

Three art shows in SUB

The prof(essional)s lack inspiration while Dorset Eskimos show talent

If anyone remembers, in a recent article I spent several paragraphs praising the art committee for the variety and the high quality of their exhibits this year. This week, I am happy to report that they are not only being consistent in this regard, but that they seem to be improving their standards.

Exhibits hung for Varsity Guest Weekend include an informal staff show, comprising works by the arts and department of extension staff, a display of native handicrafts, some specimens from the Students' Union permanent collection, and the U of A portion of the photography show.

The strongest criticism I can make of the staff show, and it by no means applies to all of the collection, is that although these artists cannot be faulted for their technique, they seem to lack the necessary inspiration. An example of this is R. Sinclair's Black Bird, done in oils. Technically, there is nothing wrong with this painting, but the idea is an old one.

I realize that to criticize an artist for using an old idea is a risky thing. There are very few new ideas in any art form. However, during a period of time, certain ideas can be worn to death simply because they are popular, and I am afraid that this is one of them.

There are several possible reasons for this lack of inspiration. It is conceivable that the staff members felt that since this is merely the prelude to official staff show later in the year, they should not hang their better works. A more likely explanation though, is

that these are 'professional' artists.

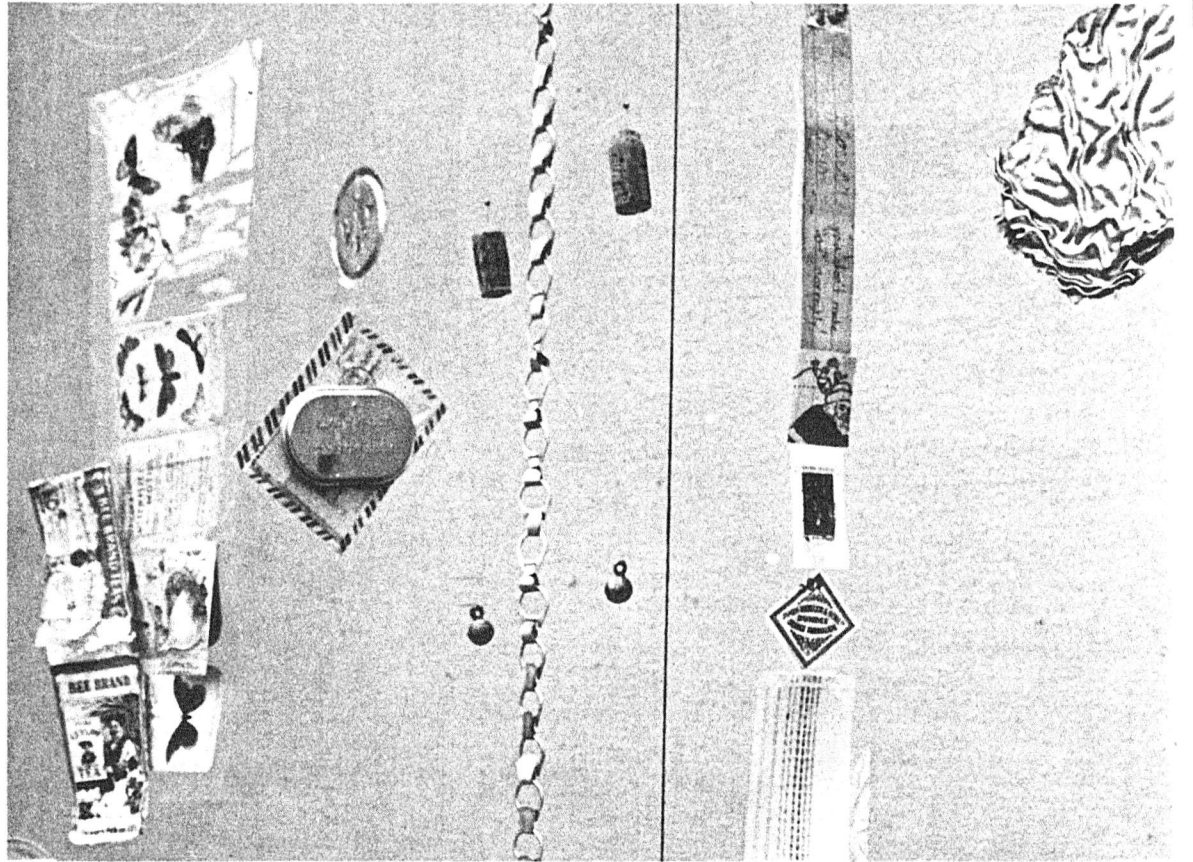
There are two reasons for this effect on the professional/academic artist. The first is simply a matter of being hired: a department cannot take chances. They can only hire an artist who is relatively well known. Secondly, the art department, like every other department on campus, seems to have an inherent prestige system. The more well-known are their artists, the greater the number of exhibitions, the greater is their departmental status. Consequently, to succeed at a university, an artist must paint what will be popular and what will sell.

In spite of this, I cannot condemn the show as a cop-out, for it has a number of interesting and intriguing works in it. Among these are three silk-screen prints by Harry Savage, and Gaile Rieke's Collection Made Entirely Out of Oleomargarine. I am also pleased that the show is not entirely painting, but includes some furniture design by Nevil Green, David Bennetts, and Bruce Bentz.

The display of native handicrafts as a whole is not overwhelming, but there are three pieces which make the show a must. These are a large unglazed pottery head, and two stone-cuts by Dorset eskimos.

