

FEATURES

Outlaw country brings mullets and songs

Shelby Thompson
Features Reporter

His cowboy boots shone like beacons from his feet, reminding all that any man brave enough to tuck his pants into his outlandish black and white boots and stand up in front of people deserves the title of outlaw.

Hey, I guess a man once on death row can wear about anything he wants. He also had a large goatee, but his stood out due to the seven or eight braids adorned with beads that hung from it triumphantly.

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I see mullets to the left of me and bikers to the right. I stand stuck in the middle, a little bit afraid. I arrived at the Orange Peel in downtown Asheville on Feb. 29. An eclectic mix of patrons and fans filled up the room waiting to see David Alan Coe.

The opening band, The Unholy Trio, had already left the stage, and I had joined the crowd to throw back a few cold ones.

I snaked my way through the crowd past men with mullets shouting "Howdy Darn!" to me and made my way to the bar. The bartender handed me my cold beer, and I tipped my cowboy hat to him in thanks. As I turned to face the stage, I surveyed the crowd.

The rednecks had come crawling out of the woodwork to see this aging outlaw and his band of ragtag musicians, The Tennessee Hat Band. The band looked like they stepped right out of a Ted Nugent video from 1983.

The bass player sported a black David Allan Coe T-shirt with the sleeves cut off (of course), a very large salt and pepper goatee, and a matching mullet that reached the small of his back.

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sang snippets of such songs as, "You Never Even Called Me by My Name," and "Willie, Waylon, and Me."

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David Alan Coe entertained a rowdy crowd at the Orange Peel by singing country favorites.

in the air, toasting Coe and answering each question in the lines of the chorus, "Why do you drink? (To get drunk). Why do you smoke? (To get high) Why must you live out the songs that you wrote? (To get laid)."

The most interesting song he sang occurred near the beginning of the show. A bizarre rendition of Betty Midler's "The Wind Beneath My Wings" snapped me out of my drunken state. Yeah, you read that

right, one of the most notorious country music outlaws sang the theme song from "Beaches."

When he first arrived on the Nashville music scene, people told him that his songs were "too country" to be played on the radio. Eat your heart out Nashville deejays.

Then, he started singing Kid Rock. Not only that, but the majority of the crowd knew the words to these songs too.

During these covers I kept myself

busy drinking too much and talking to select UNCA students and faculty that I recognized in the sea of embroidered jean jackets and cheap women.

Now, don't get me wrong, not all the women looked cheap and not all the men looked like rednecks. In a crowd like his, however, those others became increasingly more difficult to spot.

It felt like the entire crowd had stepped back in time to 1978.

Abstract art show open to interpretation

Caroline Soesbee
Features Reporter

What would you get if you mixed artists Jackson Pollock, Wassily Kandinsky, H.R. Giger, and M.C. Escher together?

You might have senior Michael Freeman, who is completing his B.F.A. in art with an emphasis in painting.

An exhibit of Freeman's paintings entitled "Golden Mean" appeared in the University Gallery through Feb. 4.

Each painting represents something different, but they all have a common theme, darkness.

"I did that because I wanted them to have a darker mood about them," said Freeman.

"I was trying to express my internal angst in these paintings and bring those feelings out when I composed."

The paintings do have color, but the majority of them are cool and muted.

"I didn't want extravagant color used in these. I wanted the paintings to be almost monochromatic," said Freeman.

"I felt that with subtle color you look more at the composition and still have the viewer interested in it."

When one views Freeman's works the artist's angst doesn't come through. Instead the textures, designs, shadow and light catch the viewer's attention.

Viewers can form their own opinion about what the picture represents. Freeman never makes it clear what exactly he intends to show.

In one of Freeman's more abstract works, "Leviathan," there appears to be a waterfall with dark water being illuminated by the light shining on it from the left hand side of the picture.

But then again, that might not be what a different viewer sees at all.

No matter what one sees in the paintings, Freeman, more than likely, didn't purposefully put it there.

"A lot of people were coming up to me and saying 'I see this and this,' and it's not really there," said Freeman.

"It's enjoyable to hear that because it means they are kind of participating in the paintings."

Most of the paintings, even though abstract, have something in them that the viewer can recognize.

Something in them seems familiar to the eye.

