

Eugene SCENE

19 **The Strangers** (rock) at the EMU Beer Garden. Free chips and salsa 4-5 p.m., music 5-7:30 p.m. Free

Arnold Brothers (soul) at Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$6

Sowbelly/The Scallywags/The Big I Am/Terry Lee Hale at John Henry's. 10 p.m. \$

Caliente (Latin salsa and jazz) at the WOW Hall. 9 p.m. \$5/6

The Webster Trio (piano-flute-clarinet ensemble) at Beall Concert Hall. 3:30 p.m. \$5

Ice T Lecture (rap recording artist speaks on civil liberties issues) in the EMU Ballroom. 8 p.m. \$6/9

Walker T. Ryan/The Mad Farmers/Oldtime News (acoustic) at Maude Kerns Art Center, a Eugene Folklore Society benefit concert. 7:30 p.m. \$5

20 **Paulette and Power** (blues from 1991 awards sweepers) at Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$5

Crackerbush/Oswald Five-O/Kpans (rock) at John Henry's. 10 p.m. \$5

Oregon Natural Resources Council 20th Anniversary Party w/ Grupo Condor (South American folk) and festivities at the WOW Hall. 6:30-11 p.m. \$20

"An Opera Sampler" at Beall Concert Hall. 8 p.m. \$2/4

21 **Fiddlin Sue, Uncle T and Johnny** (bluegrass) at John Henry's. 8 p.m. \$1

Dosa/Adickid/Compost at John Henry's. 10 p.m. \$

"Old Wine and New Spirits" (17th and 20th Century) at Beall Concert Hall. 4 p.m. \$3/5

22 **Phantom's Blues Jam** at Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$1

Filho/The Big Fags/Rough Mix (rock) at John Henry's. 10 p.m.

23 **Walker T. Ryan and Howl Combo** (his new blues band!) at Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$3

Jolly Mon/Marshall Plea/Sunrunner (rock) at John Henry's. 10 p.m.

24 **Blues Club Project** (blues) at Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$3

Tampest/Rakish Paddy (Celtic rock) at John Henry's. 10 p.m.

25 **Perfect Alibi** (classic rock) at Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$3

The Posies/Best Kissers in the World at the WOW Hall. 8 p.m. \$8

Oregon Gospel Ensemble 10th Anniversary Concert w/ Rickie Grundy to celebrate Black History Month at the Hult Center. 7 and 9:30 p.m. \$6/4

"A Coupla White Chicks Sitting Around Talking," an ACE comedy, opens tonight at the Theatre Annex, 39 W. 10th Ave. Shows Feb. 19, 20, 26, 27 and March 5, 6, 8:30 p.m. \$6/8/10

"Personals," an ACE comedic musical, opens tonight at the Downtown Cabaret, corner of 10th and Willamette. Shows Feb. 19, 20, 26, 27 and March 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 25-27. 8 p.m. \$6/8/10

"Uncooked, Unknown, Unleashed: RAW" is a graduate student Dept. of Dance concert Feb. 19 and 20 in the Dougherty Dance Theater. 7:30 p.m. \$3



On the Verge, a University theater production, is a comedic examination of gender roles in society. Victorian women (above) bushwhack their way to the 1950s.

Women romp through time

By Ming Rodrigues
Emerald Contributor

"So often we think of Victorian women as weak and powerless, when actually there were many women of that period who chose to refute that image and discover their power. On *The Verge* chronicles the adventures of three such women who are stronger than their society."

Director Amy Sarno-Fradkin, a graduate student in theater arts, is talking about the University production of a play that considers important issues concerning the role of women through time.

Written by Eric Overmeyer, *On The Verge* is a theatrical journey that tells the story of three Victorian women who bushwhack their way through Terra Incognita — an entrance to the twentieth century that has them hurtling through space, time, history, geography and fashion, finally to arrive in the 1950s.

It is not a documentary about women explorers from this period but rather a study of the quality of imagination, curiosity and yearning that explores provocative issues such as social constraints and liberation.

For instance, the women encounter artifacts from the future and try to get a perspective on Mrs. Butterworth bottles, Burma Shave slogans, and a discarded rear-view mirror with the cryptic message, "Objects in mirror may be closer than they appear."

Meanwhile, they also encounter social displacement. In overcoming

the restrictions and limitations of the 1880s, they proceed to 1955, a time when "for middle-class women, the social mandate was especially well defined: be feminine, sexy and bright, but not too brainy," Sarno-Fradkin said. For women conditioned in the Victorian social code, the 1950s prove to be very seductive.

Two of the travelers succumb to the enchantment of the surfboard, the barbecue and the jacuzzi and settle down in 1955. The third, still enthralled by the excitement of the adventure, determines to push on into the future.

