

And then there was light

Students express themselves through light, work displayed at conceptual lighting exhibit

By Kelcey Rieger
THE BATTALION

When Sophia Razzaque, a sophomore environmental design major, opted to take a conceptual lighting class, she had no idea how much she would learn.

"I have really enjoyed this course because of the freedom I am given by (professor) Jill Mullholland," Razzaque said. "She has actually done everything she tells us about. This class is my creative outlet because I get to design and build a crazy light fixture that is supposed to be wild and crazy."

Mullholland's conceptual lighting class is an architecture class offered to expose students to the concept of using lighting and how it can affect a room. Students are given a chance at the end of the semester to create their own light fixture to present at an exhibit in the Langford Architecture Center.

"I came up with my project when Jill was showing us different kinds of lamps that we could use," Razzaque said. "I wanted to make a shelf that was also a light, so I used PVC pipe, glass shelves and copper to create my masterpiece. My project has evolved from a shelf light to a sculptural form. I like the way the light shining through the edge of the glass makes the other edges glow."

Razzaque said this class and exhibit is what students need to open up to new and creative things.

"I think our exhibit will be a positive thing for students to be exposed to because they will be able to see how people think and express themselves, and how no two projects are the exactly same," Razzaque said.

Kristin Pickar, a senior environmental design

major, learned through her lighting project that she was able to test the limits of herself and her creativity.

"This class is truly an open forum for creativity," Pickar said. "I have learned not to limit myself or my ideas and to not be afraid to try something new just because you think it might fail."

Pickar said she was inspired by the mobiles of Alexander Calder to create her lighting piece for the exhibit.

"I am working with a jewel and light motion," Pickar said. "I have created a mobile that will reflect light of different colors and forms, along with casting shadows of moving shapes. As the mobile passes through beams of light, you can catch a glimpse of fantasy and surrealism."

Pickar said her involvement in the conceptual lighting class has allowed her to find something that makes her happy.

"I have to explain to my friends and family that this class is the reason I have disappeared from the radar for the past semester," Pickar said. "The time I have put into this project has really paid off, and I feel I have found my niche in lighting. This exhibit allows my loved ones to see my hard work and what really makes me happy."

Nick McIntyre, a junior environmental design major, found himself staying up into the early hours of the morning to prepare for the lighting exhibit. He said he has put a lot of time into creating his lighting fixture, but the it has been a positive experience.

"While organization and planning seemed to stretch on forever for this event, many unseen

sides of people came out in preparation for it," McIntyre said. "Some of these sides were unfortunately unpleasant and unexpected, but when it was crunch time and the more we worked together, the more friendly and helpful everyone became. It was also an enjoyable experience helping out with the abundance of ladies in our, hopefully now tighter-knit, class. Mixing a little work with fun, food and females is something you can't really complain about."

For McIntyre, lighting was an unexplored architectural field, but the class and exhibit exposed him to the new realm.

"For a first-time class and my first experience at designing with light, I have come to a basic understanding of the field and enjoyed it," McIntyre said. "Now that the class has gotten its feet wet and the class has wet my appetite, I'm hoping for more effective courses like this one to take place."

Conceptual lighting is a new architecture class in Texas A&M's curriculum. In its first year at A&M, the class struggled to make the best of what is provided.

"We've had limited supplies and costs and optimal work environments, which has been a sort of handicap in our creativity. Changes in these things can lead way to positive programs, that I feel, are currently lacking at this college," McIntyre said. "A class like this one is exactly what A&M needs to re-attain its superior status as a top-rate design school."

The conceptual lighting exhibit will give students an opportunity to present their artwork and at the same time transform a dull area of Langford into a piece of artwork.

"I hope this exhibit works out for the positive and starts a trend utilizing the otherwise unusable



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Paul Wilson, a junior environmental design major, works on his concept lighting design studio. Wilson's design will be presented in the Langford Architecture Center.

areas around Langford and possibly other areas of campus," McIntyre said. "We have turned an unpleasant and uninviting area into an intriguing and operable place."

