

DAILY COLLEGIAN

Exhibit explores multiculturalism through art

By EMILY MARINO
Collegian Staff

Those of you who have decided to stick around for this long weekend made a wise decision, because you have the chance to become part of history Friday. Right here, on our very own UMass campus, Senior Mark Fox will present an unprecedented exhibit-in-motion as his Senior Thesis for his B.A. in African-American studies. Created to communicate the idea of multiculturalism, this unique exhibit, "Historical Disintegration: American Individualism and the Absence of Historical-Cultural Understanding" will evoke all senses and expose the viewer first-hand to the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of various cultures.

The exhibit will comprise of three artistic components: an ongoing jazz concert, the creation of a three-part totem pole of oil drums, and the preparation of ethnic cuisine. Combined, these three aspects are to present "a cutting edge, musical, visual, culinary vision of multiculturalism."

"The depth of the piece is not on the undergraduate level," asserts Fox. "I am the first one to attempt something like this, and pushing the idea of multiculturalism through art."

A talented musician and master of the tenor saxophone, Fox will be featured in the musical component of the exhibit playing his own compositions from the past five years. Fox will be accompanied by seven other musicians.

Ed Byrne, who played an instrumental role in arranging the pieces will play the trombone. Tony Vacca, has recently released an album on Columbia records and will play percussion. John Medeski of the Either Orchestra and the Mandala Octect will play the piano. Chris Dailey, a "local, very happening drummer who is recording an album with Marion Brown" will play the drums. Agnes Zsigmondi McCraven, a Hungarian Folk master and former UMass student will be a special guest artist and vocalist. David Arenius will be on the bass and Kevin Bryan will play trumpet.

The music played will be primarily jazz, with international pulls from African, Latino and Caribbean rhythms. Fox will not only play these pieces, but has been primarily responsible for composing and arranging them.

The artistic aspect of the exhibit entails the building of a three piece totem pole of sorts. Nelson Stevens, Edgar Sabogal, and Richard Heller will individually work on three separate oil drums. Approximately half-way through the exhibit, the three artists will combine the drums into one piece and paint it collectively.

The idea behind this piece according to Fox needs to be applied to society. "This is a statement in society about where things are going. This piece will model how we as a society in America need to start functioning collectively as opposed to individually."

The third component of Fox's exhibit is perhaps the most unique yet basic of the three; food. The preparation of Caribbean and Jewish cuisine will add yet a third dimension to Fox's presentation which will allow the exhibit-goer to smell and taste multiculturalism. In an attempt to include all facets of culture, experiencing this aspect of other lifestyles is an innovative concept for an art exhibit.

Eric Zelman will prepare traditional Jewish foods, while Vladimir and Victoria Morales will cook Caribbean cuisine.

The multi-faceted nature of this exhibit is sure to influence the viewer's idea of multiculturalism, and will no doubt expose the viewer to various aspects of the African-American, Jewish, and Latino cultures.

"My whole point is that this country is comprised of several individuals. My message concerns accepting who we are," Fox explained. "I think that this is now a homogeneous society, but one that is heterogeneous, with groups and individuals. We have to understand our own identity and accept that others identify with who they want to identify with. The statement in this piece is self-evident, we must work together."

Do not miss the chance to experience this unique and spiritual event. The exhibit begins at 8 p.m. in the Hampden Theatre. There is no charge.



JOSH REYNOLDS / COLLEGIAN

Mr. Fox and his Sax