With a lively literary wit and a playful exuberance bordering on the surrealistic, Overmeyer liberates the stage from its naturalistic shackles with *On The Verge*. "Whether you take the work as sardonic cultural history, as the story of women's liberation, or as merely jaundiced time-tripping and star-trekking, it draws you in, affectionately and mischievously," *New York Magazine* wrote of the comedy.

It is a story of language — how we use it to control and are controlled by it. Overmeyer has been referred to as "an ecologist of language and a shrewd observer of our quest to control our environment and the environment of others." As one of his characters remarks, "I have seen the future, and it is slang."

On The Verge opens tonight at the Robinson Theater. Additional performances are scheduled for Feb. 20, Feb. 25-27 and March 5-6. All performances begin at 8 p.m.

Portraits of diversity:

High school art class helps prepare students for the real world

"A class offered in multiculturalism may not be the answer to the world's problems, but it's a start."

— Wayne P. Hill
Thurston High School principal

By Katy Moeller
Emerald Contributor

A high school art teacher in Springfield recently assigned her students to draw human faces. All of them drew Caucasian faces.

The pictures that Marcia Graham saw reflected the basic racial demography of Thurston High School, which has only 81 minority students out of 1,450.

As part of a school effort to promote multiculturalism in Thurston High School, Graham asked her students to draw faces of people from other races or cultures.

Students referred to magazines such as *National Geographic* to locate pictures of non-whites.

The common conception that the purpose of art class is to produce something that is either beautiful or useful is not the basis for Graham's teaching.

"If they produce something beautiful, that's wonderful. If they learn something while they're doing it, that's more important," she said.

In honor of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, Graham had her class do projects reflecting his messages. Students produced portraits of King and collages that emphasize racial harmony.

"I wanted to do a project that would reflect how blacks and hispanics feel. So I did some readings. I read King's 'I

Psychedelic lights

Story by
Freya Horn

The primordial ooze engulfed the oscillating moebas as bright bursts of color seduced the vast recesses of the mind.

Not some over-worked chemist's hallucination, this vision is a reality of the psychedelic light show.

Phantasmagoria Lights began in Eugene, Ore., in the mid 1960s when Doug Mosher and James Lesan met as University students. Mosher, a graduate student in psychology who was studying the psychological effects of color, hired Lesan, an art major, to make a visual presentation for his psychology research.

In one experiment, Mosher studied the effects of colored light on optical vibrations, and Lesan created scientific light shows that involved 3-D color polarization. In other experiments, Lesan's psycholumia art was used for color induction — when the mind "sees" the color orange even though the picture of the fruit is illuminated with red light — and to determine how many colors the human brain could distinguish.

Lesan's light shows were "a mixture of perception psychology, physics and art," he said. Intrigued by the concept, Lesan abandoned painting to pursue this unexplored art medium.

Part of the Phantasmagoria Lights philosophy, he said, is that the brain tries to maintain some sense of order. But the light show wreaks havoc with our everyday equilibrium — thus the term "psychedelic" — because of the way light transforms and animates colors.

"We took the chaos theory, before it really was a theory, and created ordered chaos," Lesan said. "Just one slide in all that cacophony adds some order, something recognizable that the brain can grasp."

The experiments soon went beyond the classroom when the two students began doing light shows with *The Ministry of Time*, a "happening of the hippy dippy Beatnik scene" in the basement of an old church in Eugene, Lesan said. The Basement, as it was called, was transformed into a complete sensory experience with light shows and live music — the virtual reality of the 60s.

After touring the Northwest as a solo show with their own music arrangements, they took the light show to Berkeley just in time for the heyday of San

Francisco's counter-culture 60s scene. Soon they were performing with Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, The Doors and the Grateful Dead, among others.

"One week we opened for Janis and Big Brother at California Hall, followed only two weeks later with Jimi Hendrix's American Debut concert at the Fillmore (West)," Lesan said. The plunge into the big-time "happened so fast we couldn't even think about it," he said.

While Bill Hamm invented the open-dish liquid light show, Phantasmagoria Lights became famous for taking it to a new extreme.