The Conceptual Lighting Exhibit, which is being held Tuesday at 6 p.m., is something a little out of the ordinary, McIntyre said.

"We have all grown accustomed to boring light fixtures surrounding us and the unpleasant light they create," McIntyre said. "Most people do not realize, nor utilize, the potential of lighting. Hopefully, with our exhibit, others will see what light can become and a little more of what it can do."

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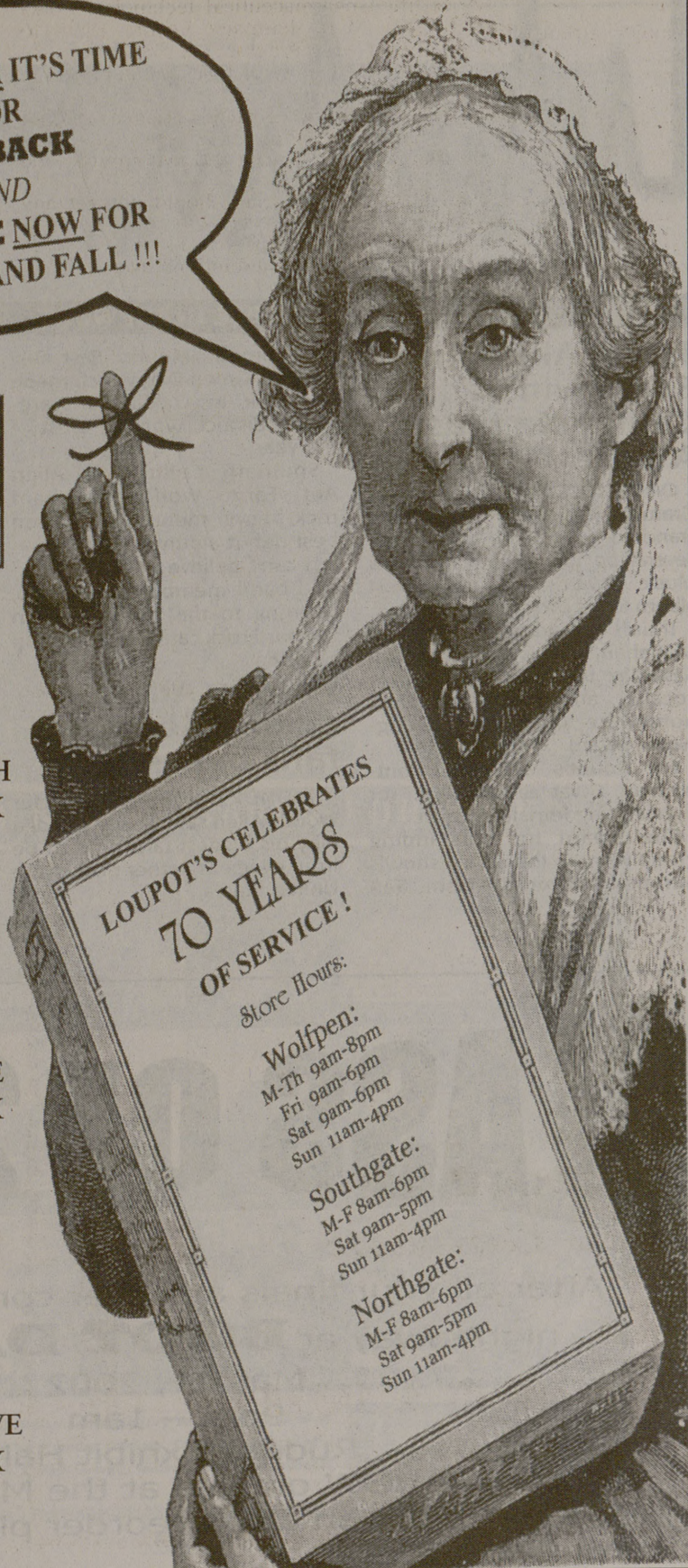
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