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'I see courtroom art as one of the last remaining art forms of a long-standing tradition. Through expression and gesture, I strive to express a moment in history.'

— Carole Kabrin
courtroom artist



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer



Carole Kabrin (right) talks about one of the drawings she did during the Vista trial in Detroit. At far right is her drawing of Marilyn Bowers, done during the same trial.

Courtroom art The picture — only one shot and a fast draw

By Shirlee Rose Iden
staff writer

Artists work to capture a lovely scene, a fascinating face or the depths of emotion. Carole Kabrin says her art is that of the artist as a recorder of history.

A courtroom illustrator for television, Kabrin, a Southfield resident, is presently showing the drawings through which she has chronicled noteworthy events for 10 years.

The show will run in the Oakland County Court, Pontiac through Nov. 25 and from Nov. 27 to Jan. 31 in Federal Court House, Detroit.

"These courtroom art as one of the last remaining art forms of a long-standing tradition," she said. "Through expression and gesture, I strive to express a moment in history."

Included in the exhibition are drawings from trials such as that of Vincent Chin, Vito, Victor Malone murder trial, the Billy-Sims contract dispute, the grand jury arraignment of John Delorean, the Karen Norman murder trial and others.

Kabrin is offering the show to celebrate her 10th year as a news artist and her fourth year with Channel 7, WKYC-TV.

"I ALSO thought it would be fun and interesting to do," she said.

Born in Detroit, Kabrin grew up in Livonia and came to Southfield 18 years ago. She was graduated from Southfield High School in 1969.

She earned her bachelor of fine arts degree from Wayne State University in 1975, the same year she started working at WJW-TV Channel 4 on the Jimmy Hoffa case.

"I heard about a drawing job at school and went right to the television station," she recalled. "They made me draw someone at the station to see how I worked."

Kabrin said her courtroom work must be quick and accurate. "In just a few minutes, it may be necessary to capture the defendant, attorney, the judge and jury foreman."

"I have to draw them in action, but I also have to draw what the reporter is writing. My illustrations are done so the camera can pan. They tape my stuff right in the court and send it via microwave to the station for editing."

She's a regular in courts such as Recorder's, the federal courts, district and circuit courts in southeastern Michigan and elsewhere.

"When cameras are allowed in the courtroom, it will end a time in which it was the artist that physically re-



Carole Kabrin caught the mental and physical attitude of her subject, Victor Moore, in this courtroom drawing.

corded current events with pencil and paint," she said.

KABRIN has worked for all three television stations locally and for the CBS network. Presently, she works exclusively for Channel 7 and ABC.

"My work has appeared on the networks, as well as 'Good Morning America,' the CBS Morning News, and 'Nightline,'" she said. "In 1980 I worked five weeks in Winamac, Ind.,

for CBS doing the Ford Pinto trial. It was quite a thrill seeing my drawings on with Walter Cronkite three to four nights a week on national television."

"It was very hard work. I drew for 11 hours a day. I didn't get much because at lunch I was finishing the morning drawings so I could finish the afternoon drawings in time for shooting and feed the tapes back to New York to be put on the air."

"Each network shared the satellite, so if the drawings weren't done, they didn't get on the air. They got done."

Another exciting story, Kabrin described, was coverage of the Republican Convention in Detroit for WJW-TV.

"I did the behind-the-scenes drawings of the news operation," she said.

"I WAS allowed on the floor for 45 minutes. A person needed a million passes to get on the convention floor. It was very exciting."

In 1983, the ABC network sent Kabrin to Chicago to cover a deportation hearing for "Nightline." A black South African professor was being deported because of problems with his passport. He was afraid to go back because he had spoken out against the ruling government.

Kabrin's vital tools are her beeper, a sufficient supply of paper, sharpened pencils and pen in her car. Added to the skill she has acquired of working rapidly and under pressure, she is an acknowledged expert in her field.

"I feel extremely fortunate to be able to do what I get my degree to do, to draw," she said. "Drawing for television news demands everything I ever studied and more. It's a very

special kind of drawing.

"The subject is always moving, and I usually have three to six drawings to do to fulfill the assignment. There has to be a picture of the defendant, the defense attorney, the judge, the prosecutor, the jury and what's called an overall sketch or 'situationer.'"

"IF THERE are witnesses, then I have to stop and draw each witness. It's difficult. They must be good likenesses, drawn with a loose, expressive line, and with feeling, and all in a short time."

Kabrin said there's no time to make mistakes, but the work is exciting and she never gets bored.

Another interest of the artist is drawing horses whose action correlates well with the action she has illustrated in courtrooms. "I love horses and I love capturing them in movement," she said.

