

Toulouse-Lautrec's posters immortalize the Moulin Rouge

Jason Chick
Reporter

In Paris during the 1880s, the Moulin Rouge was an eccentric nightclub where artists and students could admire risqué dancers, consume alcohol and meet women.

Artist Henri Toulouse-Lautrec was one of these frequent visitors to the Moulin Rouge.

With his sketchbook and crayons, he would capture the wild movements and vivid colors of the dancers and their surroundings.

A collection of Lautrec's lithographs, titled "Master of the Moulin Rouge," is on display at the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh.

The museum's exhibit takes the visitor on a winding tour of Lautrec's artistic life. Each open room houses a different time period in Lautrec's career.

Picture labels, black and white photos and posted historical references help connect Lautrec to his work.

Along with the Moulin Rouge lithographs are other lithos and posters from Lautrec's life in Paris. One piece displays the three-step lithograph process, bringing to life Lautrec's work.

Lautrec's largest lithograph is the Moulin Rouge poster (at right).

At 6 feet tall, the 1891 poster features cancan dancer "La Goulue" (The Glutton).

It was Lautrec's belief that the energetic movement of the dancer in the act of a high-kicking dance step exhibited the spirit of the establishment.

Some of the paper is left unprinted to form the ruffles of the dancer's petticoat. A silhouette of her partner, Valentin the Boneless, appears in the foreground.

Lithography is a technique that produces multiple originals. The artist draws the outlines of the composition onto a flat stone slab with a grease crayon. Areas of color can be filled in with an oily liquid.

The design is chemically affixed to the stone and water is brushed into the bare areas. Ink is rolled onto the stone adhering only to the oily areas.

Finally, sheets of paper are pressed onto the stone and removed for the final piece. The process is repeated for each copy.

Lautrec was a spectacle, reflecting the quality of his work. He was born to the aristocratic Counts of Toulouse and suffered from a physical illness that left him with short stature and limited mobility.

He wore checkered trousers, visited masquerade balls and was often seen in the presence of his tall cousin. At his death in 1901 at 36,

Lautrec had completed more than 1,000 works of art.

The state museum is displaying the current collection to observe the centennial of the artist's death. The pieces are on loan from the Collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art.

The last night of the exhibit is on Feb. 17, for which the museum will remain open until midnight. Two versions of the film "Moulin Rouge" will alternate through the day, starting with the 1952 biopic by John Huston that stars José Ferrer as Toulouse-Lautrec. The film also features Zsa Zsa Gabor.

Also being shown is Baz Luhrmann's 2001 musical representation, starring Nicole Kidman and Ewan MacGregor. This version will be shown at 7 p.m. and midnight, and also features John Leguizamo as Toulouse-Lautrec. Admission to the films is free; however, seating is limited.

Upcoming collections visiting the North Carolina Museum of Art include "Selections from the Birds of America" by James Audubon, July 14-Dec. 1, and "Art in the Age of Rembrandt," Oct. 13-Dec. 29.

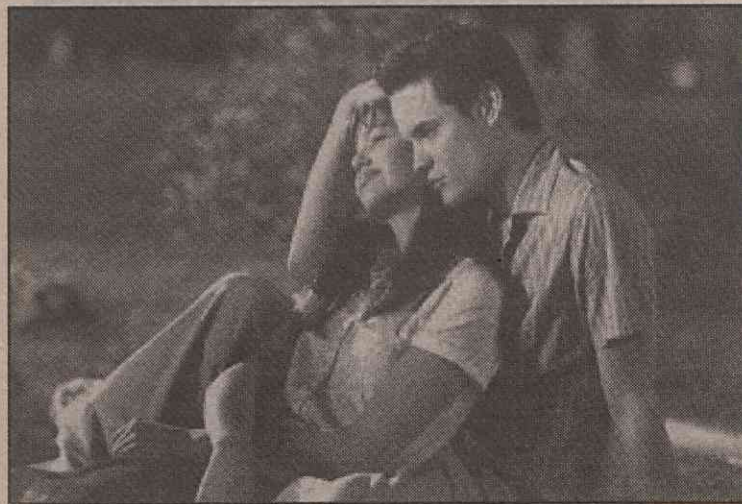
Admission to the museum is free and admission to special exhibits is \$7.50 for adults and \$5.50 for students. Tickets can be purchased at the door or from ticketmaster.com.



Can you do the cancan?

Toulouse-Lautrec's daring lithographs exposed Paris nightlife in the 1890s and marked a newfound freedom of expression.

'A Walk to Remember' strays from book; Moore sings on big screen



Warner Bros./KRT

Mandy Moore plays the not-so-ordinary girl-next-door and Shane West's love interest in "A Walk to Remember," a film based on the novel by bestselling author Nicholas Sparks.

Andi Petrini
Reporter

"A Walk to Remember," starring Mandy Moore and Shane West, is a sentimental journey through a year in the lives of two 17-year-olds from Beaufort, N. C. The movie is based on the novel of the same name by bestselling author Nicholas Sparks.

Jamie Sullivan (Moore) is a preacher's daughter, quiet, religious and giving. Landon Carter (West) is one of the town's "bad" boys, and he never dreamed of falling for Jamie.

However, fate intervenes, as it often does in movies. "A Walk to

Remember" is a love story with an unforgettable twist, and even moviegoers who are familiar with the book's ending will wipe away a few tears.

Moore is surprisingly good in the role, although a lesser-known actress could have made the character of Jamie Sullivan more believable.

Aside from his good looks, West displays true talent in the role of a conflicted young man.

Fans of Sparks' book will be surprised at how far the movie strays from the novel's plot. Even major events were changed to relate to a younger audience.

The book was set in 1958, while

the movie is set during the current decade.

The Christmas play that is performed in the book is changed to a play about a bar singer in the movie, allowing Moore to sing for more than three minutes.

Even Landon's father's occupation is changed from a legislator to a doctor.

"A Walk to Remember" is an entertaining movie, despite the fact that it doesn't draw from the book as much as a Sparks fan would want it to.

Although it is romantic, the touching film may be more appropriately deemed a "chick flick" rather than a great date movie.