

THERE'S MORE

Critical Angle
San Francisco's club scene is heating up this week, thanks to the Gavin Convention. [CUE-2]



SUSAN YOUNG

CBS' commentary on Olympics is dull

All I ask of a TV commentator is to just give me a piece of information I don't already possess and to let me know exactly what I'm watching on the tube so I don't feel completely like a Californian at a snowplow convention. Is that too much to ask?

Apparently so for most of CBS' sports commentary on the Olympic Winter Games in Lillehammer. Unlike the opening ceremonies commentary, which was awful, there's nothing horrible about the coverage. Just nothing to recommend.

Although Greg Gumbel has lost his silly giddiness from the Opening Ceremonies and has settled into his role as sports anchor, it's all so neatly packaged that it's hard to differentiate one broadcast team from the other.

When a real nugget is dispensed, it's almost a thrill in itself. After watching German pairs skater Many Woetzel bite the ice in a heart-stopping

spill, commentator and former Olympic skater Scott Hamilton slipped in the fact that Woetzel had given her partner a concussion three times during their time together. That's exactly the kind of anecdote I want to hear, but it doesn't come up often enough.

Viewers too often get the same old stories. Yes, we all know about the love affair between American skaters Jenni Meno and Todd Sand and how Pecabo Street got her name. How about just a few tidbits about some other competitors?

It's the events themselves that viewers tune in for, but along the way it's nice to get some information.

Unlike previous analysts who discussed the technical merit of the lifts and jumps during the performance, Hamilton's style during the pairs skating competition Tuesday was to make only sparse comments, leaving the analysis for later.

He gushed over the Russians and Canadians even before they took to the ice. After the Canadian team of Isabelle Brasseur and Lloyd Eisler performed, he said their performance was the kind skaters dream of. The lifts were difficult and well done. Yet the numbers from the judges didn't reflect his praise. Hamilton's only comment was that the team skates too slow, but he didn't explain why this would count against them.

At the end of the competition, Ekaterina Gordeeva and Sergei Grinkov took the gold away from fellow Russians Natalia Mishkutienok and Artur Dmitriev. Hamilton did a good job when he explained that the judges chose "perfection over passion." By using slow-motion replay from both performances he was able to show that the difference between the silver and gold medal winners was more technical than artistic.

Sometimes, it is the athletes themselves who do the best analysis of their own performance. Dianne Roffe-Steinrotter described her winning super G gold-winning performance with style. She relived her emotional tension at the gate and the technical performance in every twist and turn down the slope with the clarity that no other commentator could match.

All viewers want is an insight into a winning performance and a peek at the personal lives of these athletes.

Bowing out
Channel 7 reporter Carol Ivy says a noisy mobile van and too many people talking to her during a telephone interview made for a miscommunication about her contract negotiations.

When she returned a phone call, Ivy says she meant to say that she had instigated the early release from her contract, not the station.

News director Milt Weiss said Wednesday Ivy had approached him last week about being let out of her contract early because of personal reasons. The contract is up in May. She has been with KGO 18 years.

Attorneys for Ivy and the station are ironing out an agreement.

On the AIR



Gumbel

ENTERTAINMENT/WHAT'S DOING IN THE BAY AREA

ART



JAY SOLMONSON PHOTOS — Staff

Artist David Maxim stands in front of his work, "The Radius of Earth," on display at UC Berkeley Museums at Blackhawk.

MAXIMS on Canvas

DAVID MAXIM'S ABSTRACTS ARE PICTORIAL COMMENTS ON PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES

By Jolene Thym
STAFF WRITER

At first glance, the massive, paint-splattered constructions by David Maxim look like a pile of giant chicken bones dipped in paint.

Layer upon layer of color drips down the 10-by-15-foot canvases, coating hunks of netting, dangling ropes, wheels and 12-foot-long clubs made of wood and burlap.

"I realize that my work looks a lot like an order of giants came by and left this fragment of machinery," Maxim said with a smile. "but I hope most people will get past the Keystone Cops humor of the work."

As he explains in text panels that accompany his works, Maxim's abstract expressions are pictorial comments on serious philosophical issues.