Presently working on her master's degree in drawing at WSU, Kabrin is proud of the work she does because she said it helps inform people and preserve the freedoms we enjoy.

The illustrator in her keeps her hoping for a network job in Washington, but the artist in her also dreams of being a fine artist and exhibiting her work.

Barton's mixed-up baby boomers ring true

By Hugh Gallagher
staff writer

THE EL CHOLO FEELING
FASSES, by Frederick Barton.
Peachtree Publishers, \$14.95.

Every so often a book comes along that speaks to the problems of a specific generation. "The El Cholo Feeling" is about hard times for baby boomers.

One suspects that this is Barton's semi-autobiographical coming-of-age novel. It is a dark comedy, bizarrely amusing and deeply disturbing. It's about growing up in the South (New Orleans), being forced into a career (academia), and most of all, trying to make a modern marriage work.

Barton has an incredible ear for dialogue, especially the angry give and take of marital arguments, during which two people who love each other seem to always find ways to wound.

THE BOOM alternates objective third-person narrative with a first-person monologue written by Richard James to explain to the UCLA history department committee why he isn't writing a dissertation. The book looks back on James' life up to the mid 1970s when, at age 34, he is giving up an academic career. But the heart of the novel is a painful examination of James' marriage to Faith, a woman torn between a

review

sense of insecurity and dependency and a desire to be free and equal in all things.

This is a classic, male exploration of that famous Freud question "What do women want?" The only conclusion James reaches, or anyone can, is "who really knows." The reverse is also true here, "What do men want?" Even they don't know.

The objective chapters are meant, I suppose, to provide a less biased view of things, especially in the more dramatic scenes, James being too much a Southern gentleman to detail in his memoir all the bizarre incidents of his marriage. But this technique doesn't quite work. The objective chapters are still from James' point of view. Faith's behavior is presented from James' bewildered reaction. But this is perhaps good antidote to the flood of women's books detailing the basic degeneracy and selfishness of men.

James is sympathetic to his wife's desires, but he cannot contend with her shifting moods, her constant criticism and her demands that he succeed. Yet



Frederick Barton

he retains a possessive, destructive desire for her.

IN all of this Barton delivers a devastatingly accurate portrait of our mixed-up world. Women grew up learning one thing and now must cope with whole new expectations. But the old expectations live on. The same is true for men. Men grow up being told they must succeed, get ahead, compete.

Men who fall short of expectations are quickly cast aside as losers. Yet men, now, also must be there for family, must be sensitive to the demands of their wives and lovers, must be capable of emotion but strong enough not to show it. Superman and Superwoman end up colliding when it all falls to pieces.

James is a driver, an excellent student, a basketball star, an achiever. He grew up in that strange of contradictions, a liberal Southern Baptist home. He was praised from grade school for his maturity. He is a sensitive lover, eager but always giving. Then, one day, perfection becomes a grind. James realizes that he doesn't want to become the historian that everybody wants him to be. His memoir is an attack on the academic community that wants to weld him with open arms. It is an attack on being forced to live up to the expectations of others to the point where you lose contact with your own expectations.

Faith is bright, attractive, often good-humored, ambitious and sexy. But she is also insecure, disappointed, pulled in several directions at one time (the demands of marriage, radical feminism, a need to please men, a need to succeed equally with her husband). Every word becomes a challenge, every act an assault. Nothing is taken at

This is an important book, perhaps one of the best, most accurate looks at what has been called the "baby boom" generation.

face value by Faith because she can't trust that stranger who shares her bed. She drives him away and calls him back and drives him away again.

The subject matter is serious, but Barton is a good storyteller. He uses humor and exaggeration to make his points. James' favorite book is Joseph Heller's "Catch 22," and though "El Cholo" never achieves Heller's grand scope of the absurd, the tone is very similar. We are dealing with something important here — let's laugh at it before we cry.

The book has some explicit but curiously sensitive sexual scenes.

Barton doesn't tie things up neatly. Relationships do not begin and end simply; Barton understands that life is a

series of half endings and tentative new beginnings.

This is an important book, perhaps one of the best, most accurate looks at what has been called the "baby boom" generation. It is certainly more critical and complex than the film "The Big Chill" with which it shares some themes.

The title, by the way, refers to the full feeling of satisfaction James gets from dinner at a certain Mexican restaurant and the yearning for that satisfaction.

This is Barton's first novel, but the 37-year-old novelist is a talent we'll hear from again. — *Wendell Berry*

Barton's next novel is "The El Cholo Feeling," a semi-autobiographical novel about a man's search for meaning in life. — *Wendell Berry*