

Carrier of the Month Farmington



Kevin Fredericksen

Kevin Fredericksen is the Observer & Eccentric's Carrier of the Month for June.

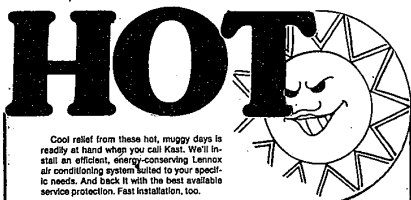
Kevin, a fifth grader at Shiawassee Elementary School in Farmington, has been delivering the Farmington Observer for two years.

His route includes Glenmoor Heights, Montclair, Astor and Fink. A "B" student, Kevin's favorite subjects are math and handwriting. He enjoys beer can collecting, roller skating and baseball.

Kevin is the son of Brian and Darlene Fredericksen of Farmington.

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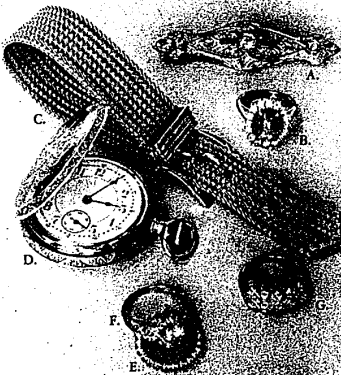
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Looking at Rivera

Controversy haunts mural

By CORINNE ABATT

Looking at the Diego Rivera murals 43 years after they were completed, it's difficult to comprehend the controversy they once generated.

A motion was presented to the 1933 city council that the paintings be washed away. One of the daily papers suggested "Whitewashing" the walls as the answer.

His mural in Rockefeller Center was smashed to powder in 1934. It almost happened in Detroit. But, Rivera was a man of the working people. His sympathies had never wavered and it was the workers of Detroit who found their artist in Rivera.

THEY STREAMED into the museum to see his frescoes of "Detroit, Industry." And they saw themselves as a part of the mechanical age, of the assembly lines, smelting furnaces and molten steel.

Edsel Ford, who had donated \$25,000 to pay for the work, defended the artist. And although Ford's statement was a gentle one, "I admire Rivera's work," it carried enough clout to quiet the dissenters and save the works.

Before the outcome was certain Rivera wrote, "If my Detroit murals are destroyed, I shall be profoundly distressed as I put into them a year of my life and the best of my talent, but

tomorrow I shall be busy making others for I am not merely an artist, but a man performing his biological function of producing paintings. . . .

Not only were the murals saved, but because of the foresight of several people, they are extraordinarily well documented — to the point where Rivera's presence is still in the garden court where he worked.

The latest, and major, addition to the documentation is the discovery of Rivera's full scale drawings or cartoons, for the project.

They were unraveled in the almost an acre floor of the north court last week, and placed on public exhibition briefly. Because the storage conditions had been favorable and because Rivera was an artist of gigantic proportions, these drawings are breathtaking.

PEOPLE WHO prefer drawings and sketches to finished oils because of the intimacy of the medium, would adore these.

The two sepia-toned drawings of the nude female figures, best seen from three floors up, are so total in their rounded composition and have such depth with so seemingly little effort that the viewer feels as though he is standing in the midst of the art process — which, indeed, he is.

Rivera kept a progress journal of the work on the Detroit murals and much of this is in the film, "The Age of Steel"

made by Shelby Newhouse for the Ford Motor Co.'s 75th anniversary celebration last year. The film, which has been shown regularly at the museum, tells the story of the murals and includes interviews with several men who worked with Rivera on the project.

Fortunately, too, Edsel Ford had the making of the murals filmed in black and white. The film adds to the completeness of the documentation and parts of it were used in the Newhouse film.

So, not only are the murals well preserved at the Detroit Institute of Arts, but so are the materials directly related to them.

RIVERA WAS well aware of the diverse opinions his art could generate. He wrote down his belief that the artist must be "concerned with all problems of social struggle. . . ." and he was delighted with the Detroit commission and the opportunities it provided to visit the automobile plants and related industries, to sketch the workers in action and to tell their story.

In Rivera's hands, faces of workers, American and Mexican, take on nobility. Often, in his murals of Mexican history and life, those who exploited the downtrodden have animal characteristics. He didn't feel the need to do that here, but his unpardonable offense in New York City was to include a portrait of Lenin.

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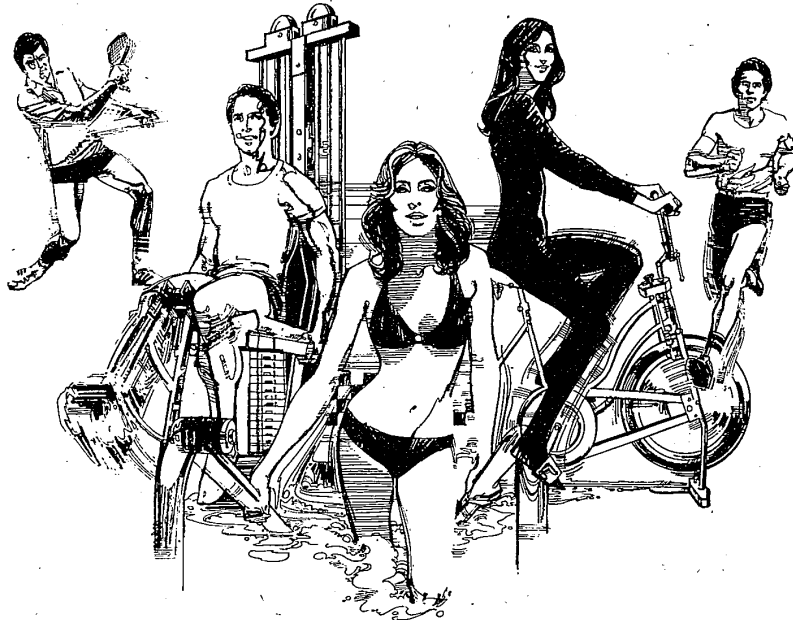
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