

Display of humanity



Gazette photo by Buzz Orr

Artist Mauricio Lasansky stands Wednesday with his wife, Emilia, in front of one of his well-known "Nazi Drawings" being displayed at the University of Iowa Museum of Art. A celebration of Lasansky's life and work will be held Sunday at the museum and the Levitt Center.

Lasansky honored at UI

Artist's 'Nazi Drawings' depict atrocities

By John Kenyon

Gazette staff writer

IOWA CITY — Perhaps it is a testament to the impact printmaker Mauricio Lasansky has had on the University of Iowa that a Sunday celebration of his life and art requires three separate functions.

Lasansky, 85, who retired from the UI in 1985, founded the university's printmaking program in 1945. Last month, U.S. News & World Report named it the top graduate printmaking program in the country.

The printmaker, who continues to work in his downtown Iowa City studio, was taking the accolades in

stride. He said his "ego is at the same level," but admitted the celebration will be nice recognition.

"It is nice to know, when you worked half of your life in one place, that they liked it," he said.

Lasansky will be recognized Sunday, first with a 1 p.m. program at the UI's Levitt Center honoring his work, followed by the first public viewing of a docu-



Lane Wyrick
Produced Lasansky documentary



David Gompper
Composed music for film



Eric Forsythe
Narrated 'The Nazi Drawings'

mentary video about his most well-known work, "The Nazi Drawings."

That will be followed at 2 p.m. at the Museum of Art by a concert of original mu-

Artist: Documentary won 1st-place honors

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sic inspired by the drawings and a 3 p.m. reception at the museum hosted by UI President Mary Sue Coleman.

The reception and film showing are just the most recent recognition for Lasansky. In October, Gov. Tom Vilsack gave him the Iowa Award, the highest award granted to Iowans.

Lasansky's "Nazi Drawings," a collection of 30 individual pieces and one triptych that depict the atrocities carried out in Nazi Germany, were completed between 1961 and 1966. They have been shown all over the world but can usually be found in the Lasansky Room at the UI

Museum of Art.

The drawings are the subject of "The Nazi Drawings," a 25-minute documentary video by local videographer Lane Wyrick. UI professors David Gompper and Eric Forsythe, respectively, provided the video's music and narration.

The documentary won four top awards at the Showcase Iowa 2000 Iowa Movie Awards on April 1 in Des Moines. It won best documentary, while Gompper and Forsythe won top prizes for their work. It also won best short-form entertainment program.

"I videotaped Mauricio at his

studio, trying to capture an honest quality, a dialogue between the artist and me," Wyrick said. Wyrick said he knew he had something special when he did not get the typical response at a private screening.

"I was waiting for the typical congratulatory clapping, but it was just silent," he said. "It was a stunned response. It was a really heavy weight. At that point I realized the impact of that documentary."

Lasansky said he was happy with the video. "It puts the point across," he said. "It will help people understand 'The Nazi Drawings.'"