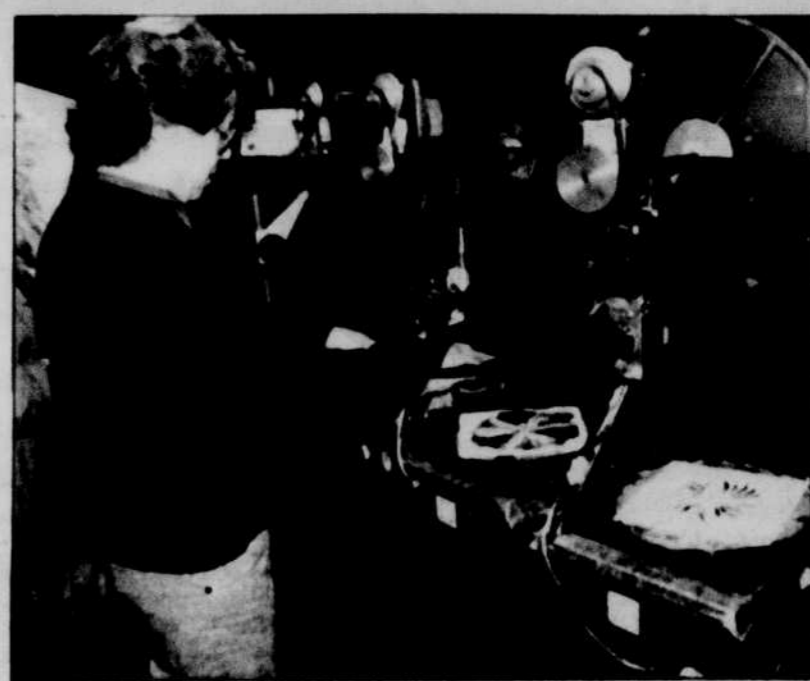
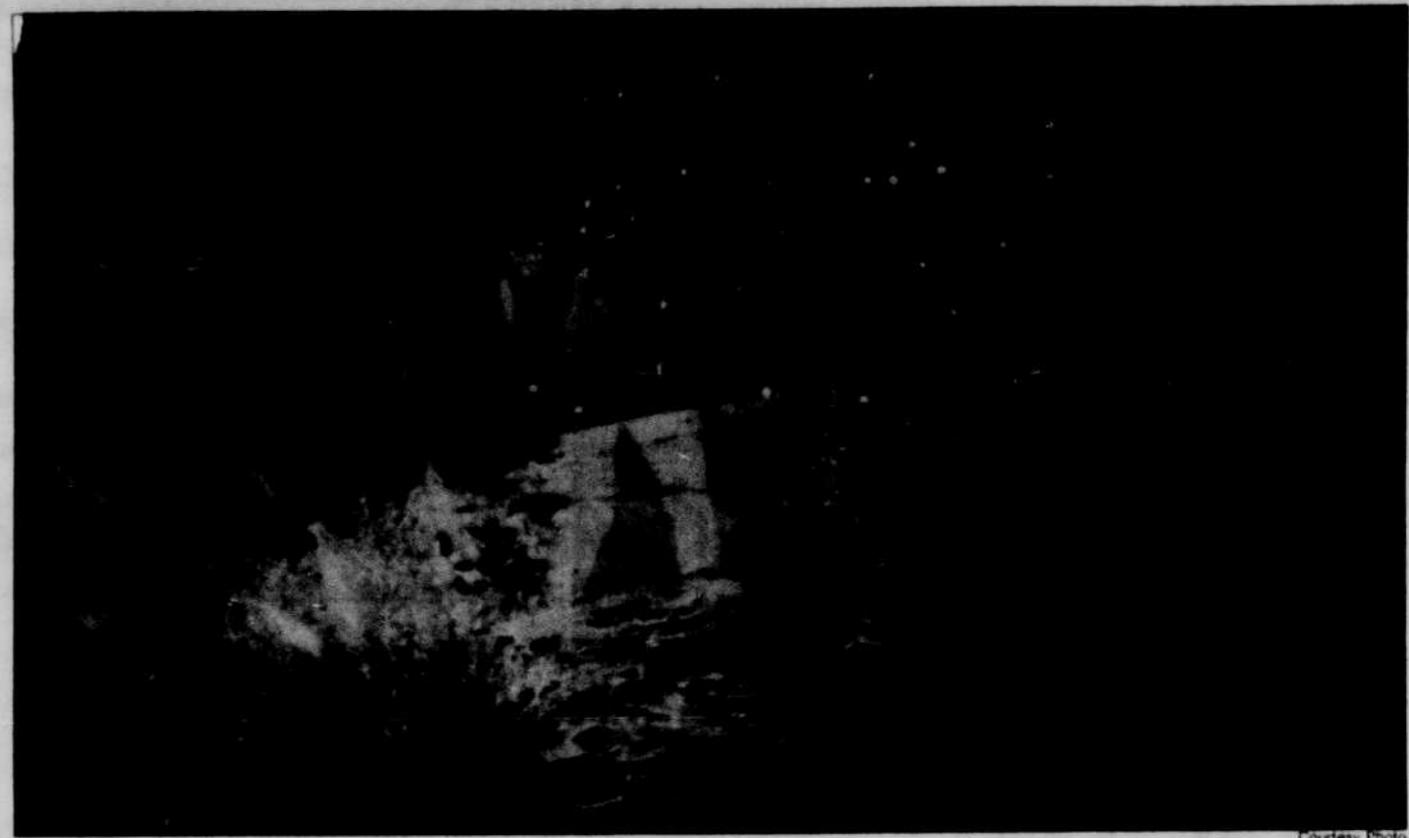
First, they put the colored liquids between panes of glass, which produced more air bubbles for the dancing amoeba effect. To this they added other special effects with transparencies, paper cutouts and slides. To coordinate all the visuals, they customized ordinary light projectors with speed controls, color wheel rotators and kaleidoscopic devices. Then they combined all the images and colors with their own creative flair.

