

# Thirty years in creation: An artist's first, full-scale survey of work

To tell the story of Michael Sarich, one only has to look at his art. And as your eyes bounce from one symbol to another and are treated to the bright colors of a Skittles-like rainbow, you might ask, "What does it all mean and how does this relate to the artist?"

Just as those colors and symbols evoke question and thought, you are witness to the artist's goal.

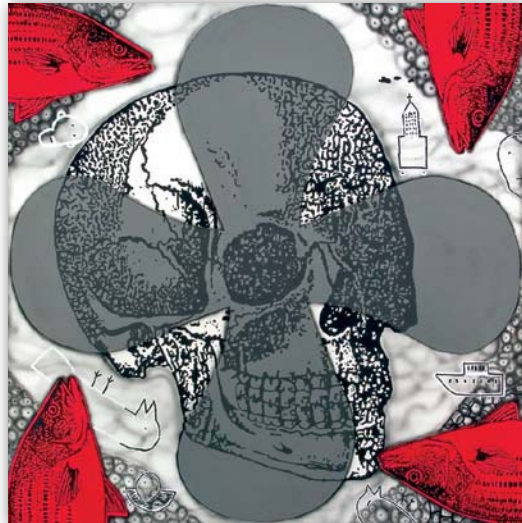
"It is very important for the viewer to bring their sensibilities to the table and have a dialogue with the piece without being steered," the 52-year-old artist and native Chicogan said.

Sarich came to Reno in 1989, and now works as an associate professor of art at the University. He teaches drawing, painting and ceramic sculpture, and is one of the most prolific artists working in northern Nevada today.

It is hard to encapsulate an artist's work and passion in one exhibition, but the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno undertook the task and presented "Like, Love, Lust: Michael Sarich," earlier this year. More than 100 pieces spanning 30 years of work and expression were on exhibit, even a re-creation of Sarich's Church Fine Arts Building office. Nearly 1,200 people attended the exhibit's January premiere, including Sarich's wife, Valerie; 19-year-old stepson Jack; other family members; and a host of art department colleagues, students, his friends and art enthusiasts.

Sarich was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease nearly eight years ago. Friends and critics tell him he's doing the best work he's ever done.

Much of the imagery in Sarich's work involves religious iconography, double meaning and metaphor. His iconography and practice of mark-making is complex and has evolved from deeply personal to the broadly social.



*Grey Prop, 2005, acrylic on canvas. Collection of Karen and Brett Coleman.*

In the beginning, Sarich describes his work as "straight from the heart ... the heart and groin. There was real angst," he said. "It was real aggressive, I wasn't filtering it or hiding anything, I was just putting it out there."

Recurring images in Sarich's work include a beach ball, skulls, Mickey Mouse, the Virgin Mary, fish, the Wal-Mart smiley face, seductive and horned devil women,



*Kick, 2004, ceramic.*

*Private Collection. © Michael Sarich*

Darwin's bird, churches, and much more.

"I love making marks," Sarich said. "It got a hold of me at a young age and I've never stopped. I still have a long way to go."

"I think too many people go into a museum, they go and read about the work instead of looking at the work. They should see what they think about it, then go read about it. They short-change themselves and that kind of disturbs me."

Sarich's most recent pieces feature a propeller.

"It's my central focus right now—kind of my icon—everything revolves around that," Sarich said. "I like the word prop as in proposition, to propel, to perpetuate, theatrical props, so I like the language of the word and I think the word has an open-ended meaning."

The museum published a full-color catalog to accompany the exhibition. The publication features essays by NMA curator Anne Wolfe, art critic Kirk Robertson and Robert Sill, assistant director of art at the Illinois State Museum. Copies are available for \$50 at the museum's store.

Wolfe says, "There are no answers to his paintings; there is no single meaning. You bring to it what you want."

Sarich hopes publication of the book will help him take the exhibit on the road.

"I'm just really grateful I have friends and people that I have affected and have the exchange with," he said. "It's lasted through many years and that really touched me."

For now, Sarich just wants to work. He's had time to absorb the publicity and digest the craziness of planning his exhibit, but it's the classroom and the studio he likes best. For information on the recent exhibit or the catalog, call (775) 329-3333 or visit the museum Web site at [www.nevadaart.org](http://www.nevadaart.org). To view more of Michael Sarich's art, visit <http://www.unr.edu/art>.

