



Mario McGee editor/591-2300

Thursday, July 20, 1989 O&E

(F1E)

Concours D'Elegance

Finally — automobile accepted as fine art

By Corinne Abatt
staff writer

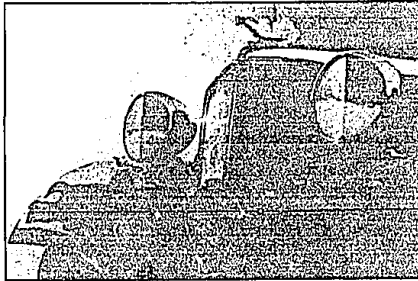
ARTIST PETE MAIER runs on as many cylinders as the vintage cars he paints and draws — Rolls-Royces, Duesenbergs, Packards, LaSalle's, Mercedes and Auburns.

Maier, poster artist for the Concours d'Elegance at Meadow Brook Hall on Sunday, Aug. 6, is a man with a mission. When he left General Motors as senior designer for the Chevrolet, Pontiac and Cadillac divisions in 1980, to become a full-time artist, he was determined "to bring the automobile as a subject into the realm of fine art rather than illustrative art."

To do this, he traveled a circuitous route. He concentrated on subjects such as animals and people and moved to rural Pennsylvania, convenient to New York City.

He established himself as a versatile artist who delighted in doing larger than life paintings of cows and horses and still lifes as well as cars. He eventually found two New York City galleries ready to handle his work and promote him widely — Louis K. Metzel Gallery and Gallery Henoch.

HE WORKS IN GRAPHITE, egg tempera, oil, acrylic air brush and printers' ink. PHH Fleet America



"Chrysler Imperial," an acrylic by Tom Hale of Northville, chairman of the Invitational art exhibition at the Concours, will be in the art show along with works by a dozen other artists.

recently bought one of his drawings for a record \$30,000, a distinct improvement from what his drawings and paintings used to sell for at the Shain Park arts fair when he was living in Troy and working for GM.

When he works with classic cars as his subjects, he frequently will do the same basic subject in each of the five mediums in which he works. "Each one is handled in a different way," he said.

The size in which he works, the planning, detail and the techniques which he has developed since those early days of his career give him a special place in the art world. He has perfected a technique in his front views of cars of showing much more in seemingly perfect perspective than the human eye could possibly see.

This requires not only an intimate knowledge of the vehicle, but great technical and artistic skill as well. It's like a camera's fish-eye lens view or frog's eye perspective without any distortion. From a video which Maier made, it's clear that there's very little guesswork in this process.

"My auto paintings are the biggest being done in the world today. . . The fine art world has accepted my autos as fine art — but, boy, that took a while." The largest is 6 by 7 feet and he plans to do side views in the 8 by 26 foot range.

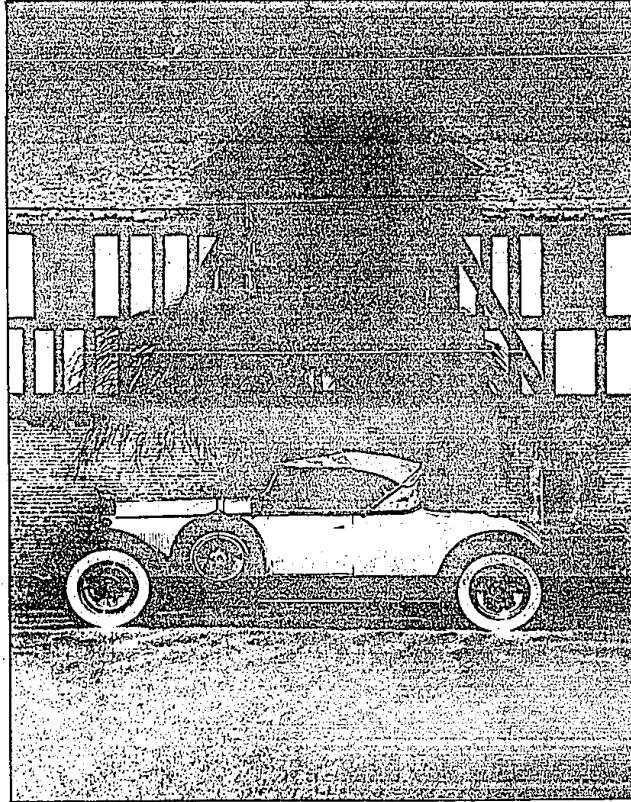
HE SAID HE HAS SOLD more than 400 paintings since he left GM in 1980, but he hasn't had a one man show — not because he hasn't been asked, but because everything he does sells so fast, he can't accumulate a body of work.

"It sometimes takes six to eight weeks to do one piece. The water-color paper is imported from England on a roll. I build my own stretchers."

He said paper is affixed to the stretcher and every inch is wetted down before he begins.

His egg tempera painting for the Concours d'Elegance poster is 48 by 64 inches. He said, "I had a big frame made and I finished it up to sort of look like the architecture at Meadow Brook. It weighs 75 pounds." It will be sold at the special preview auction on Saturday, Aug. 6, before the Concours.

Maier builds his own frames as well as his own stretchers. He said that the big ones framed, properly



Pete Maier's painting of the 1929 Packard for ground. He has designed a frame for the original this year's Concours D'Elegance poster is not, to be auctioned, that also suggests that against a Meadow Brook mansion-type back-type of architecture.

set back and ready for hanging weigh 185 pounds each.

Maier learned last spring that Automobile Quarterly will be doing a full color ten-page write-up of his art for next spring's issue. While the publication has done illustrators in the past, he is the first fine artist to be featured.

