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THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS PG 7:30  
LABAMBA PG-13 7:30

# Director of opera: Pursuit of art gives society meaning

By Lee Schexnaider  
Staff Writer

Peter Sellars, director of the new opera "Nixon in China," sat on a table in 701 Rudder Friday. Frantically speaking with his hands and voice, he tried to explain how people collaborate to create an opera. But he quickly strayed from the subject.

"I have this problem in that basically when I say something, I say it with a tremendous level of authority which comes from having been a director for too many years," he said. "Which obviously (means) you have no idea what you're talking about and you're faking desperately."

The discussion, sponsored by the Department of Liberal Arts, also brought Alice Goodman, an English poet who wrote the libretto, or text, for the opera. The opera is based upon President Richard M. Nixon's trip to the People's Republic of China that marked the reopening of Chinese-American relations.

The bulk of the discussion concerned art and society. Sellars said they are not as separate as many think.

"So often we're put in the position of the arts where we're this weird thing off to the side that has nothing to do with anything," he said. "And in fact the opposite is usually true — most people wind up being these weird people off to the side that have nothing to do with anything."

"The only reason that society hires artists to exist is to know that somewhere on the face of the earth somebody did something that they meant."

He said that most people don't mean what they say or do, but they use a version of it.

"It's just a little to the left of what you meant, or a little to the right of what you meant, but you didn't actually mean that," he said.

"The reason the artist exists in some sense is that someone has to do something that is utterly useless, that has no materialistic gain, that's not done to make money, that couldn't possibly make money," he said.

Sellars said that even with all the money spent on an opera, the audience does not carry anything physical home with them.

"You don't have a souvenir to take home with you," he said. "You just spent a ton of money and what do you have left for it? There is no object. You just have this thing which enters your mind and either it dies

there real fast because it was stupid or it was usefully irritating.

"It continues to just scratch and won't exactly stay still. And then you live with it and it becomes part of your life."

He also addressed students in an interdisciplinary seminar class called Form and Imagination, who had drawings and models on display. He spoke directly to an architectural aspect of the class that emphasizes the connection between literature and the visual arts.

"In the theater, I'm allowed to be irresponsible," he said. "In the the-

*"You're doing something that can't be disposable like a greeting card. You're doing something that people live with every day."*

— Peter Sellars, "Nixon in China" director

ater, the great thing is (that) you can always fold your tent and leave town.

"Whereas in architecture, it's still there — oh, there's that tent — which is a bit of a problem.

"The are not any fast getaways."

He noted the importance of the decisions made when designing a building.

"As beginning architecture students know, obviously, when you design a house for somebody, you're engaged in marriage counseling," he said. "You can make or break a marriage by the way you design a house."

"One does not make a design decision based on 'this would be nice.' Basically 'this would be nice' is over with. It is like the difference between a Rembrandt and a Norman Rockwell, or like a Hallmark greeting card. In that, obviously, the experience is over with, with the greeting card."

"The greeting card is meant to be opened for a second — you look at it and say 'great,' and then it's thrown away. But what about the aspects of people's lives that can't be thrown away?"

"You're doing something that can't be disposable like a greeting card. You're doing something that people live with every day."

"It has to do with a personal decision that every human being makes — that everything they touch will be of a certain quality or not."

## What's up

Monday

PHI THETA KAPPA ALUMNI: will meet at 7:30 p.m. 027 MSC.

ATHEIST, AGNOSTIC AND FREETHINKER SOCIETY will meet at 7 p.m. in 704 Rudder.

SIGMA IOTA EPSILON: will meet at 7:30 p.m. 123 Blocker.

INTRAMURAL SPORTS: Entries will open for cross country and badminton doubles in 159 Rudder.

HONORS COUNCIL: Executives will meet at 7 p.m. at general meeting will follow at 7:30 p.m. in 402 Rudder.

PI SIGMA EPSILON: Team B, the Beepers, will play volleyball at 9 p.m. in the Read Building and will have an executive board meeting at 6 p.m. in the second floor of the vilion.

HILLEL, JEWISH STUDENT FOUNDATION: will meet at 8:30 p.m. at the Hillel Building, 800 Jersey.

AGGIES FOR DUKAKIS: will discuss a San Antonio trip at 8 p.m. in 604A-B Rudder.

PHI ETA SIGMA NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY: accepting applications until Tuesday in 216 Pavilion.

Tuesday

PI SIGMA EPSILON: Team C, the Dotted Lines, will play volleyball at 9 p.m. in the Read Building.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS will take pictures for the Aggeland at 7:30 p.m. on the side steps of Zachry and Dr. Alexander will discuss graduate school at 8 p.m. in 105 Harrington.