—Natalie Savidge

#### LOOK ONLINE

For another story about Michael Sarich and his devoted students, visit <http://www.unr.edu/nevadasilverandblue>

# Ceppos, Mosier excited to lead colleges

## DEAN JERRY CEPPOS

Jerry Ceppos, a former newspaper industry executive and adjunct professor at San Jose State University, will hold the Fred W. Smith Chair in Critical Thinking and Ethical Practices established by the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation in late 2007 and is the new dean of the University's Donald Reynolds School of Journalism and Fred Smith Chair. He began work Feb. 4.

"Jerry possesses experience, vision, commitment to diversity, credibility, and has great name recognition among the country's leading journalists," says President Milt Glick. "His leadership qualities match the spirit of achievement of the journalism school's faculty, students and staff. He will be a major influence in the school's pursuit of excellence in new media, journalism and public communications."

Ceppos was formerly vice president for news at Knight Ridder, then the nation's second-largest newspaper company. He was responsible for the company's Washington and foreign bureaus, administered its news service with hundreds of clients worldwide, identified and recruited top editors and increased newsroom diversity.

Ceppos served as executive editor and senior vice president of the *San Jose Mercury News*, leading a 350-member staff during the paper's climb in rankings of the top 10



Jerry Ceppos



Greg Mosier

newspapers in the country and securing its position as "the newspaper of the Silicon Valley."

During his employment, staff diversity grew from nine percent to more than 30 percent, among the highest in the nation.

## DEAN GREG MOSIER

New College of Business Dean Greg Mosier is excited about what the future holds for the region, the University and the business community. He sees the college developing into the Western Region's leader for academic research and economic development.

"To get to the next level, this college must claim a prominent role in the Western Region," says Mosier, who began leading the college in August. "Our sphere of influence

is large; it does not stop 12 miles west of Reno (at the California border). It extends throughout Nevada, California, southern Oregon and beyond."

Mosier has spent several months engaging alumni and stakeholders in conversations about their vision for the college. He added, "I want to understand what faculty, staff and students want, what local businesses want and what alumni want for the college. We will then develop initiatives that help the college advance."

The college is clearly on the right track. A new interdisciplinary

minor in entrepreneurship will be offered in fall 2008. Students can now participate in a business student council. The part-time master of business administration degree program is ranked 17th in the United States by *Business Week* magazine. The Small Business Development Center and the college's Center for Regional Studies recently won first place in the Community Development category at the University Economic Development Association's annual summit in Portland, Oregon.

The college is enhancing its activities related to the global economy and entrepreneurship as well as developing initiatives that address sustainability and the environment.

—Jill Stockon

## Psychology exhibit poses question: 'What does it mean to see?'

The University's psychology department has opened an interactive, multimedia exhibit, "Perceptual Relativity," at the Fleischmann Planetarium and Science Center to explore the processes of perception through visual illusions. The exhibit of images that distort our perceptions in remarkable ways is an installation in the planetarium throughout 2008, enhanced with several changing displays and new content during the year.

Visitors can explore dozens of illusions where stationary figures appear to move, lines and colors are warped by their surroundings, and entirely new perceptions emerge simply by turning the picture. These illusions are not only surprising and entertaining, but provide scientists a powerful window into the workings of the human mind.

"Many people take perception for granted," said Mike Webster, foundation professor of psychology and project director. "In reality, there is enormous complexity in how the eye sees an image and

translates or perceives it."

Perception is one of the core areas in psychology. "Psychology researchers want to understand how we think and behave, and how these processes are built in the brain—one of the most important frontiers in modern science," Webster says. "The study of vision and perception is being approached from many different disciplines because it is seen as an important key to understanding brain function."

Contributors to the exhibit include Mike Crognale, Jeff Hutsler and Mark Wessinger, all psychology faculty members and graduate students in the department's cognitive and brain sciences program.

Exhibit sponsors are the Optical Society of America Foundation, the University's College of Liberal Arts and the psychology department.

—Zanny Marsh

# Pedal heat from 'Bicycle Boiler' wins engineering students championship

Four University engineering students created a human-powered water still called the "Bicycle Boiler," and then they rode it last fall to the international championship of a student design competition in Seattle.

Ian Chase, Nathan LaBrosse, Karl Schulz and Scott Waters, all Nevada undergraduates, worked together as members of the campus chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers to take first place in the organization's 2007 Student Design Competition finals.

"The competition was partially based around solving one of the big problems introduced by Hurricane Katrina," Waters said. "There was water everywhere, but nearly all of it was polluted and not fit to drink. So ASME decided to create a design competition with the primary goal to boil water using only human power, essentially making it safe to drink no matter what kind of pollutants were in there."