"Nothing is pre-arranged," Lesan said of the Phantasmagoria technique. The machines add to his ability to be more improvisational, he said, because they coordinate everything while he creates his "portable painting."

"It's a mind blower," said Michael Wilson, stage manager for the Community Center for the Performing Arts. "They have a really good sense of musicianship and arrangement. When the lights and patterns hit the band, it completes the sensory experience," he said.

The members of International Anthem, a local band that performed with Phantasmagoria recently, all agreed that the psychedelic light show enhanced their music.

"The audience was dumbfounded by how amazing it was," Phil Simon, the band's manager, said.



James Lesan (left) of Phantasmagoria Lights practices his light show techniques in his studio. Lesan's customized light projectors have speed controls to coordinate the colored liquids, paper cutouts and transparencies. "Babba on the Moon" (above) is an animated sequence of 60 color light show slides Phantasmagoria Lights created in 1967.

He listed in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Lesan is the only original member left, and even he gave up the show for awhile.

The light show troupe returned to Eugene in 1970 when "things ended as quickly as they began," Lesan said. That year they did their largest work, a 150-foot by 25-foot light show at the University's McArthur Court, but by then the troupe was "tired of performing," Lesan said.

He soon pursued other artistic ventures, such as opening an art gallery, teaching as a visiting artist at LCC and helping to establish the WOW Hall as a community center for performing arts. Having a desire to be self-employed, he also started up two new businesses — both still thriving today — in stained glass design and ornamental pruning.

Yet the light show continued "on the side" with its local shows, done mainly for Lesan's own enjoyment, he said. "I have a hard time going to concerts anymore," he said. "If I'm not doing a light show, I get real bored."

After more than 25 years of creating visual stimuli to accompany music, Lesan said he can't help but "see" music, literally. "I'll be driving along and a tune comes on the radio that I like, and I'll get into it, and then I'll see the music in front of me," he said. "I have to pull the car over ... because all I can see are patterns and colors instead of the road." It may resemble an acid flashback, but it's not, he said, because his sense of sight is in tune with his sense of hearing.

"My brain has been trained over the years to think visually," he said as he leafed through a

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Have a Dream" speech. Then I worked for six hours straight. I felt it had to be expressed," said Peabody.

Peabody's portrait of Martin Luther King Jr. is framed by handpainted African and American flags.

"I change the colors of the flag. The flag represents every color of people in America, and I try to reflect that in the flag," he said.

Thurston High School principal Wayne P. Hill also stressed the need for multicultural education at Thurston High School.

"I tell my students that after they graduate from here, they might be going to the bright lights and big city. And they better have the knowledge and capacity to interact in a multicultural setting," Hill said.

"We'd be doing you a disservice if we just talked about what's happening in Springfield," he said.

Graham, who is fond of Mexican art and music, asked her students about what comes to mind when they think of Mexican culture. She was shocked at their response.

"They responded with several terrible ethnic slurs," she said.

In an effort to combat the problem, Graham brings in artifacts, books and sometimes schedules foreign students from the University to come and speak in her class.

Thurston High School students recently became embroiled in the controversy over Measure 9, the statewide anti-gay measure, said sophomore Daniel Peabody.

"I actually carried Measure 9 around with me. When people said it was about special rights, I would say, 'Where does it say anything about special rights,'" he said.

Peabody, a student in Graham's art class, said he suffered both verbal and physical abuse when he transferred from Springfield Christian Center to Thurston High School.

"People thought I was gay. I was extremely preppy. I was stereotyped," he said.

"I have never seen an issue so divisive since the Vietnam War," a Springfield High School English teacher said.

"The tension in high schools was a reflection of the community. Families were divided on this issue," she said.

Graham confirmed that students were highly involved in the issue and often discussed it in her class. She sees verbal communication between students as a vital part of her teaching and encourages this by placing students into small groups when they begin their projects.

The class projects are now being displayed outside the entrance to the Springfield public library and will remain there until March 1.

In the past there has been a "Women's Week" and a "Men's Week" honoring students of each gender for academic and extracurricular achievements, but this year marks the first year with a "Multicultural Week" at Thurston High School.

"A class offered in multiculturalism may not be the answer to the world's problems, but it's a start," Hill said.



Art teacher Marcia Graham (left) and high school sophomore Daniel Peabody view the Thurston High School art exhibit.