"My work is about theatrics. It's

about power, sexuality, philosophy, the passage of time, the theory of relativity. It's about the cosmos. It's about people," he said, pausing in front of his piece, "Speed of Time," at the UC Berkeley Museums at Blackhawk.

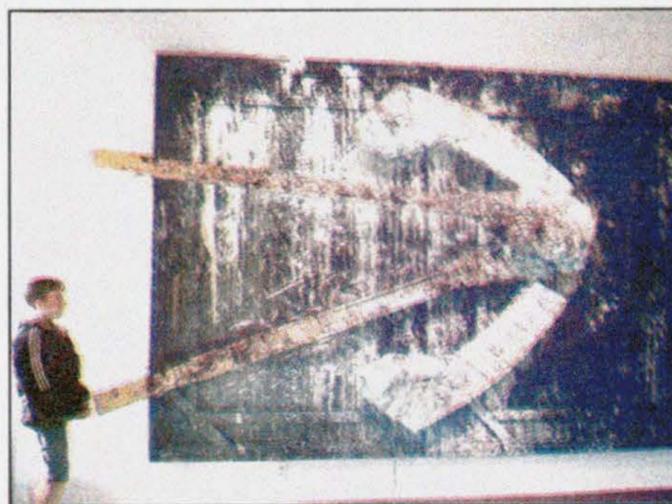
Maxim's paintings have been well received by galleries in New York and Germany. But this exhibit, "David Maxim: Painted Philosophy," which will be at the museum through May 15, is his first solo show.

Maxim began painting more than 20 years ago in the tradition of Jasper Johns, Julian Schnabel and Jackson Pollock. His work is now in the permanent collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Museum for Modern Art in Frankfurt, Germany.

Working in a large warehouse in San Francisco's Mission district, Maxim spends at least three weeks on a single painting.

Armed with canvas, wood, half-mile spools of rope, piles of burlap

Please see Maxim, CUE-5



Shawn Brush, 12, studies "Determinism," by Maxim.

Music

Ancient Future blends sounds, styles from around the world

By Dave Becker
STAFF WRITER

WHEN Matthew Montfort and his friends started performing under the moniker Ancient Future 15 years ago, there was no such thing as "world music."

The average record store had a few dusty LPs of international folk music on the most remote shelf, but it was still years before Paul Simon's "Graceland" encouraged an ever-growing stream of artists to freely blend styles from across the globe.

Montfort, who performs with the latest version of Ancient Future on Friday in Berkeley and Saturday in Danville, said he didn't have any grand cross-cultural crusade in mind when he started the group. He just wanted to utilize the music that had fascinated him for years.

"It was tough at first to explain to people what we wanted to do," says the guitarist. "We coined the term 'world fusion' because it seemed to sum up what we were doing. Basically, the overall theme is to blend styles from around the world with jazz and pop themes."

The group's name is a reflection of that goal, Montfort adds.

"It refers to the idea that we're taking elements from ancient cultures and putting them together in new ways," he says.

At first, Montfort's interests centered on Indian classical music. A student of jazz and classical music, Montfort's sensibilities underwent a drastic change when a friend convinced him to take a few classes at the Ali Akbar College of

Music in San Rafael, the city where he eventually settled. The Colorado native was instantly hooked on the exotic instruments and rhythms of Indian classical music, and he has been a global explorer (and San Rafael resident) ever since.

After a few years and a couple of albums, Montfort's interests shifted to Balinese gamelan music. Lately, he's been fascinated by Asian music. The exotic sounds of the Chinese *gu zheng* and

Please see Ancient, CUE-5



Ancient Future members are, from left, Matthew Montfort, Jim Hurley, Doug McKeehan and Ian Dogole.

TICKETS

- Ancient Future
- 8:30 p.m. Friday
- Freight & Salvage Coffee House, 1111 Addison St., Berkeley
- \$9.50 in advance, \$10.50 at the door
- 548-1761
- 8 p.m. Saturday
- Village Theater, 233 Front St., Danville
- \$10 and \$12
- 620-6337

TELEVISION

Anchor Diane Sawyer decides to continue with ABC news

ASSOCIATED PRESS

AFTER weeks of avid courting from rival television networks, ABC news anchor Diane Sawyer has decided to stay put.

