

Fabric art attracts worldwide acclaim

Noted artist Calman Shemi is flying in from his home in Israel for a reception at 8 p.m. today at the Jewish Community Center of West Bloomfield, where an exhibition of his soft paintings and acrylics on canvas continues through Feb. 7.

He had an exhibit at the same location about a year ago, so his return, again under the auspices of the Danielle Peleg Gallery of West Bloomfield, says something about the public's response to his unusual art.

Shemi, born in 1939 in Mendoza, Argentina, moved to Israel when he was 22 and was a member of Kibbutz Carmia until 1981. He studied at the School of Ceramics and Sculpture of Mendoza and in Israel with Rudy Lehman, a German-Israeli sculptor.

In 1977 he began to create the soft paintings which have since brought him international attention. For these paintings, using fabric as the medium, he draws on influences of nature, trees, fields and landscapes.

Shemi said he felt very close to earth and nature while living at the Kibbutz. He wrote that his work is also influenced by ancient African, Islamic and Israeli culture and the implements of everyday life such as pottery, tools, sculptures and ritual utensils.

He said that much of his work over the years has been with architects and interior designers. That collaboration is represented in his art, since many of his soft paintings are large, brilliantly colored pieces, abstract or semi-abstract, in design that would be appropriate for large spaces.

He wrote, "I know I succeed in awakening in people a longing, a familiarity integral in my works — landscapes people feel they have visited or dreamed about. The key to my work is simultaneously simplistic and complex — but neither arrogant nor pretentious. This popular understanding is what I believe to be the inherent appeal of my soft paintings."

His soft paintings are in public and private collections in Israel, China, England, Spain, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, the United States, Nigeria and France.

The exhibition at the Jewish Community Center is in the Hamburger Exhibition Lobby, 6600 West Maple, West Bloomfield. It is open during regular hours.



Calman Shemi, trained as a sculptor, has developed an unusual fabric art. He uses wool, felt and other fibers, which are dyed, cut by hand and arranged in layers much as paint is applied to a canvas.



Portrait of state

"A Day in the Life of Michigan" is the theme of the photo show at Somerset Mall through Feb. 7. Last June 1, 30 photographers were assigned an area in the state to photograph in a 24-hour span. Pictured is one done by Maynard Juell, which is part of the traveling exhibition. The stop at Somerset is sponsored by Meteor. Photo of Troy, Somerset Mall is at Coolidge and Big Beaver, Troy.

Making Detroit debut

The Vienna Schubert Trio will make its Detroit debut under the auspices of the Chamber Music Society of Detroit at 8 p.m. Tuesday at Orchestra Hall of Detroit.

The program will include the Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 120 by Franz Schubert, the Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 83 by Schumann and the Trio in B Flat Major, Op. 89 by Schubert.

The musicians are Boris Kuschner, violin; Martin Hornstein, cello; and Claus-Christian Schuster, piano. The Vienna Trio is trio-in-residence at the Vienna Conservatory.

The series will continue with the Alban Berg Trio, March 2; the Salomon String Quartet, April 16; the Tokyo String Quartet, April 30; and the Cleveland Quartet, May 13.

For ticket information, call the Orchestra Hall box office, 633-3700.

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