In New Orleans, the city water system was inoperative and the water that surrounded people was either brackish or filled with both biological and chemical pollutants. According to the mechanical engineering society, one of the ways of purifying some water would have been to distill it. However, electrical power was not available, solar energy was limited or not available, and filter systems, which could have been used, might not have removed all of the pollutants.

The competition creators decided a possible solution would be to make use of a human-powered still. The device could provide at least limited amounts of purified water for drinking in an emergency situation. Students were challenged to design and build a device that would heat water to boiling and then condense the generated steam to get potable water. The requirements included having all significant energy input come from a linkage or mechanism driven by human effort, the device had to be small enough to be easily stored or transported for emergency use and it had to be easily assembled from its stored configuration.



Photo courtesy of mechanical engineering students

*Engineering students Ian Chase, Nathan LaBrosse, Karl Schulz and Scott Waters, take top honors with 'Bicycle Boiler' at the American Society of Mechanical Engineers' 2007 Student Design Competition finals in Seattle, Wash.*

"We decided very last minute to enter into the competition so we only had about two weeks to come up with our first design last spring," Waters said. "To generate the heat needed to boil water we chose to use friction instead of generating electricity.

"The main power plant of our design is a modified bicycle "fluid trainer," which is basically a stationary bike roller for use indoors. It uses a spinning disc in oil to generate resistance, and most of the pedaling work goes straight to heat. We quickly discovered it had no problem getting to 300°F in a few minutes of pedaling. One cool thing about this design is that if someone has an existing bicycle, the whole project would be very portable and would only weigh about 30 pounds."

After winning at the North-American Pacific District competition in April 2007, the team made a few modifications to the device. They added a second boiling chamber connected to a vacuum hand pump. Waters explained that when the

steam comes out of the first chamber it heats the secondary chamber, and because it is on a vacuum it boils at around 130°F instead of 212°F.

Twelve schools representing ASME districts in the United States, South America and Asia participated in the event. The hour-long, head-to-head competition began with students charging their devices with "polluted" water, which was dyed with food coloring. Then the pedaling began.

Kwang Kim, chairman of the University mechanical engineering department, believes team members have a great future in mechanical engineering.

"Winning this national engineering design competition confirms the quality of the mechanical engineering program at the University of Nevada, Reno," Kim said.

—Sue Putnam

#### LOOK ONLINE

For more photos, visit <http://www.unr.edu/nevadasilverandblue>

# Here's a cup of java to save the world

It all started because Manoranjan Misra loves coffee.

Whenever you see Misra, one of the University's finest researchers, walking on campus, he inevitably will have a cup of coffee in his hand.

One morning, at home, Misra made a discovery—one that could have profound implications for the development of a more environmentally friendly form of biodiesel.

"I had left my coffee out one night, and the next morning, I noticed that there was a kind of oil around the edge of the cup," he said. "Every cup of coffee has it. I decided to do some tests on the oil."

He discovered that the triglyceride-rich oil could be easily converted to biodiesel.

"The oil still smells like coffee," he said. "It doesn't change a lot during the process."

Since that morning, Misra, a professor of chemical and metallurgical engineering, has developed a novel process—believed to be the first of its kind in the country—that extracts high-quality biodiesel from spent coffee grounds.

What sets his work apart from other biodiesel efforts is the high quality of the oil extracted from the grounds. The process also utilizes an inexpensive waste product, reducing overall cost.

"We have found that biodiesel created from spent coffee grounds is stable over a longer period of time than other forms of biodiesel that have been created from feed stocks such as soy and corn," Misra said. "Biodiesel from spent coffee grounds is a low-cost 'green' form of fuel that shows a significant reduction of carbon dioxide emission. It's an excellent source for biodiesel."

Misra's patented process involves two simple steps: the extraction of oil from the spent coffee grounds, and then the conversion of the oil to biodiesel.

The oil is a triglyceride, which is the chemical form in which most fat exists in food. It easily lends itself to biodiesel conversion, and serves as an agent to reduce carbon dioxide emissions when burned as fuel.

Worldwide, the potential for the new "coffee" biodiesel is great, Misra said. He noted that about 15 billion pounds of coffee is consumed in the world; of this, the new technology could potentially produce more than 200 million gallons of biodiesel.

—John Trent '85/'87, '00M.A.



