

Arts



"YONDAH LIES DA CASTLE OF MY FADDAH": York's Fine Arts students are gearing up for the Ice Cube Show that begins February 8.

Ice-Cube show set to sizzle

By JENNIFER PARSONS

Are you intimidated by the Fine Arts Building (FAB)? Our sports editor recently suggested that fifty per cent of York students have never been in the building. "It's the glass," he said, and then asked, "is it solar or something?" Surely any building on York campus that actually has windows is an oddity but death by ultra-violet rays, Marxist brain-washing or any other rumour about what can happen if you walk into the building should be dispelled, especially considering the biggest art event of the year is at hand.

The Fine Arts Festival is a five day, morning, noon, and night arts event featuring plays, performances, readings, gallery shows, screenings, bake sales, and parties taking place from Monday February 8th to the Friday before Reading Week.

Originally, the Festival was called the Ice-Cube show and was designed by the visual art students. It was intended to be a spoof on a 1985 Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) show called "The European Iceberg."

The pieces in the AGO show were often sculptural, some combining manipulated household objects while others employed acid-orange spray-paint. For the York visual art students, it was an easy target for parody. Since the first exhibition the Ice-Cube show became an annual event and when other Fine Arts disciplines became involved, the show became known as the Fine Arts Festival.

The visual arts students still make their contribution to the Festival in the same manner as it was first conceived. The Ice-Cube show features work by students from all areas of the visual arts department, including graphics, sculpture, photography, drawing, painting, and video. Significantly, pieces that are supposedly "thrown together" for the Ice-Cube show prove to be some of the most interesting work to be seen in the year. The Ice-Cube can be seen in the IDA Gallery in, yes—the dreaded Fine Arts Building. But let there be peace of mind: its on the first floor, making any dangerous wandering unnecessary.

Crossing the lobby of Fine Arts to the IDA Gallery has also been made easier by the ongoing festival activities. For instance, *Still Life* will be performing in the lobby noon on Monday with other live bands, video screenings and food-fundraising scheduled throughout the week. If you still feel safer in other buildings on campus, *Existere* will be having a reading series (with refreshments) at the Samuel Beckett Theatre in Stong College. There will be an opening on Monday at 5PM, with readings Tuesday at noon and Thursday at 2PM.

Yak, another York publication, will have a poetry and prose display in Vanier Junior Common Room. Opening on Wednesday and continuing until the end of the Festival, it is *YAK*'s first "Walk-in issue" and a real experience in 3D literature.

The Theatre Department will be presenting its production of *Lower Depths* throughout the week with evening performances and a matinee on Friday (See Christine Bouchard's preview this issue for details). Other chances to see the York Theatre students in action include: a fifteen minute version of *Hamlet* at noon, an acapella gospel at 12:30pm on Wednesday in the FAB and, on Tuesday at 7:30 in the Samuel Beckett Theatre students will be performing improvisational games and scenes.

No Festival is complete without a competition. This year's Ice-Cube show is no exception as next year's additions to the murals which adorn York's walls will be selected on Thursday at noon in the FAB.

The Festival wraps up on Friday with the film department screening their second year student's experimental films in the Samuel Beckett Theatre at noon and with the dance department presenting works by their students and faculty in the main dance studio in the FAB at 2PM.

With the exception of *Lower Depths*, all events are free. The closing party is open to all on Friday at 4PM in the IDA Gallery.

A Crafty lawbreaker

By ADAM KARDASH

One slide depicts a powerful male hand pulling on the hair of a half-naked woman who is chained and on all fours. Another slide shows a fully naked woman inserting the long pointed heel of her red shoe into herself. Yet another yields the image of a protester throwing raw meat onto the stage of a Miss California beauty pageant. Not surprisingly, below the screen sits the radical American feminist Nikki Craft.

Craft's slide presentation/lecture took place last Tuesday (Jan. 26) in the Fine Arts building as part of "Not Just Another Women's Sexuality Week," which was one of the highlights of this year's successful Women in Art series at York. Craft entertained the large, spirited crowd with an emotionally charged, humorous, and thought provoking presentation.

The topics of Craft's lecture were not new. The feminist perspectives on pornography, rape, inequality of women, etc. have all been explicitly stated before, perhaps even to the point of redundancy for both feminists and chauvinists alike. But the manner in which Craft raises the issues is different, to say the least.

Craft openly advocates "civil disobedience and a healthy disrespect for the law" in her feminist crusade. "I am here to make a few people lawbreakers," she says. "I've been arrested 47 times and consider it [civil disobedience] to be my work."

Most of Craft's lawbreaking activities are attempts at revealing the inconsistencies in the treatment of men and women that exist in North American culture. Craft gave the example of how she has been arrested numerous times for going topless on state beaches. During one incident she told the arresting officer that she would place her top back on as soon as a nearby man covered his stomach. "Surely his pot-belly is more offending than my breasts," she contended. Unfortunately, for Craft, the officer was not amused.

Other forms of Craft's protest include what she refers to as "creative street theatre which is the intermixing of art and politics," most commonly known as graffiti. "Never, ever, walk by wet cement without leaving your mark," Craft advises. "Wet cement is your chance for your views to live on indefinitely."

Whether Craft employs a creative approach such as when she changed the wording of a large "Miss Amer-

ica" billboard to read "Myth America," or more straight forward tactics—such as the time she, and fellow radicals, chained themselves to the front of the *Playboy* headquarters in Chicago demanding that publisher Hugh Hefner remove his clothes—one aspect of all her activities remains constant. Nikki Craft always attracts media attention.

Craft is a media professional. In the same manner that the media have used, and abused, the image of the woman for corporate use, Craft has exploited a variety of media for her purposes.

Her lecture at York exemplified her expert media skills. Craft began the presentation by dedicating all of her activities to her sister who committed suicide. She then proceeded to tell how she had been raped at knife-point at fifteen years of age and that her experiences with the police, after the incident, were almost as horrific as the rape itself. Within two minutes, the audience, comprised of about two-thirds women, was hooked.

Craft had the audience in the palm of her hand for the duration of her three hour lecture. She showed dozens of examples of how women are constantly degraded in today's society and that civil disobedience was one effective medium for change.

"To be silent is to collaborate in our own victimization," Craft announced. "We live in a society that trains men, reinforces men, to see women purely as objects. We're living in a state of seige. Something has to be done."

Craft's verbal attack on pornography was particularly effective. She is vehemently opposed to violent pornography and the objectification of women. Commenting on one slide that shows a photograph from *Hustler* magazine of a "vulnerable" woman seemingly consenting to a violent sexual act, Craft said that it was "frightening to think that millions of men are lying on their backs masturbating to these types of images of coercion and violence."

Regardless of the fact that many feminist groups advocate censoring these types of publications, (ie. bill C-54), Craft is committed to uphold the tenants of the United States' First Amendment. She feels that education, not repression, is the best way to combat injustices that preside in today's society.

Of course, a little lawbreaking, here and there, wouldn't hurt either.



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