However, Freeman doesn't like pointing out the objects that are actually in the paintings.

"It kind of takes away from the viewer looking at it and seeing what they're feeling that particular day," said Freeman.

"I think it kind of brings you into the painting more when you say 'Hey, I recognize that shape,' and sometimes you see things I didn't add in there, but it adds to the conversation between the viewer and the painting."

Freeman built up layers in his paintings, creating fascinating textures.

Each painting has about 10 levels of oil paints. He uses both acrylic and oil paints.

"I basically paint something on the canvas to begin with, then work with things I see in there and add a second layer and remove paint and add paint."

"I just keep doing that until I come up with the finished product. I would usually work on them three at a time, then go through the series, then I would come back and work on them again."

"So I've probably worked on each of these four or five times in a round about way."

Italian people, culture shown in student exhibit

Rhiannon Richard
Features Reporter

A recent exhibit in Ramsey Library featured photos by Cassie Floan, a senior art major, taken while she spent a semester abroad in Italy.

"I got into photography when I got my father's camera," said Floan. "He passed away when I was a junior in high school, and I got his camera and just started messing around with it."

Floan spent the spring 2002 semester in Italy and took pictures using three unique cameras. She had one modern camera, which she felt captured the sharpest of the images. She also had two older cameras, one from the 1950s and the other manufactured in 1916.

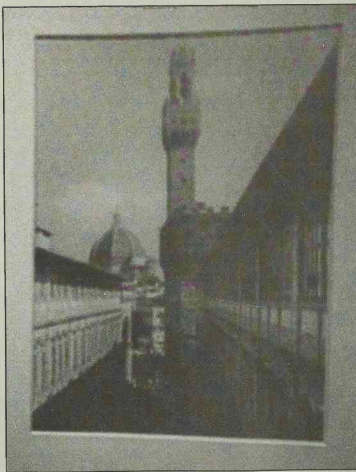
"As part of my studies I worked with a variety of camera bodies," wrote Floan in a statement accompanying her photographs. "By using only three cameras, I was able to experiment with the subtle and dramatic differences of each and to discover which captured the atmosphere of each shot with the most genuine character."

The 1950s camera produces a square image, while the 1916 camera produces a rectangular image with frequently blurred edges. Instead of holding the oldest camera up to the eye the photographer holds it away, usually near the chest.

Floan's pictures captured both human interaction and landscapes in Italy.

Floan took care to make sure she used the best camera for the picture, though she did sometimes have to use what she had readily available.

"I didn't have all three cameras



Floan spent spring semester 2002 taking photographs in Italy.

the whole time I was there," said Floan. "Two of them I borrowed from my professor while I was over there. So that kind of dictated what kind of camera I used. But once I got a feel for which cameras had which qualities I was a little bit more conscious about how I photographed."

As students passed by on the exhibit in Ramsey Library many took a minute to examine the photo-

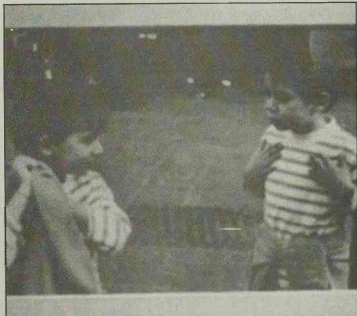
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graphs, as well as the cameras that Floan used.

"I really liked the fact that all of her pictures don't look like they came straight from postcards," said Steven Rash, an undeclared sophomore.

"She really kind of went out on a limb and took some freaky shots. She was able to really convey her experience in Italy to me."

Steven Rash, undeclared sophomore



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CASSIE FLOAN

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of one student. "It has this really old fashioned appeal," said Caroline Spaulding, an undeclared sophomore. "Kind of like catching a single frame of complete innocence that is missing now."

The use of different cameras interested many students. All the pictures, no matter what camera Floan used, had a classic feel.

"I think it was really cool that she was able to use all those different kinds of cameras and still come out

with all these impressive results," said Floan.

"All the pictures look like they came from really professional and modern cameras."

Floan found her experience in Italy enriching.

Aside from the photography, she took weekend trips to different cities and enjoyed the Italian lifestyle. Though she borrowed two of the cameras for the trip, she has since acquired her own antique camera. The same as the 1916 model she used in Italy.