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Pulse *Excite*

On Tuesday
Chocolates, hearts
and disasters: Pulse's
Valentine's
edition!

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Television twins, movie multiples rarely redundant

Mason West
Movies/Music/TV Columnist

Nothing draws a crowd like TV guest appearances by Oscar-nominated actors. And so I found myself watching "Alias" Sunday night to see my beloved Ethan Hawke.

Like any boy born in the early 1980s, Ethan Hawke reached out to me as the idyllic hero in the 1985 film "Explorers," where he and three friends go on a journey in space ... for some reason I have since forgotten. But that does not demean its impact on my supple young mind.

But back to "Alias." Knowing they only had one shot with the Hawke, the show's screenwriters had him doing double time as a CIA agent and an evil doctor who had used gene-altering technology to copy his face. Like salmon returning upriver to spawn, the show followed its only natural course to the scene where the two Hawkes pointed guns at each other and CIA agent Sydney Bristow was left to figure out which was the real one.

Disregarding hackneyed climax devices, the show got me thinking about actors playing twins or look-alikes of some other nature. The other current example is Nicolas Cage in "Adaptation," where his two screen personae are so expertly integrated, it's almost believable that there are two Cages. But movie twins — or twinema — is a phenomenon dating back to great action heroes such as Jean-Claude Van Damme in the classic "Double Impact" and Jackie Chan's "Twin Dragons."

Of course, these examples follow "long lost twin" scenarios. There is also the "honey I cloned myself" premise that made Michael Keaton's "Multiplicity" one for the books. This year's "Treehouse of Horror" Simpsons episode comes to mind, where Homer uses a cursed hammock to clone himself. And then I remember that he is a cartoon.

Time travel also makes for good twinema, as demonstrated by Michael J. Fox in "Back to the Future Part II." Evil robots are also acceptable, such as in "Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey." You want more? 'Cause I've got 'em. So I don't want to hear anybody complaining they can't justify twins on screen.

But you ask, "What is all this driving at?" It's time we demand more from our actors. In our negligence, look what we have let those lazy "artists" get away with: the Olsen twins playing one baby on "Full House." Outrageous. Child labor laws. *Pfft!*

In my new, perfect world, those jail bait floozies would have to give us at least four Olsens to warrant any notice. Here's the pitch: Hayley Mills of "The Parent Trap" reprises her role as twin sisters who have now grown up and each simultaneously give birth to twins that miraculously look the same — perhaps twin fathers? — and will be played by Mary-Kate and Ashley. Let me know where to collect my Oscar.

Now, I'm probably crazy. That or I've hyperbolized hyperbole. But I figure we've already discovered all the talent out there, and from here on out I just want to see movies with Brendan Fraser playing every part.

Contact the Pulse columnist at masonwest@dailyemerald.com. His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.



Mason West
Selling out

Stash of trash turned art cache

MECCA bridges the narrow spaces between materials, art and community with recycled art supplies

Helen Schumacher
Pulse Reporter

One of Eugene's best-kept art secrets sits unassumingly behind a cluster of parked cars on a lot far from campus. The Materials Exchange Center for Community Arts, located at 1235 Railroad Blvd., is dedicated to making art affordable and environmentally friendly.

Jennifer Fogerty-Gibson has served as MECCA's executive director since summer 2002.

"MECCA specializes in diverting reusable materials from the waste stream and teaching people how to make something fun with it," she said. "We're an environmental organization, but the cornerstone of the organization is giving access to art to those that don't have it."

The inside of the building is crammed with trash-turned-art supplies. Five-gallon buckets overflow with colored straws; empty film canisters and medicine bottles, wood scraps, wires and small tins line one wall. Cardboard boxes burst at the seams with light bulbs, glass panes and hand-dyed yarn. Crowded film reels rest on one shelf; fabric scraps fill another. More shelving, running from floor to ceiling, sags from the weight of old tiles. Mosaic tile projects from a group of elementary students dry on a table in the center of the room.

Last August, all these materials were moved here from Lizzy Hughes' garage. Hughes and Sara Grimm founded MECCA two and a half years ago — creating a place to divert reusable material from the BRING Recycling program, which had no indoor storage.

The idea for the materials exchange was inspired by SCRAP, a similar Portland organization.

"Sara knew about SCRAP; her sister was one of the founders," Fogerty-Gibson said. "And Lizzy saw a need for access to arts education and materials."

The organization has grown from providing collage-making workshops for children to needing a second location. In addition to the existing warehouse, the arts group will soon open a studio and art gallery at 449 Blair Blvd. The new building will house art education programs and the "Junk Art Gallery."

MECCA maintains its services through grants, volunteers and donations. A grant the group received in 2001 helped build the mosaic statue that stands at 4th Avenue and Blair Boulevard. Local crafters built the statue to symbolize the spirit of community in the Whiteaker area.

