

Laser show combines light, music

By Sean Meyers
Of the Emerald

How would you like to spend this Saturday night soaking up orgasms of light and color, absorbing unworldly electronic inflections and chasing psychic snakes up and down the walls?

You're suspicious. You worry about whether such an experience is legal, and how many millions of brain cells it would consume.

But the trip is free, in terms of brain cells, when the spaceship "Krypton" leaves the Willamette Science and Technology Center promptly at 8 p.m. on Eugene's first laser art show.

And not too expensive in earth currency, either. Just a dollar admission for students and seniors. The WISTEC facility is located just southwest of Autzen Stadium.

A pair of Eugene "Laser Artists," Lee Harris and Michael Charles, have put together an original electronic soundtrack and video show to be presented as "Krypton Dynamics Volume I." Harris says this will be the first laser show ever to incorporate an entirely original musical score.

"Krypton" is not a reference to the stuff that makes super-heroes weak in the knees. The chemical is a key component in making photons weak in their orbits, producing a laser beam that can be manipulated into infinite forms and colors.

"It's amazing how many people think Krypton is just a fabrication of Superman," says Harris, 29, who first became interested in lasers when he was six years old. When he was a junior in high school, Harris built his first laser. "It's been a love affair ever since."

Harris and Charles own Krypton Media Effects Lab, a consulting and advertising production company in Eugene. In addition to giving laser shows indoors, they have ambitious projects for the future. Two possibilities are bouncing laser beams off the moon, and running shows on the sides of buildings in downtown Eugene from a laser stationed on top of Skinners Butte.

Harris wants to get permission to magnify laser beams through a telescope towards reflectors left on the moon by astronauts. There have been scientific experiments in bouncing laser light off the reflectors, but it has never been done with artistic intent. Harris says it is a "real possibility" that he will go ahead with the project.

In conjunction with the shows Saturday night, WISTEC will hold a "Laser Day" where a variety of laser applications will be demonstrated and discussed.

Included will be presentations of laser scanners similar to those used in retail stores and a laser beam that measures distance. Harris and Charles will also be on hand to discuss

techniques used in putting together a laser art show.

Also slated is a presentation by Dr. Lawrence O'Dell on the medical applications of laser beams in the treatment of glaucoma and retinal disease. Displays on laser art, laser telephones and holography will be available for inspection.

"Laser has a potential at some point in the future of being able to generate almost any kind of visual picture you can imagine," says Harris. "It can be just as versatile as audio tape."

Harris says Saturday's laser show will be not to emphasize "the super dynamic quality of light by overloading the senses with light and color." Instead, it will be "much more subdued, what we feel to be a more aesthetic presentation," Harris says.

Charles and Harris are in a symbiotic relationship with WISTEC — in exchange for the use of WISTEC's costly medium-power laser, the pair are putting together a "laser projector" that can be programmed to alter the laser beam into artistic configurations.

The projector has 100 optical components, where a laboratory microscope might have 10 or less. When perfected the 1,000-plus piece projector will be comparable in many respects to a \$150,000 off-the-shelf model, Harris says.

As of Wednesday afternoon, the portions of the projector were still strewn over

a laboratory floor in the WISTEC building. Despite the seeming disorder and constant questions from the curious, Harris is confident the show will run smoothly.

"This laser beam isn't going to cut me in half?" asks a man seeking passage through Harris' make-shift workshop at WISTEC.

"No," replies Harris, waiting until the man has already walked through the waist-high beam before adding a touch of laser-artist humor. "But it will make you sterile."



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Jones, the airport police chief, had said before the passengers' release that the hijacker had no demands "other than the fact he wants to go to Afghanistan. He said he had been in prison and it wouldn't hurt the folks on the plane to sit with him for awhile."

While the hijacking incident was unfolding in Portland, four hijackers commandeered a South Yemen airliner with 54

people aboard to the east African nation of Djibouti Thursday, and surrendered after shooting two passengers on board the plane, according to an airport official.

The airport official said the two were only slightly wounded in the shooting, which erupted shortly after the hijacked Al-Yanda Boeing 707 landing in Djibouti.

"There was two shots fired

inside the plane and two passengers were injured but not seriously," the airport official said. The Kuwaiti news agency reported the hijackers traded fire with armed members of the plane's crew.

The official said the South Yemenese airliner was seized by four hijackers on a flight from Damascus, Syria, to Aden, Yemen, via Kuwait with 44 passengers and 10 crew members

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