## Faces on the Quad

### ANDREA SITTON

Sitton, a forward on the Wolf Pack women's basketball team, was one of 30 Lowe's Senior CLASS national award candidates this



season for her four-year commitment as a model student-athlete. The Brush Prairie, Wash., student is an elementary education major. She has played in 98 games for Nevada through March 7, and received Academic All-Western Athletic Conference honors her first three years on the team. Sitton has also been a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee since 2004 and is a member of several clubs including Intersarsity, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Champions for Christ.

### JOHN UMEK



Umek, a watershed limnologist, recently received his master's degree in biology from the University. Under faculty mentor

Sudeep Chandra, Umek is studying the fragile ecosystem at Walker Lake, which has seen its water level drop nearly 150 feet over the past century. He's assessing the health of the Walker Basin's river and lake ecosystems and creating a conservation plan for its native fisheries, invertebrates and plant communities. Umek hopes to work for a government agency or a private organization in the field of watershed restoration.

# Regional Studies center wins national award

The University's Center for Regional Studies won first place in the Community Development category at the University Economic Development Association's annual summit in Portland, Ore.

The Center for Regional Studies is an economic development collaboration between the College of Business and the Nevada Small Business Development Center.

The center earned the award based on maps and analyses of proposed areas for a new Reno redevelopment district, which prompted mega-retailer Cabela's to build a site in northern Nevada. The hunting, fishing and outdoor gear outlet is west of downtown Reno, off on Interstate 80 near the Boomtown Hotel-Casino.

"This award highlights one of the many community partnerships of the NSBDC, and demonstrates the critical role the University can play in supporting economic development in Nevada and the surrounding region," said Sam Males, the NSBDC state director.

The Cabela's opening netted the following estimated economic impact: local tourism benefit of \$700-\$800 million annually; 184 full-time and 216 part-time jobs; gross sales in the first year of \$55 million, generating \$3.6 million in new sales tax revenues.



Photo by Clay Statham

*Cabela's, the world's foremost outfitter, opened its newest store in the Reno-Tahoe area as a result of the community partnership forged between the University's Center for Regional Studies and the City of Reno.*

"We won this award for a project that used geographic information services, confidentiality data agreements and important datasets produced and maintained by the center to assist the City of Reno in adopting a second redevelopment district," said project manager Brian Bonnenfant, an NSBDC official.

"The City of Reno is thrilled the University's Center for Regional Studies has received this honor," Reno Mayor Robert Cashell said. "It points out that Reno's redevelopment successes have been the result of careful planning as well as help, support and partnerships from the community, particularly the University."

—Jill Stockton

## Health and Human Sciences departments to align with Division of Health Sciences

University President Milton Glick announced in January 2008 that several departments and centers in the College of Health and Human Sciences will align with the newly created University Division of Health Sciences.

"This reorganization is driven by the recognition that optimal health is provided by multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary teams—nurses, public health professionals, social workers, pharmacists, therapists, physicians and others—who train and work together focusing on meeting the health needs of the state," Glick said. "This integrative approach will best serve University students seeking health-related careers by leveraging the talents and expertise found in these health science disciplines."

Health and Human Sciences will formally disband July 1. Charlie Bullock, the college's interim dean, will assist in ensuring a smooth transition for each of its 14 departments, schools and centers.

"I see the creation of this new division as a great opportunity to emphasize the numerous assets, strengths and talents that this college has championed," said Bullock, a faculty member at the University since 1996.

The college's School of Public Health and Orvis School of Nursing are two of several units to be realigned into the Division of Health Sciences along with the statewide University of Nevada School of Medicine. Dr. John McDonald, dean of the medical school and current vice president of health sciences, will serve as the vice president of the new division.

"This cooperation and interdisciplinary approach will work to further human health," McDonald said. "This new division will result in a stronger unit, uniting students, faculty, and staff, as well as benefiting all Nevadans."

—Jill Stockton

## Advanced directives for Silver and Blue

The University's Nevada Center for Ethics and Health Policy and the Nevada Secretary of State's office are leading the charge to create the Nevada Living Will (<http://www.NVLivingWill.com>) web site. The site is the state's first online repository for advanced directives, allowing physicians access to decisions about their patients' end-of-life treatment options.

Advanced directives, including living wills and durable power of attorney for health care papers, are legal documents for individuals to communicate appropriate end-of-life care ahead of time. Advanced directives are used when individuals cannot communicate this information to their healthcare provider themselves.

