

Gynecological art travels to Truman

BY KRISHA SHRESTHA
Staff Reporter

March is the month to celebrate girl power, women's empowerment, feminine mystique and feminism.

In 1987, March was officially declared women's history month as an expansion of Women's History Week, which started in 1978 in Sonoma County, Calif. This also coincides with International Women's Day on March 8.

Senior Angela Carter, president of the Women's Resource Center, said women often are left out of history.

"Most of the history books and most of the ways our culture and mini-cultures understand history [is through the] perspective of men," Carter said. "And in doing that you miss out on a lot of great, important accomplishments that women contribute to history and to society. So this month is just a time where the nation and society can reflect on what women have accomplished in their place and the significance in our culture."

She said Truman has more female students than male, so it is important to build awareness of women's history on campus. The WRC filled March with various events celebrating women.

One event was the Pap Art Exhibition sponsored by the Art Department. Curator Nancy Mizuno Elliot earned the Truman Curatorial Fellowship to bring art to Truman.

Aaron Fine, associate professor of art, said the fellowship is a two-year program that teaches students and faculty more about curatorial activities.

"While most of the curators were really qualified, most of them talked about what they would choose, but not why they would choose it," Fine said. "But she had a clear vision of what curating is to her and essentially a means of community building."

Elliot also had great authenticity, so she came out stronger than the other choices, Fine said. This was a great opportunity to learn about an art form outside the sphere of Truman, he said.

"I think it creates a different aesthetic than what we get in our art classes, and that was what we were trying to get out of it," Fine said. "Compared to average art exhibitions that we have in this area, or in Truman, it is more frank, sassy and informal. The show is very important, for it is about real issues like

health issues and is very universal."

Fine said his personal favorite is from artist Lisa Alembik. Alembik is drawing while she is pregnant, so the audience is exposed to the issues of women's reproductive health, Fine said.

Elliot said she named the exhibit Pap Art as a reference to the Pap test performed in gynecological examinations. Elliot said the inspiration came from her personal experience while visiting her gynecologist.

"My first exam [my doctor] asked me 'Do you want to see your cervix? It is a smiley face,'" Elliot said. "It had been very memorable, although not dramatic. [It] made me really comfortable with my body."

Elliot said she was familiar with Kirksville because she visited the University 10 years ago, so when she heard about the opportunity she became interested in developing a relationship with Truman. She felt comfortable bringing controversial art to the University because she knew she could relate to the students, Elliot said.

"Most of it is very humorous and is supposed to make this topic [of the] vagina very accessible, disarming and take away all the cult of culture baggage that we have about talking about it," Elliot said. "So we are using humor so as to make it very commonplace, especially around young people, because these are important issues."

Elliot said she tried to make the art straightforward but she was skeptical about censorship.

"Even though people say that [Northeast Missouri] is a more conservative area ... I remember being [at Truman] watching the students' version of 'The Vagina Monologues,'" Elliot said. "Eventually they started incorporating their own stories, and I thought that was brave. That was eye-opening to me."

It was a coincidence that the opening of her exhibition was during women's history month, but she said she agreed to work with the WRC when she heard about its plans to celebrate the month.

"We are thrilled [to be with the WRC]," Elliot said. "They are helping us publicize it and that is good. It helps to continue the longer discussion so I think that is cool."

The exhibition continues until April 16 at Ophelia Parrish.



Mayank Dhungana/Index

Watchmen | Although producers tried to keep to the original graphic novel, the movie seemed to alienate those who hadn't read it

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Owl is retired, getting fat and "hiding in plain sight," as Rorschach phrases it. Russia and the U.S. are on the brink of nuclear war, and the Doomsday Clock only is seconds away from midnight.

The opening credit sequence is deeply moving, mostly because Snyder allowed Bob Dylan to set the tone for the whole film while telling the story of the Minute-men in a brief, minimalist style. Dylan is all over "Watchmen," to profound effect.

Snyder did the Comedian justice, putting him in the movie at almost every instance he occurs in the novel because of his centrality to the plot and the importance of his character when it comes to understanding the text's ultimate message about human nature. Snyder also succeeded at making the movie as gory as the novel (possibly gorier).