TOM HALE OF Northville, who was also a GM designer before he left to become a full-time artist, is chairman of the art exhibition. Hale, like Maier, not only does paintings of cars, but handles a variety of other subjects adeptly as

well. He is one of 13 nationally recognized artists in this year's art exhibition at the Meadow Brook Pavilion.

Hale said the proceeds for last year's auction, which lasted about 30 minutes, were more than \$50,000. He predicts this year's will top that. Part of the proceeds from the preview auction will benefit Meadow Brook Hall.

The Concours is the largest annual single-day fund-raiser for Meadow Brook Hall.

Maier learned last spring that Automobile Quarterly will be doing a full color ten-page write-up of his art for next spring's issue. While the publication has done illustrators in the past, he is the first fine artist to be featured.

TOM HALE OF Northville, who was also a GM designer before he left to become a full-time artist, is chairman of the art exhibition. Hale, like Maier, not only does paintings of cars, but handles a variety of other subjects adeptly as

well. He is one of 13 nationally recognized artists in this year's art exhibition at the Meadow Brook Pavilion.

Hale said the proceeds for last year's auction, which lasted about 30 minutes, were more than \$50,000. He predicts this year's will top that. Part of the proceeds from the preview auction will benefit Meadow Brook Hall.

The Concours is the largest annual single-day fund-raiser for Meadow Brook Hall.

Concours d'Elegance features art events

The 11th annual Concours d'Elegance benefiting Meadow Brook Hall, a cultural institution of Oakland University, Rochester, will feature an invitational automotive fine art exhibition and sale on Sunday, Aug. 6, as well as a variety of art activities throughout the weekend.

Starting with a Friday evening preview in the Shotwell-Gustafson Pavilion sponsored by Autometric of Royal Oak, more than 2,000 collectors will be invited to examine and purchase featured art show pieces prior to the Concours opening.

The art show judging will take place at the preview reception and three winners will be announced at the end of the evening. Art show judges Alf Bogusky, director of the Art Gallery of Windsor, Jan van der Marek, curator of 20th Century Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts and Charles Jordan, vice president, GM design staff, will present three Awards of Excellence. Each award of Excellence includes a \$1,500 cash prize.

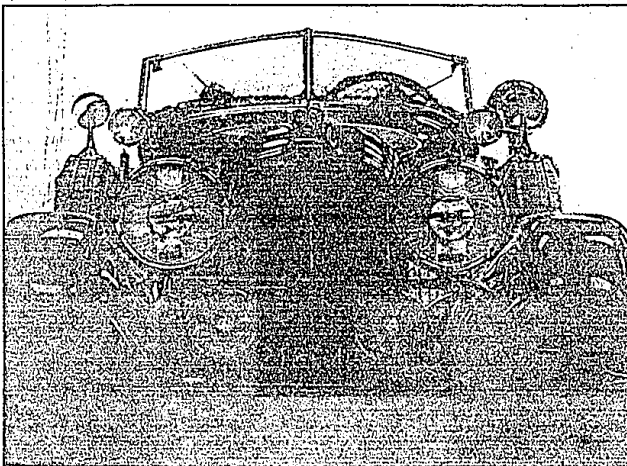
Saturday's itinerary will feature a formal banquet for Concours participants, committee members and invited dignitaries. The official

poster painting for the Concours as well as a piece by each exhibiting artist will be auctioned during the banquet to benefit the Hall.

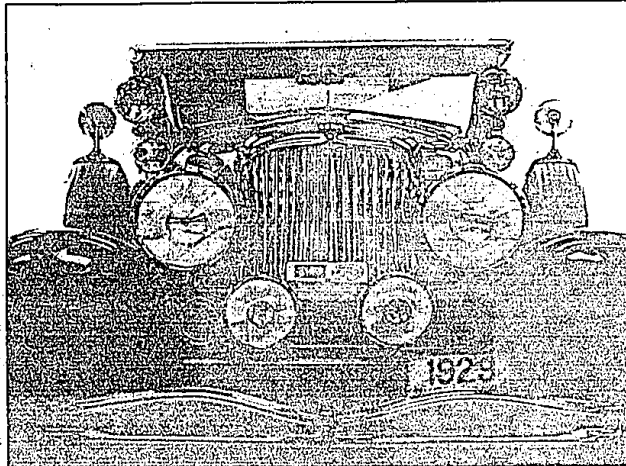
All the invited artists will attend the art show and auction, including poster artist Peter Maier of Buck Hill Falls, Pa., and Dennis Brown of Claremont, Calif., the poster artist for Meadow Brook Historic Races, the Concours sister event. The art show brochure will be provided by Thompson Advertising of Farmington Hills.

Invited artists include Jorge Ferrerya-Basso of Blochfeldheim, West Germany; Larry Braun of Loveland, Colo.; N. Gray Counts of Clarkston; Ken Dallison of Toronto, Canada; Ken Eberts of Temecula, Calif.; Dennis Frits of Chelsea, N.Y.; Tom Hale of Farmington Hills; Bill Neale of Dallas, Texas; J. Paul Nesse of Minneapolis, Minn.; Thierry Thompson of Toronto, Canada; and Stanley Wanless of Astoria, Ore.

The Concours is open to the public 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 6. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children ages 5-12 years. Children four years old and younger will be admitted free. Call Meadow Brook Hall at 370-3140 for details.



1929 Auburn (boatall speedster, graphite on paper) illustrates how Pete Maier keeps everything in seemingly perfect perspective while showing more than a person could actually see at a single glance. It is 72 by 67.5 inches.



Pete Maier's graphite on paper of a 1929 Duesenberg (dual cowl Phaeton) is a wonderful example of mechanical artistry and design in reality and on paper. It is 72 by 67.5 inches and