"Typically, people think advanced directives are an issue for older people, but this is an issue that affects everyone," said Sally Hardwick, the center's interim director and a lecturer for the University's School of Public Health. "When individuals have an advanced directive, it alleviates pressure on family members to make a decision and allows the individual's wishes to be carried out by a physician."

Only 22 percent of Nevadans have advanced directives for end-of-life care. Further complications arise about end-of-life treatment, according to a 2002 Nevada survey of emergency medical service responders and emergency physicians, because advance directives are rarely seen by emergency room personnel.

"As an emergency room doctor with an interest in bioethics, I have witnessed patients in the hospital who are very sick and then a sudden event occurs," Reno physician Kevin Brown said. "Having access to advanced directives at the hospital is a concrete way to grant the patient's wishes."

The Nevada Legislature passed the state law to create the web site June 2, 2007.

—Jill Stockton

## ORAL HISTORY COOKBOOK DESCRIBES ITALIAN-AMERICANS' UNIQUE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

From the time Nevada achieved statehood, Italian immigrants and their descendents have constituted the largest and most influential ethnic group in northwestern Nevada. For generations, food from the old country has been not just a staple of family gatherings, but also a contribution to Italian-Americans' unique cultural identity.

Last December, the University of Nevada Oral History Program published *Famiglia e Cucina: Stories and Recipes from Northwestern Nevada's Italian-American Community*, part cookbook and part oral history, chronicled by members of the region's Italian-American families. The collection of 52 recipes also includes stories and memories about family history, the cultural significance of food and time-honored traditions.

The Oral History Program published the cookbook in time for holiday shopping; demand for the book surprised Mary Larson, senior oral historian and cookbook editor.

"This project struck a chord," Larson said. "The book's contributors are familiar to many people but, in the larger context, food unites all of us in a tangible way. We feel very strong bonds to the foods that we ate as children."

The book set campus and community sales records, prompted book signings

### FAMIGLIA E CUCINA

Stories and Recipes from Northwestern Nevada's Italian-American Community



with the book's contributors, and heightened interest in the northern Nevada immigrant experience. The Reno independent bookseller, Sundance Bookstore, listed *Famiglia e Cucina* eighth among its 2007 best sellers.

"*Famiglia e Cucina* weaves together recipes and remembrances for a fascinating glimpse of a vibrant and longstanding community with roots reaching back to the 19th century," said Tom King, director of the Oral History Program. "Anyone who enjoys authentic Italian food and also has a passion for history will love this book."

The project marked a departure from previous oral histories, and is the program's first publishing foray into the cookbook genre.

Call (775) 784-6932 for details on ordering the book.

—Zanny Marsh

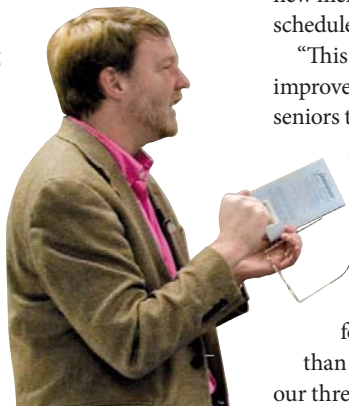
# Continued grant support for Osher Lifelong Learning Institute fosters intellectual growth

Metaphysics, Poetry, Watercolor Painting, The Bible as History, Yoga, Shakespeare's Henry IV and Henry V. Sounds like a pretty good sample of University courses, doesn't it?

Although many are taught by University faculty, these are not University credit courses offered on campus, but rather a small sampling of the more than 80 noncredit classes offered for adult learners over 55 by Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Nevada, Reno this spring.

These and scores of other

*Eric Rasmussen, professor of English, teaches Shakespeare to seniors.*



courses and discussion groups are included with the \$45 annual membership to the member-driven, learning-in-retirement organization, which received a second \$100,000 Bernard Osher Foundation grant for 2008-09. Since receiving the first \$100,000 grant from the foundation in summer 2007, the organization has added more than 130 new members and grown its spring 2008 schedule by more than 50 classes.

"This grant has allowed us to improve our outreach to community seniors tremendously," said Shera Alberti-Annunzio, the University's campus liaison to Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and assistant director of professional development for Extended Studies. "In less than a year, we've nearly reached our three-year goal of 500 members."

Renowned Shakespearean scholar Eric Rasmussen, professor in the Department of English, is one of many University faculty who volunteer teaching time. "I absolutely love shifting from my 20-something undergrads to my 80-something folks, who not only bring a more mature perspective to the readings, but often more enthusiasm," Rasmussen said.

—Sarah Purdy '02



Photos by Jaclyn Prescott

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