These two prints (Birdman by Ningecuga, and End of the Hunt by Eleeshushe) can only be described as magnificent. The balance, the use of form and line, and the sense of space all contribute to make these cuts remarkable works of art.

The third exhibit is the most



A COLLECTION MADE ENTIRELY OF OLEOMARGARINE

... the shapes of an old butter carton

varied I have seen for some time. It is the permanent collection of the Students' Union, and every student should go in and see what sort of a collection he is part owner of.

For this special occasion, the gallery has dug up from god knows

how many private offices in this building, some really excellent works. Among them are two Riopelle's, with an extraordinary delicacy of line and color, and Les Falaises Englouties by Jacques de Tonnancour. I can't help wondering how many more treasures are perishing around the building. I

say perishing advisedly, because without proper care, many of these works are rapidly falling apart. The Students' Union would be wise, I think, to invest in a permanent full-time director or curator to weed out the collection and preserve whatever merits preservation.

—Bill Pasmak

records

DION:

Laurie SLP 2047 includes Abraham Martin & John; Purple Haze; Both Sides Now; others.

Whether the song be written by Leonard Cohen, Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan, Fred Neil, Jimi Hendrix, or himself, Dion is able to sing it—and sing it well!

After fading into oblivion about six years ago, Dion has made a successful comeback thanks to one hit record (Abraham, Martin, & John), and some excellent promotional work. However, Dion's talent has always been there; just listen to some of his old L.P.'s or to the flip sides of some of his top hits of years gone by. The only difference is that now the arrangements are more sophisticated, the recording techniques used are better, and the style is "in".

SERGIO MENDES & BRAZIL 66: FOOL ON THE HILL A & M SPX 4160

Imaginative piano improvisations, fine vocal work, and infectious Spanish-American rhythms have resulted in Sergio Mendes & Brazil 66 hitting the top of the middle of the road category of popular music. Though not greatly different from their other three albums (except for the fact that the cuts are longer), FOOL ON THE HILL is the group's best effort to date. Besides the title tune and their current hit single Scarborough Fair, the most notable cuts are When Summer Turns to Snow and Festa.

BILL MEDLEY: 100% MGM SE 4583

After hearing Bill Medley's impactful interpretation of a modern-day spiritual entitled Peace Brother Peace (not on this record), I found Bill Medley's first solo album disappointing. As was indicated by his performance in the Righteous Brothers, Medley is definitely capable of doing difficult material, but over-elaborated and dated big band arrangements, as well as too heavy a concentration on his own vocal caesthenics, drastically deform the songs on this album. With the possible exception of his hit song Brown Eyed Woman, no feeling for the material is exhibited by Medley himself nor by conductor Michael Patterson.

High quality compositions such as You Don't Have to Say You Love Me, The Impossible Dream, Goin' Out of My Head, and Who Can

I Turn To are "overperformed" and at times totally ruined.

HOLLYRIDGE STRINGS PLAY SIMON AND GARFUNKLE: Capitol ST 2998

Two albums ago the Hollyridge strings played The Beachboy's songbook, which consisted of an array of second-rate Beachboy songs set to a large orchestra. The result? An array of second-rate Beach Boy songs set to a large orchestra. It turned out that the compositions were just too simple for arranger Mort Garson to do anything with.

Next they tried selections from the Beatles' Magical Mystery Tour album. Once again they weren't too successful, this time because the songs were, for the most part, too complex for any rearrangement of them to go over very well.

Finally, however, they have found appropriate material in the songs of Simon and Garfunkle. Harmonically simple, yet interesting, they allow the Hollyridge strings room for expansion upon the basic design without totally destroying the mood which Simon and Garfunkle intend to portray.

A fine easy-listening L.P.

SWITCHED ON BACH: WALTER CARLOS Columbia MS 7194

A modern electronic composer by the name of Walter Carlos has programmed the music of Bach onto a mood synthesized and has come up with an offering which is currently number one on the list of best selling classical L.P.'s in North America. The actual compositions are not touched—Bach's ingenious harmonies, perfect form, and contrapuntal technique are still there, but the texture is much more interesting; particularly to the person (such as myself) whose lack of familiarity with Baroque music leads him to the mistaken belief that all Baroque music sounds the same.

Though not generally a great appreciator of the ingenuity of J. S. Bach, I find "Switched On Bach" to be not only refreshing, but at times quite amusing.

All records reviewed can be heard on CKSR Student Radio, studios located in Room 224 of SUB.

—Larry Saidman



JACK-OF-ALL-TALENTS THEODORE BIKEL—arrives in Edmonton Thursday to give a concert of folk songs from around the world. Well known as an actor in such movies as "The African Queen" and "The Blue Angel", Bikel is also an exceptional singer, composer, musician, author, linguist and lecturer.

Bikel is currently on a world tour. His annual concert appearances take him to at least 40 cities in the United States. He has also toured England, New Zealand, Australia, Israel, Holland, France, Spain and Canada. He speaks seven languages fluently, "gets by" in several others, and can sing in 21.

Bikel brings to Edmonton not only the songs of the people he sings about, but also the feeling of urgency which permeates the struggles of dispossessed peoples throughout the world. As an activist in the civil-rights movement in the United States, he has joined such people as Belefonte and Seeger in concerts at Washington and Selma. Tickets are still available at the Allied Box Office, third floor of the Bay.