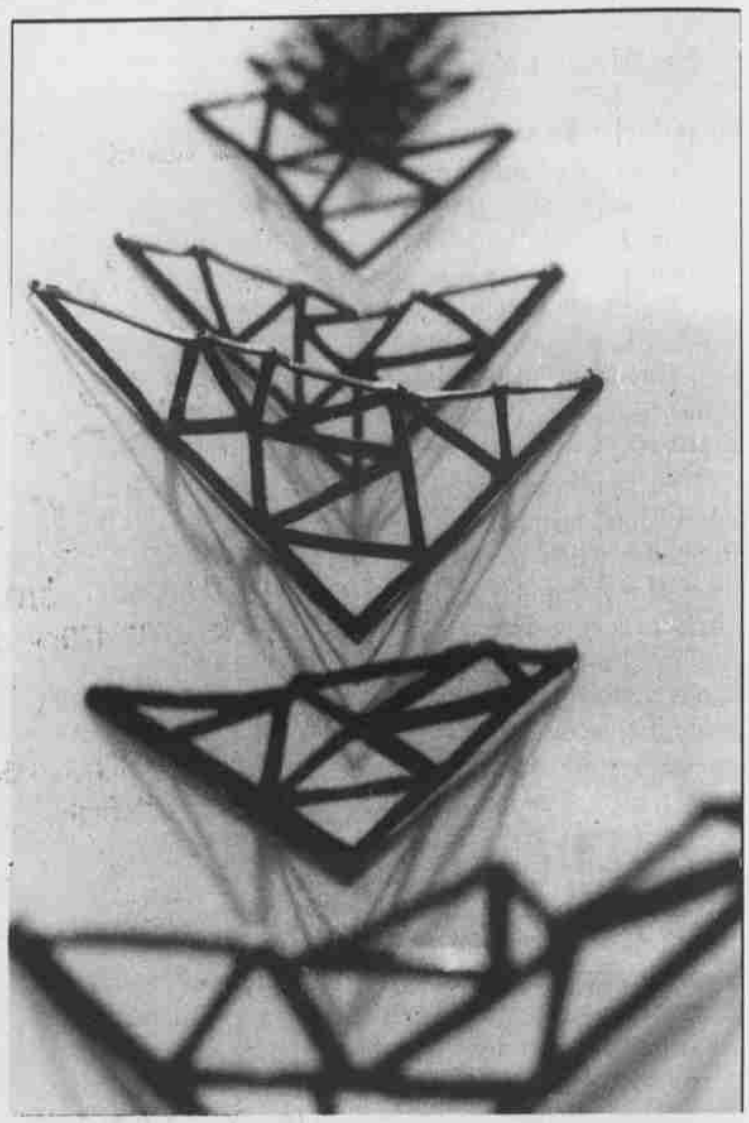
Donna Beam Gallery to showcase six spring exhibitions

by Deborah Perlman

Left: Untitled # 6, 1991by Mark Lee. Below: Animal Spirits (more), 1992 by Rita McBride.

photos by Rob Weidenfeld



This spring semester not only marks the beginning of a new year and its resolutions, a new U.S. president and a new chapter to the Persian Gulf War, but on campus, it mostly means new schedules.

For those connected with the Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery, the spring semester means rigorous curatorial preparation of its exhibition space due to a schedule packed with provocative visuals to be showcased beginning with the exhibition, "A Complete Hand of One Suit" featuring the contemporary works of seven Los Angeles artists: John Baldessari, Mark Lere, David Lloyd, Rita McBride, Stephen Prina, Alexis Smith and Christopher Williams.

If the spring semester means spring cleaning for some, for the Donna Beam Gallery, spring cleaning means interior renovation. This includes disassembling past exhibitions, spackling, sanding and repainting its wall space, waxing 1,400 square feet of parquet flooring, adjusting two floors of variable track lighting and reassembling and or hanging the new show.

This doesn't mean once, but once per exhibition. Six exhibitions are scheduled from Jan. 11 through May 7.

Donna Beam Gallery Director Jerry Schefcik says it is well worth the curatorial preparation (which also includes publishing catalogues or brochures for each exhibition) when you see the whole exhibition come together. Schefcik said,"Our opening exhibition this spring marks the first time we have borrowed works through a cooperative effort with a Los Angeles art gallery." The Los Angeles art gallery is the Margo Leavin Gallery.

"Our gallery is meant to be used as a research tool where students can see work from outside Las Vegas, explore a theme or social issue or study the visual aesthetics of a body of work," said Schefcik. "We focus on showing contemporary art because it interacts in support of UNLV's studio art program."

After serving its two main functions as a lab for art students and as a vehicle for learning and entertaining all UNLV students, the gallery is also meant to serve the community at large.

According to Schefcik, people say that the Donna Beam Gallery is the best exhibit space in Southern Nevada. He says that one reason is the university gallery has the resources and contacts to borrow art from other universities and museums.

The other reason is the gallery's intimate size coupled with its 23-foot ceiling enables large-scale works to be shown in a non-intimidating environment.

Schefcik said, "I really do see the Donna Beam Gallery as a leader in visual arts in Southern Nevada."

Spring Exhibition Schedule

Jan. 11 - Feb. 7	"A Complete Hand of One Suit"
Feb. 14 - 21	"American College Theatre Festival Costume Designs"
March 1 - 28	"New York Photographers of the 1980s"
April 5 - 9	UNLV Masters of Fine Arts candidate, Mitch Crawford
April 12 - 16	UNLV Masters of Fine Arts candidate, Victoria Reynolds
April 23 - May 7	UNLV Student Show

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