

Nevelson given star treatment

By CORINNE ABATT

The appearance of sculptor Louise Nevelson in Southfield generated the kind of activity usually associated with sports heroes and movie stars.

There was pre-appearance hype by the media. Artists tried to become gate crashers (most didn't succeed). Bendix Corporation protected their celebrity with the kind of care usually reserved for visiting political dignitaries. She was ushered out of the press conference first, like a bride leaving the church. A careful schedule allotted just so much time for conversation, so much for looking at the sculpture and so much for official dedication.

The public was excluded from this corporate dedication — the signs outside clearly stated "by invitation only."

Mrs. Nevelson made no comment, visual or oral, as to whether the afternoon's arrangements pleased or displeased her. Certainly to the corporate powers, her presence justified their care. She carried herself like a queen, maybe even a gypsy queen, but nevertheless a queen. On film Georgia O'Keeffe has this same regal presence. So did Dame Edith Sitwell, English poet and critic.

BORN WITH A NATURAL SENSE of drama, Mrs. Nevelson incorporates it beautifully into her dress, her speech and most of all, her art.

"I think we're all born with certain gifts," she said. Later she smilingly agreed that she enjoys the publicity about her home and her appearance.

On this occasion, the 79-year-old, looking considerably younger, topped a long blue, red and yellow print paisley fur trimmed skirt with an electric purple blouse and hand loomed looking geometric print vest. The tan scarf tied around her head served to accentuate the strong, pleasant features. Not to be

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missed was the delightful sweep of one or more sets of false eyelashes.

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She spoke of her pleasure with the Louise Nevelson Plaza in the Wall Street area of New York City. A wealthy man has this never met "Thank-ed to do something for the world." He had made known his interest in showcasing her sculpture. She searched the city for a site, at first in the ghetto and low income areas, because she felt it would be needed there. Finally she found a site in the financial district and realized there were a couple of million people working in that area who would benefit from the project.

"WELL, I THOUGHT these people ought to have a place to sit — and it's used all the time," she said, adding that the people from the buildings eat lunch there, meet there and enjoy the art.

"I think New York ought to have many things like that," she said. Although the Bendix Trilogy is definitely a part of the total building complex rather than public art, the artist said she considered how many people working and visiting the building every day would see it and get something from it.

All three pieces can be seen from the sidewalk that leads to the building. Although she never studied sculpture, she was a painting student of Hans Hofmann in Germany.

from Civic Center Drive just west of Southfield.

Here, just as in her wooden pieces, Mrs. Nevelson shows her penchant for playing off one clear, clean form against another to achieve balance, grace and movement. The hardest of steels had been slatted into geometric shapes, bent into concave and convex forms and bundled into thick rods that look as if they had been shaped as much by the wind as the high heat of a furnace.

ALTHOUGH SECURELY earth bound, they appear to be light enough to float just above.

While she does some maquettes ahead of time, and few if any preliminary drawings, Mrs. Nevelson relies



primarily on her experience and inborn talent for art. As she supervises the foundry work, and the actual assembling of the pieces, she said she even points to each place where the welds will be made.

In answer to a question if whether she could visualize what would be on the site here when she first visited it, she said with a broad smile, "You're damned right I could."

She ran her hand over a wood grained table surface beside the couch on which she was sitting.

"I'd like it black. Black has more meaning today. It is more reflective of the times. For me, black is the most aristocratic of colors."

Opera theater opens with new production

Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT) will open its 1979 fall season with a new production of Frank Loesser's "The Most Happy Fella," starring Metropolitan Opera basso Giorgio Tozzi.

This contemporary American opera will premiere in Detroit Sept. 7-10 and 12-16. After the Detroit engagement, "The Most Happy Fella" is slated for a Broadway run to be followed by a national tour.

"We are very proud to be producing 'The Most Happy Fella' with Sherwin M. Goldman Productions of New York," said David DiChiera, MOT general director. "This joint venture reflects a major move by MOT into the national limelight."

"The Most Happy Fella" replaces the previously announced production of Scott Joplin's "Treemonisha" which has been rescheduled as part of MOT's 10th anniversary celebration in 1980. Plans for "Treemonisha" also include the possibility of a European tour.

MOT's fall season will follow "The Most Happy Fella" with two productions in both English and their original language.

Martina Arroyo will open Sept. 24 in Verdi's "Il Trovatore." MOT's first dual-language production. Miss Arroyo will sing two performances in Italian on Sept. 24 and 29, soprano Marie Robinson will sing the remaining performances, Sept. 26, 28 and 30, in English.

MOT's third production is Puccini's

"La Boheme." Pamela Myers and Rico Serbo, who scored critical successes with MOT last season, will be returning Oct. 8 and 13 for the two Italian performances. Karen Hunt and Stephen Dickson, who sang with MOT during the '77-78 season, will sing in English, Oct. 10, 12 and 14.

The finale to MOT's fall season, will be the first major United States production of Tchaikovsky's "Joan of Arc." Metropolitan Opera star Mignon Dunn will alternate in the title role with New York City Opera's Susan Marsee. Miss Dunn will be on stage Oct. 22, 26 and 28, Miss Marsee Oct. 24 and 27. All five performances will be performed in English.

"I know that this, MOT's 9th season, is its most exciting ever," said DiChiera. "Detroit audiences will have the opportunity to see four dynamic operas, choose opera in English or in Italian, see a major American revival and the first major U.S. production of a Russian work."

"In eight years, MOT has proudly played host to over 850,000 people with its performances at Music Hall and its Opera in Residence touring program throughout Michigan," said DiChiera. "Now we are reaching out to both national and international audiences as well."

For further information regarding the season, call Michigan Opera Theatre at 963-3717.

Antique show runs 3 days

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furnishings of her Farmington Hills home.

Her particular penchant "is beautiful woods and beautiful grains, but I don't buy anything I can't use."

THE CHAMPAGNE preview is a something-new Mrs. Foran adds to the show this year in keeping with her goal to make it "the most prestigious show in the Detroit area."

For \$2.50, asked at the door, guests will receive champagne and hors d'oeuvres, and preview the antique offerings against a backdrop of live music furnished by the Norman Zameczky Trio. Previewgoers will also receive a pass for the show for the next two days.

"Reservations aren't necessary, but we would appreciate hearing from those who know they'll be coming so we have some idea of how many to prepare for," Mrs. Foran said.

Show time on Friday runs from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

and on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Admission to the show is \$1.50, asked at the door.

Throughout show hours, the center's kitchen will be open so guests may enjoy light lunches out on the terrace.

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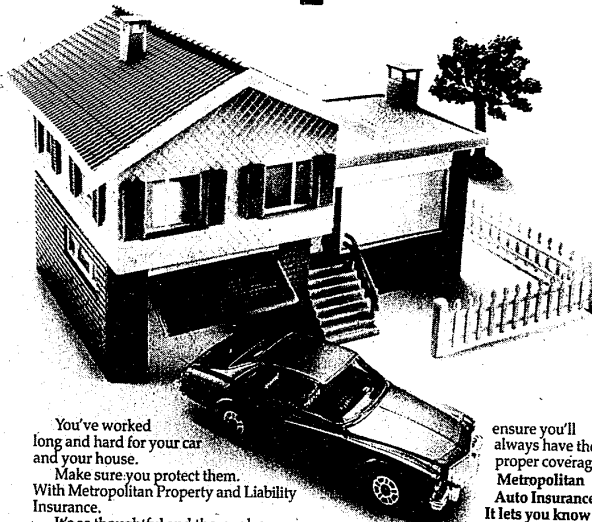
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