Terms of Sawyer's new multi-year contract were not disclosed by the network Wednesday but, by some estimates, her salary will rise to between \$5 million and \$6 million per year. She reportedly had been earning nearly \$3 million per year under the five-year contract that would have run out this month.

Sawyer will continue on ABC's "PrimeTime Live," the magazine show she has co-anchored with Sam Donaldson since its premiere in August 1989.

But she also will share anchor duties with Barbara Walters and Peter Jennings

on "Turning Point," a magazine show that begins next month, the network said.

In addition, Sawyer will be involved with yet another magazine show, the year-old "Day One," currently anchored by Forrest Sawyer.

The big news was not that Sawyer would stay at ABC, but that she had turned down lucrative and imaginative offers from suitors that included NBC, CBS and Fox Broadcasting Co.

Reportedly, NBC had wanted her to anchor a five-nights-a-week prime-time newsmagazine. CBS President Howard Stringer was said to envision a nightly half-hour news and analysis program for Sawyer.

And Fox would have starred Sawyer in a Sunday newsmagazine.

EVENTS

Ticket prices drop, sales lag for 'Jackson Family Honors'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PRICES on some tickets for Saturday night's "Jackson Family Honors" show in Las Vegas have been reduced because of lagging sales, a show spokesman said.

Tickets that were originally \$200 and \$350 have been reduced to \$150, \$100 and \$50. Anyone who has paid the higher price may receive a partial refund through Ticketmaster.

John George, a spokesman for Jackson Communications Inc., said tickets originally priced at \$150 and less have sold out. He said show officials anticipated the mid-level tickets would be hardest to move.

The show is scheduled Saturday night in the 15,200-seat arena at the MGM Grand Hotel here.

VIP packages remain available for \$1,000, which includes a room at the hotel and post-concert party. A \$500 ticket includes a preconcert cocktail party.

George admitted "people are skeptical" about Michael Jackson's involvement in the show.

Michael Jackson is currently not scheduled to perform a solo number but will sing with family members and will present special awards to actress Elizabeth Taylor and Motown records founder Berry Gordy.

The event will air live on television in 28 countries and in an edited form at 9 p.m. Tuesday on channels 3 and 4.

All the Jacksons are expected to appear except for La Toya Jackson, who is estranged from the family.

The \$1,000 and \$500 seats will benefit several charities, including earthquake relief funds in Los Angeles.



Jackson

Ancient: Music from around the world

Continued from CUE-1

Vietnamese *dan bao* are at the heart of the group's latest album, "Asian Fusion" (Narada), and its current concerts.

"There's a heavy Asian element now, but I'm sure we'll be going in different directions in the future," the performer says. "It looks like there'll be some significant Middle Eastern influence and a more obvious rock component on the next album."

All that musical traveling has meant a lot of practicing for Montfort, who has branched out from the guitar to tackle a global array of stringed instruments.

"I've spent an awful lot of time learning new instruments, but I've enjoyed it tremendously," he says. "Besides, it's not as hard as it **might** sound. There are certain

kinds of music that are so complex and rhythmically challenging that if you can play that, you can do just about anything. Indian music is one of those, so I started out with a great foundation."

The ever-shifting focus of Ancient Future has also meant steady changes in personnel. The current line-up includes Doug McKeehan on keyboards, Jim Hurley on violin and Ian Dogole on percussion. Montfort is the only original member still with the group, something he doesn't regret.

"I used to feel a need to keep the group as stable as I could, but at this point, I feel change is a positive thing," Montfort says. "We all learn from each other, and the new people bring in fresh ideas and perspectives. It keeps it

from getting stale."

Montfort adds that he's familiar with the charges of "musical tourism" and "cultural imperialism" purists have leveled at his kind of cross-cultural experimentation. He remains unswayed.

"What I believe is that it's one world," he says. "Western culture is permeating all over, so I think it's good for a little non-Western culture to permeate into this country.

"Overall, I don't feel that anything I'm doing goes against the idea of preserving the musical traditions of these cultures. I think those traditions are important and should be looked after. At the same time, music has to relate to what's happening in its times. There's room for both."