BETA BETA BETA: will meet at 7 p.m. in 105 Helderberg.

JUNGIAN SOCIETY OF THE BRAZOS VALLEY: Dr. Schenk will discuss "Navajo Healing" at 8 p.m. in 226 Blocker.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE ORGANIZATION: will have prayer meeting at 7 p.m. at the All Faiths Chapel.

THE BIG EVENT: will meet at 7 p.m. in 146 MSC.

INTRAMURAL SPORTS: Entries close for bowling in 159 Rudder.

MSC LITERARY ARTS: Dr. Christensen will present a paper on poetry analysis at 5:30 p.m. in 228 MSC.

WEST BELL COUNTY HOMETOWN CLUB: The meeting at 8:30 p.m. is postponed.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION: Dr. Ferrell will discuss "International Business Ethics" at 7 p.m. in 126 Blocker.

RHA FRESHMAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM: will meet at 7 p.m. in 200 Harrington.

DELTA SIGMA PI: will meet at 6 p.m. in Blocker.

MEXIA HOMETOWN CLUB: will meet at 8:30 p.m. in 604A-B Rudder.

TAMU HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION: will have a demonstration at 7 p.m. at the Dick Freeman Arena.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT PUBLIC RELATIONS: will meet at 7 p.m. in 704A-B Rudder.

LIBERAL ARTS SOCIETY: will meet at 7 p.m. in 701 Rudder.

AGGIE DEMOCRATS: Greg Laughlin, U.S. House of representative candidate, will speak at 8:30 p.m. in 504 Rudder.

COLLEGIATE FFA: will take Aggeland pictures at 5 p.m. in the Zachry lobby and will meet after pictures taken in 208 Scoates Hall.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion 216 Read McDonald, no less than three working days before desired publication date.

### Snow Ski Club

meeting  
October 26, 1987

- Ski exercises by Aerofit (wear loose clothing)
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Attend the October 26 meeting to sign-up  
\* Must be a member

## School officials say hazing continues on some college campuses in Texas

AUSTIN (AP) — Despite laws aimed at erasing it and deaths that have resulted from it, hazing continues on Texas college campuses, school officials say.

"It's something we have to keep hammering away at year after year," said Michael Schardein, Texas Tech University's assistant dean of students.

Bill Kilber, associate director of student affairs at Texas A&M, said some students have difficulty distinguishing between "good college fun" and hazing.

At A&M, sophomore Bruce Goodrich died after an August 1984 hazing episode supervised by members of the school's Corps of Cadets.

Kilber said hazing is still a problem at A&M today. "It's not any greater a problem now than it has been in recent years," he said. "But to say it's not a continuing problem on our campus would be inaccurate. Students are involved in various things that clearly violate our hazing regulations."

Three disciplinary hearings on hazing have been held this school year at A&M, involving "physical kinds of things," such as tying people up or dumping them in water, Kilber said.

Kilber said some students do not understand why hazing a willing victim is wrong.

"Many students feel they can bring forward the victim and get that person to testify that they volunteered and considered it an honor to participate," he said.

School officials said the well-publicized deaths and injuries plus the

Sen. Gonzalo Barrientos, D-Austin, said, "You are always going to have dummies doing dumb things, unfortunately."

The secret world of hazing made its periodic trip to the headlines a few days ago when a special panel reported that hazing, in some of its most brutal forms, still goes on

among some University of Texas student organizations.

The law professor who chaired the panel, John Ratliff, said the abuse, sometimes with two-handed paddles and sometimes with cattle prods, continued despite the UT commission's well-publicized, year-long investigation.

The commission went to work after the September 1986 death of Mark Seiberger, a Richardson freshman who drank up to 20

ounces of rum in an hour during a fraternity event.

Dean of student development Dan Wallace said Stephen J. State University officials are conducting an investigation of "clue hunt" in which new students under the legal drinking age were encouraged to drink beverages.

In 1980, an SFA student died after falling from a balcony during a fraternity social function, said school officials. Wallace heard much about "serious" at their campus in recent years at many Texas schools. SFA has an "awareness" campaign for students about the new anti-hazing law, which, among other things, makes it illegal to fail to report hazing.

At SMU, the awareness campaign included a mock trial of a hazing-related death.

Caswell said, "It's quite certain that gets their attention and added that all fraternities and pledges must sign a statement that they understand the law."

*"It's not any greater a problem now than it has been in recent years. But to say it's not a continuing problem on our campus would be inaccurate."*

— Bill Kilber, A&M associate director of student affairs

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