I must admit, it is sweet to see these characters in motion and to hear them speaking. It is even sweeter for the songs referenced at the end of some chapters in the novel to appear in real-time, as background music or as rocking full frontal soundtrack.

However, the film falls

noticeably short of the depth and breadth that Moore's subtle, enlightening, one-of-a-kind text possesses. Snyder's movie has to explain things overtly that Moore left for the reader to infer. Despite this, it still leaves things unexplained, like how Rorschach's face changes and that the vigilantes do not have any super powers (Rorschach seemed to have super agility and Nite Owl seemed to have super strength) — only Dr. Manhattan does. Snyder had to alter dialogue, and henceforth character, in order to account for the condensation. He changed the ending in

order to update the film for an audience that lives in a world 24 years past the one inhabited by the original audience, for better and for worse. Dr. Manhattan's time on Mars, both going there (soundtrack is amazing) while telling his past and touring the planet with Silk Spectre II in the watch castle, is so weak compared to the novel that Snyder should've omitted it, which he basically did, gutting the dialogue and eliminating most of the journey across the Martian landscape.

There ain't nothin' like the real

thing, baby.

Snyder's film is true to the graphic novel in the aesthetic sense only — many stills and camera angles (eyeball angles?) from the book appear on screen, the characters look as they do in the book and the music is used to great effect. As far as everything else goes, even at almost three hours long (and, like "The Dark Knight," it doesn't feel like three hours if you are swept up by the ride), so much is changed and missing that the film only can be enjoyed by fans of the graphic novel who have read it and know it, so they can subconsciously fill in the gaps, while their friends who saw the preview last summer and thought, "Whoa," have to lean over and whisper inquiries throughout the film until they give up trying to put everything together.

If you haven't read "Watchmen," the movie leaves you with unanswered questions, characters that seem over-acted (they are comic book characters — they kind of have to be), little resolution and a plot that moves too fast to grasp, despite the grand visual and audio elements of the film.

If you are interested in "Watchmen," read the graphic novel, then see the movie. Who watches the "Watchmen?" Only fans prior to its cinematic release. To the rest, it's all a joke, and not a good one.

Drive-in | The closest drive-in is in Moberly, but Truman students can enjoy the SAB drive-in on May 2

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well-kept and clean in content.

"I remember when 'Finding Nemo' came out we had that as a big family night presentation," Iris said. "We gave away helium balloons. We had contests about fish. Out on the patio we had hula hoop competitions. We just had fun things for the children."

The Macon Drive-in could fit 350 cars with individual speakers, but it also had a radio station that patrons could tune in to that allowed for a bigger turnout.

She said that before they shut down, their business held its own, but like other drive-ins in the Midwest they had a number of things going against them including the limited season. Iris said most drive-ins are only open from May to September.

"We just did it because we liked it and it was a family-oriented thing," she said. "Did it make us millions? No. We had a lot of fun doing it, got a lot of satisfaction out of it and if it hadn't blown down we'd still be over there."

With the Macon Drive-in closed and the Moberly Five and Drive an hour away, the Student Activities Board tries to provide its own drive-in experience to Truman students. Senior Aaron Razavi is on the SAB

comedian and film committee and said they it has been doing the drive-in movies longer than anyone can remember but a couple of years ago they showed the movie inside.

"It's just easier to control your environment when you're inside," Razavi said. "It's easier to sit. You

have bleachers, you have air conditioning, no insects [and it's not] too hot."

The SAB goes through a Web site called Swank, a company based out of St. Louis that provides it the rights to newly released movies. Razavi said the SAB usually aims for a comedy and drama when making its selections. The next drive-in movie day is May 2.

"Right now we're going to show 'Role Models' and 'Gran Torino,' but 'Role Models' could be changed to 'Slumdog Millionaire' — we're looking at prices right now," Razavi said.

New releases are \$800 and others are \$400, Razavi said. New releases are movies that have not gone to DVD yet.

In previous semesters the attendance has been about 500 people, which Razavi said they hope to attain again this semester.

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Iris Arnold

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