

LTU to sponsor meal with message

BY BECKY BURNS
STAFF WRITER

Food with an out-of-the-ordinary, if not other-worldly message seems to be the thread that will run through two Lawrence Technological University events on Tuesday.

The College of Architecture and Design will host two banquets to promote an awareness of design and philosophical thought. One also is to raise money for a new addition to the school.

The first event, the second annual "Design Theorist Banquet," is a competition that requires participants to use food as material to make a theoretical statement. The theme of the second banquet focuses on minimalist principles while serving food to raise money for the school.

Both are the brainchildren of Betty-lee Seydler-Sweatt, assistant dean of the college.

"It's an opening to the holiday season," she said. "Both of them deal with taking ideas of design into another arena."

The "Design Theorist Banquet" was originally inspired by "Marinetti, the Futuristic Cookbook," a book of manifestos published in 1938 in Italy that used food as a vehicle for political, social, technological, literary and aesthetic beliefs in early 20th century Italy. With the book, Marinetti challenged the belief systems of his time and anticipated future systems.

Through the banquet, students and faculty update some of Marinetti's ideas to fit today's thinking. Harold Linton, also an assistant dean of the College of Architecture and Design, said he thinks it gives students a different kind of experience from what they learn in the classroom. In a "sudden burst of energy and imagery" last year, about 20 students in his Basic Design 2 (color) class came up with the idea of an Altar to the Holidays theme for their entry. They began a week before the competition and spent several hours in class planning the collective project.

What the class ended up with was a symbolic display of, among other things, a purple-colored turkey and Easter eggs placed on an

altar masked by a haze of dry ice and accompanied by Chipmunk's and holiday music.

"We had so much gifts and so many lights," he said of his group's first-place winning entry. It was "a variety of visual imagery reflective of the important holidays throughout the year." He added that students did not buy anything for the display but rather found it all themselves.

The second banquet will cater to patrons in a minimalist fashion. Dinner, for a \$10 donation, includes such delicacies as Hot Desk Miso — a plastic foam bowl of miso broth with a thin slice of mushroom named as such because the college needs money to buy desks. Other menu items included in the \$10 price are Photo Gelatin — the school needs a photo lab — and Marinated Chicken Bone, "because we're at bare bones," Sweatt said.

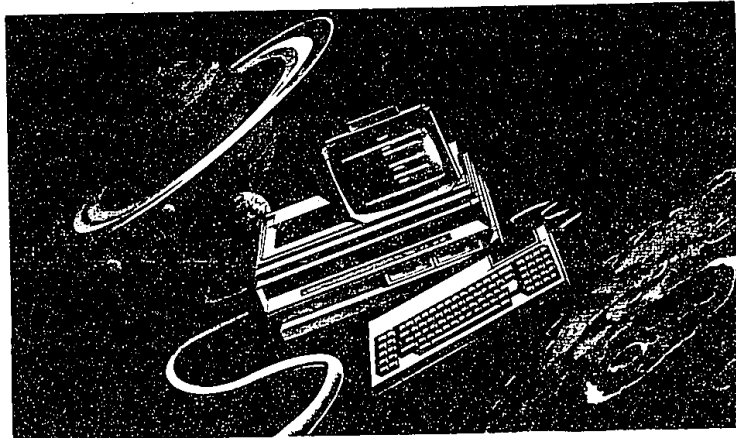
Diners will have the option to order more food — for a price. And if they want plates that aren't paper and real utensils, they will be charged \$1 and 50 cents each respectively. There is also a cost for chairs, as opposed to the stools they will be provided, and flowers, if so desired. Dishes and faculty will hire themselves out, charging whatever they think they are worth, mostly depending on the type of costume they don, Sweatt said.

Sometime during the course of the evening, organizers will auction off 18 items, including a book published by a faculty member, prints by Dearborn architectural illustrator Richard Rochon and a burnt frying pan, a casualty in a student's kitchen fire.

Sweatt said she does not know how much money the event will raise.

The "Design Theorist Banquet" Competition will take place from 1:30-3 p.m. in the Buell Building's atrium. The "Create Your Own Banquet by Building upon The Minimalist Dinner" will start at 7:30 p.m. in the gallery of the College of Architecture and Design. Both events are open to the public. LTU is located at 21000 W. Ten Mile in Southfield. For more information, call Donna Harris at (810) 204-2808.

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