Fogerty-Gibson said the materials exchange focuses on community.

"Arts bridge a gap," she said. "When people get together and start creating things, they get inspired by each other's ideas. It's a place to form a bond. It gives people ownership of the community and a way of talking to each other that's nonverbal."

Fogerty-Gibson said the exchange also benefits the community as a source for low-cost art supplies. People who may not otherwise be able to afford to participate in art can get involved without draining their bank accounts.

University junior and MECCA intern Liz Edwards agreed. "I really want people, especially art students and people who are into crafts, to know about this place as a resource for



Jessica Waters Emerald

MECCA Executive Director Jennifer Fogerty-Gibson helps children make art projects out of recycled materials, which are available at the store.

buying art supplies so their first resource isn't Oregon Art Supply or the bookstore," Edwards said.

The warehouse is open Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wednesdays from noon to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Materials range in price from around 10 cents to a few dollars. People can also bring in donations for store credit. Fogerty-Gibson said those who plan to exchange items should call ahead to make sure the warehouse can use the articles.

Montana Rohrback has patronized MECCA since October, amassing CDs.

"I'm taking CDs and riveting them together to make a giant geodesic dome," Rohrback said. He is using the discs to fill in the panels that make up the dome, which he will use to reflect light for photography projects. He plans on taking the dome to the Burning Man celebration.

"Creativity gives me an outlet to relax and to release myself," Rohrback said.

Fogerty-Gibson credits people like Rohrback with making her job enjoyable.

"The energy of everyone's excitement makes this a nice place to work," she said. "People will come in, and their entire face lights up. That sounds cheesy, but it really happens. People get really excited about finding a new way to do something with ordinary materials."

Contact the Pulse reporter at helenschumacher@dailyemerald.com.

Improv earns local recognition

Comedy and improv organizations in Eugene are gaining acknowledgment and appeal, following successful shows like "Whose Line Is It Anyway?"

Ryan Bornheimer
Senior Pulse Reporter

Mention the word theater, and many people might imagine the well-rehearsed production of a carefully written play. However, the more adventurous theater-goer craving a truly spontaneous stage experience shouldn't lose heart. There's a growing scene in Eugene that's summed up in one very illustrative word — improv.

Improv exhibitions have become an increasingly popular and immediately recognizable form of entertainment all over the world, riding on the success of improvisational shows like "Whose Line is It Anyway?" Eugene is no exception, and improv shows playing across the city vary in length, style and content.

ComedySportz is a national comedy organization with per-

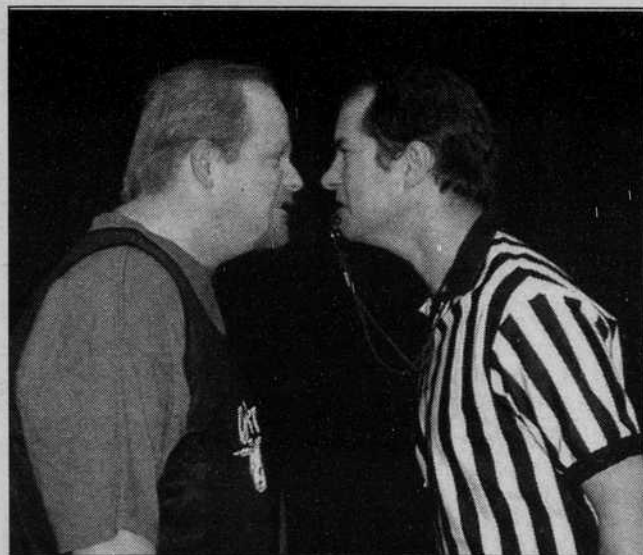
formances in Eugene. Kent McCarty and Rob Rock founded the local troupe in 1999 after meeting during a stint in Portland. The group jumped from venue to venue for the first few years and finally found a permanent home at 1030 Oak St., with performances every Saturday at 8 p.m.

ComedySportz, which is celebrating its national 20th anniversary, hosts competitive shows where comedy teams battle on stage for the most laughter. A referee stands in the wings ready to call "fouls" if the skit is running long or isn't funny.

It could be argued that ComedySportz gave birth to another high-profile improv troupe in Eugene — Absolute Improv. Founded by former San Jose ComedySportz performer Kevin Bradshaw seven years ago, this group, containing eight members, performs both short and long-form shows.

Absolute Improv manager Curtis Williams said the high-wire nature of improv is what makes the performances exciting for both the audience and the performers.

"In the short-form shows, there's a lot of audience interaction, and that just makes the show a lot of fun," Williams said.



Courtesy ComedySportz

The ComedySportz troupe is a national comedy organization, and just one of many improv groups performing around town.

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