

Olum's official portrait unveiled, added to presidential collection

By Phil Levinson
Of the Emerald

A portrait of University President Paul Olum has been added to the University's collection of 13 presidential paintings.

The official presidential portrait, painted by artist Lynda Lanker, was unveiled last Friday at a University Board of Trustees dinner. The portrait will be featured in the American Master Prints art show that begins Sunday at the University Museum of Art.

Lanker, selected by Olum to paint the portrait, was commissioned by University Relations two years ago. She completed it in December after a bit of experimentation and a lot of hard work, she said.

Lanker was chosen because she was the most qualified and had painted former University President William Boyd's official portrait, said Muriel Jackson, assistant vice president for administration, who arranged for the commission.

"The only work I really liked was Lynda's because I liked the portrait of my predecessor Bill Boyd," Olum said. "I wanted Lynda to paint my portrait."

Once Lanker was chosen, she and Olum began the long portrait-painting process.

"I like to take quite a while to get to know the subject," she explained. "I wanted to show (Olum's) personality."

"She wanted to catch the spirit in it — something about the personality," Olum said. "We spent a lot of time talking and sharing ideas."

Their first idea was to paint Olum in a conference setting in order to reflect his position and openness. "It was an unusual idea, and it didn't quite work out," Lanker said.

"I really liked the idea, but it was very hard to do and didn't accomplish what she wanted," Olum said. "She tried to paint the way she saw me. I didn't mind, I just didn't want to get old (before the painting was finished)."

"We worked through the problem, and I was finally pleased with it," Lanker said.

The portrait is "illustrative of Olum's personality and presidential office," Lanker said.

"Dr. Olum is so friendly and warm, it was easy to get him to

relax and take a natural pose," she said, noting that Olum's portrait is somewhat less formal than some of the others.

"I like the painting very much," Olum said. "I never thought anyone would want to paint a picture of me."

Olum stressed the need to put such an honor in perspective. "I like being president very much. I get a kick out of it, but it's a job to do... The trappings of position and authority don't make you a better person. You are who you are independently," he said.

"It's nice to know that when I'm long gone there'll be a picture of me along with other portraits of significance," he added.

"This was an official portrait, not a penetrating psychological portrait," Lanker said, noting a difference between this and the many private portraits she does.

Jackson was impressed at the change in Lanker's style shown between Boyd's and Olum's portraits. "I had the highest regard for Lynda as an artist before, but now her style seems to have evolved. My response to her current work is very positive."

Lanker said her rendering of Olum captures his "inner warmth and humanity and this will be displayed in the museum forever."



Photo by Michael Wilhelm

Artist Lynda Lanker stands before her portrait of University President Paul Olum.

Both Olum and Lanker were not only pleased with the way the portrait turned out but happy with their collaboration.

"I liked Lynda, her way of doing things, her attitude," he said. "I think her view of me

was great if that's the way she wanted to do it."

Lanker said that portrait painting "is a privilege for me because it's what I always wanted to do. Working with Olum, though, was a big thrill."

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Campus agencies can aid stress-afflicted students

By Irene Hislop
Of the Emerald

Winter midterm time is traditionally one of the most stressful for college students.

But pizza, coffee and No-Doze aren't the only ways to deal with midterms.

Students experiencing difficulties can turn to any of three campus agencies for help with personal or academic problems.

The number of students seeking counseling always goes up as midterms approach and as finals approach, said Charlie Nixon, director of the University Crisis Center. But although there is no conclusive scientific evidence about winter being a more stressful season than others, he said he's noticed a "significant" increase in calls this term.

Oregon's constant drizzle seems to give students a common ailment besides the legendary problems of the "cold and flu season."

"The constant rain and the gray skies, and having to walk through puddles — it's hard to get motivated to get up and go outside to class when it's always gray," said Brian Butcher, a senior speech major.

Last term, the Crisis Center received about 20 percent fewer calls than fall term 1985, taking only about 55 calls in September. But as winter term began last month, the center's phones were busier, with 80 calls in January.

Nixon attributed the increase partially to more student awareness of the center. In an Oregon Daily Emerald article last term, Nixon said he thought the Crisis Center was being "under-utilized."

The Crisis Center offers 24-hour phone-in counseling. The phone number is 686-4488.

In addition to the Crisis Center, students needing help with stress this term have the option of using the Crisis Center's mother organization, the University Counseling Center, which helps students deal with personal problems.

Students come in mostly to talk about relationships, Nixon said. Depression and anxiety also are common problems. The Counseling Center is located in the Student Health Center.

Another agency that helps students troubled by academics and other worries is the academic advising and student services office.

Student services counselors answer questions about selecting a major and satisfying its requirements.

Turn to Stress, Page 11