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Sculptor's work receives recognition

By Rachel Miller

For The Oregon Daily Emerald

With the sale in February of his sculpture entitled "Tragedy of the Common, Lord Buford Mumford Augustine Tullyrill's Last Shoe" to Hawaii, Eugene sculptor Mike Randles is increasing his national exposure.

This ebony and ivory sculpture in the shape of a foot is also part of "The 5th International Shoebox Sculpture Exhibition" which has been traveling throughout the Pacific Rim for two years.

Randles, 51, was born in Lowell, Washington. He was educated at the University of Idaho, where he studied architecture, and Linfield College, where he received a bachelor's degree in 1988. He spent 12 years farming, ranching and building houses in Idaho and Eastern Oregon before coming to Eugene to pursue a master's degree.

But it is just in the last two years that Randles' work has received more national recognition.

"My style has not changed," Randles said. "The critical analysis has become more accepting of my work. If you create a level of honesty and integrity in your work, people finally get it."

Randles' mixed media sculptures depict the human condition and his views on politics.

"My work explains who we are and where

we come from," he said. Many of his life experiences have influenced his attitude toward society and each piece of art reflects his beliefs.

With his sculpture entitled "Grow-or-die meets Godzilla," he addresses the destruction of the natural environment by human progress.

In a statement about the piece Randles said, "My interest is the paradox between the feeling of being human and the illusion that must be preserved: an aesthetic that relates to the human condition."

This sculpture is part of his "Uncle Gus's Attic Treasures: Rapture Collection" on display until May 29 at the Maude Kerns Art Gallery.

The entire collection, which is part of the gallery's "Art and the Environment" show, speaks to Randles' belief that "academics become so highly specialized that they become detached from life, the environment and relationship to other cultures," he said.

Nancy Frey, artistic director at the Maude Kerns Gallery, said that people generally find Randles' work challenging and thought-provoking.

"It is important for me to show my work - my effort is conured for exposure - to be exhibited," he said. "I don't do closet art - looking for that special little spot in me to

hang on your wall. I do 3D to be seen. If there are special little spots exposed in my effort it is an aesthetic, not style, the product of my need to express myself with material at hand."

Randles is in the process of completing a piece entitled "Racial Facials." This is a series of life-size, human heads on sticks with handles to be placed into stands. The skins of the faces are constructed out of three layers of mixed media.

According to Randles, the purpose of this series is to show the meaninglessness of the color of a person's skin.

Randles has also been assigned to construct the "Paul Olum mobile Hemi Bust" by the Lane Arts Council. This structure will be hollow inside and stand 18 feet tall and 8 feet wide. It would function as a bus stop, tourist attraction and sound stage for performances.

Randles has work displayed in over 15 states, England and Germany.

Frey believes that it is hard for artists to get recognition because there is a lot of competition and good artists, but she said Randles' success in Hawaii is a sign of his growing importance.

"I try to make my art very approachable to all people, children included," Randles said.

Naturalists share knowledge of local environment

Natasha Shepard

For The Oregon Daily Emerald

Local naturalists gathered Sunday at the Natural History Museum to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for our local environment. Seven "naturalists" from different backgrounds set up displays and answered questions during the reception, which was the first in what will be a series of educational field trips sponsored by the museum.

"These are people who really love nature and have studied it firsthand," said educational program assistant Amy Klauke. "They're treasures."

The naturalists attending varied from William Sullivan, author of several books about hiking in Oregon, to Evelyn McConaughy, who is both a connoisseur of seaweed delicacies and an author of recipes using sea vegetables. Her display included a sampling of some of her recipes, including pickled seaweed. Naturalist Sharon Teague's display of insects included a tarantula and hissing cockroaches native to Madagascar.

According to Klauke, coordinating the "Meet Your Naturalist Day" was not only for the benefit of the community but also a chance to celebrate the resources the community is afforded through people who have had experience in different fields.

"I hope that people will learn to appreciate our natural world locally and develop an enthusiasm," Klauke said.

Sunday's presentations were the kick-off to the "Learn the Landscape" series of field trips scheduled to begin in May. A variety of trips is planned for the series, each emphasizing a different natural niche. The trips will "focus on learning the landscape from different perspectives," said Klauke.

Experts from the community will lead groups on hikes along the coast to learn about coastal geology, to an active volcano and across Portland's sidewalks to learn about urban horticulture. The field trips are open to anyone but are less expensive for museum members. Space is limited, so anyone interested should contact the museum for a schedule and further information.

COMMUNITY UPDATE

- Womenspace has organized a battered lesbian support group for lesbian and bisexual women. The group will provide a safe, confidential place to discuss abusive relationships. Child care will be provided. For more information, call 485-6513.

- The Lane County Department of Human Resources needs volunteers to provide group child care for people enrolled in parenting skills classes. People are asked to volunteer for a three-month period. Volunteers are carefully checked and must agree to a criminal record check. For more information, call 686-7856.

- The United Way needs volunteers for the following positions: driver for Special Mobility Services, four hours per week; classroom volunteer for Early Education Program, two hours per week; clerical volunteer for Womenspace, four hours per

week; baseball, T-ball and softball coach for Emerald Kid-sports, four to eight hours per week; campground host for Cottage Grove Ranger District, six days per week. For more information, call the Volunteer Connection, 683-9000.

- McKenzie-Willamette Hospital is offering a course called "Staying Quit" for people who have stopped smoking. The class begins today and will last through May 25 at the hospital's Siuslaw Room. The class fee is \$50. For more information, call 343-2580.

- A lecture titled "From Kiwis to Nut Trees: Designing for Year-Round Productive Beauty" will be presented Tuesday by landscape designer Jude Hobbs at the Maude Kerns Art Center. The lecture includes a slide show presentation. The cost is \$13.50. For more information, call 345-1571.

UNIVERSITY UPDATE

- The University's Outdoor Program participants will float the Rouge River, pausing occasionally to pick up litter Thursday. The event is in its fourth year and requires an advance sign-up and fee in order to participate. Call 346-0636 for more information.

- A University sociology professor will speak Friday about Husserl's criticism of reason as part of the Oregon Humanities Center Work-in-

Progress series. Ken Liberman's free lecture will begin at noon in Room 159 PLC.

- Several University departments and employees received awards last week for their leadership in designing and promoting innovative recycling programs. The six staff members received "University Environmental Citizen of the Year Awards" as part of the campus-wide Earth Week celebration.



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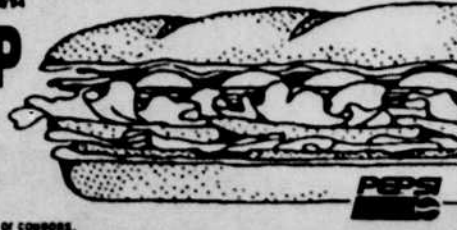
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