovering that STV-9 was in fact a reality, Jünker volunteered his services to Kristen Durst, the station manager and host of “Wake-Up ISU,” in order to learn the ropes. Jünker said after a month’s time, he was able to produce a show. Then, he began working at an “insane” rate to get the set built and all the other details in place.

But he didn’t do it alone; others helped. Jünker said he “cannot thank the people enough” who contribute enormous amounts of their time and effort to the show.

“They do it because it’s something that needed to be done,” Jünker said. “I feel bad because I get a lot of the credit. Some people share as large a piece of this show as I do.”

He said about 30 people work to produce the show, which is a dramatic increase from the initial 13 energetic die-hards who helped the show get rolling.

Tom Pepper, “Ordinary Iowa”’s dedicated director, said that while he may not have at first realized the “incredible amount of stress” involved in directing a student-run television show, he does not regret his part in the production.

“It’s been Fritz’s big dream to do a TV show, and I kinda got sucked into working on it with him,” Pepper, a former Iowa State student, said. “But, it’s been a hell of a lot of fun.”

Pepper said his role in the production involves “making sure what happens on-stage gets to the audience in one way or another. I just try to maintain some form of order without swearing at the top of my lungs.”

Stress is something that Jünker, too, can understand. He said while sometimes he feels really excited about hosting his own television show, other times he is simply “scared to death” about the entire situation.

“I never really have doubts, I just get really scared,” Jünker said.

“Ordinary Iowa” seems to be gaining momentum, in spite of Jünker’s fears. People often salute the show when Jünker least expects it. Once, he was recognized while buying groceries.

Jünker, now the STV-9 assistant general manager, added that he wants more people to get involved with the show, including professors, students, faculty, community members and anyone else who wishes to contribute a creative component to the show.

The show does boast a live audience of about 50 people.
Those interested in witnessing first-hand the madness that is "Ordinary Iowa" are encouraged to follow Jünker’s Three Easy Live Audience Steps:  

"The first thing you have to do," he said, "is to find out when we're taping. We tape every other week, so that factors in there somewhere. Second, you have to find Exhibit Hall. Third, you have to arrive at the East door of Exhibit Hall about 15 minutes before the show starts. If you're lucky, you'll get to sit in the bleachers!"

For Ames residents who are unable to catch the show live and who lack the cable connection, The M-Shop airs “Ordinary Iowa” every Friday afternoon at exactly 3:34 and 23 seconds.

Jünker’s show also has a Web page (www.ordinaryiowa.com) which features clips from past shows, profiles of crew members, a sneak peek at upcoming shows and even a segment devoted to “viewer hate mail.”

"Ordinary Iowa" broadcasts on STV-9 every Tuesday and Thursday night at 8:00 p.m. It is on the move and is making its mark in the ISU and Ames communities. Ordinary? Definitely not.

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**THE SHADOW RING**
Put the Music in its Coffin

I don't think I would ever force anyone to listen to this album, no matter how interesting I find it. There are no sounds here that resemble music as most people would think of it. I'm reminded of the Residents, but it seems that the Shadow Ring worry less about melody and focus more on its rhythms, which sound a lot like several young children banging sticks together. The lyrics are equally bizarre, offering mostly offer poems about animals, mumbled in a sleepy cockney chant. In the first song, "horse meat cakes," the vocalist declares he feels like he has just eaten a horse's head, while in the background an out-of-tune guitar sounds as if it is being sawed into pieces.

I think the best description can be found on the back of the sleeve: "The Shadow Ring like never before blends elements from the various musical styles; rock / folk / whatever, and serve them in a way that is neither improvised, preconstructed nor re-creatable, only uniquely them. Of course the criticism has been leveled at the band that they are nothing more than some half-baked ad-lib unit, only semi-concentrating on getting the tunes right. This LP will make up your mind. Fans will warm instantly to this LP; antagonists will loathe it and new-comers could swing either way."

I'm a fan, but are you tall enough to listen to this record?

by Greg Peterson

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**Tractor Hips**
(self titled)

What happens when you cross the careful meanderings of Slint with the the fun stylings of Primus? Tractor Hips! You were expecting Nine Inch Nails?

The usually instrumental rantings of Tractor Hips’ self-titled album range all over the map. Case-in-point is the first track, "The Universe Seen Through the Eye of a Needle." It starts with a fast-paced guitar lick complete with Fugazi-style neck bends and continues with a jazzy drumbeat on a backdrop of swaying guitars. This is clearly music that demands your attention.

The rest of the songs follow the same "no pattern" style of writing. A typical feature is the sometimes jazzy, yet always intense sound as heard in the first song.

The most amazing thing about Tractor Hips is its ability to capture every instrument in perfect harmony while still retaining its disparity. The individual pieces fit together well and nothing gets overpowered by anything else, as all too often is the case with some bands.

Again, the most pleasing aspect of Tractor Hips' album is the way it keeps you on your toes, hoping to catch something new and exciting. Fortunately they've pulled it off, so you won't be disappointed in that search.

by Dan Quinn