

'Courting' favor

Atrium Gallery has eclectic focus

By Arlene Funke
special writer

SUNSHINE pours through the windows of Northville's Atrium Gallery, capturing the shiny beauty of hand-made gold, silver and enamel jewelry.

Displayed nearby are bold, colorful acrylic and water color paintings of vintage automobiles by Barbara Demgen, a Livonia painter and art teacher whose work recently was featured at the gallery.

Dominating another wall are several large paintings of ballerinas by Northville artist Linda Banks Ord. Also on display are unusual pieces of pottery, glass bowls, sculptures and natural-fiber

wall hangings.

Atrium Gallery, tucked into the Old Town mini mall on Center Street in downtown Northville, opened in November. Around 100 artists are represented, half from Michigan.

"OUR GOAL IS to represent fine artists in an affordable price range," said Heidi Elzelman of Farmington, one of the Atrium owners. "There are so many talented people in this area."

The gallery was the brainchild of Patricia Kresin Jania of Farmington Hills, who has formed a solid network of artist friends through years of collecting expressionistic paintings and sculptures.

"It just came to me out of the

blue," said Jania, a former Livonia Public Schools teacher and real-estate saleswoman. "I happened to see a space that appealed to me and I thought it would make a nice gallery."

Jania, 55, teamed up with Elzelman, a 43-year-old teacher of special-education classes at Buchanan Elementary School in Livonia, who shares an interest in collecting art. The third partner is JoAnn Lyall, 50, a former Livonia resident now living in Northville, who for many years, was a computer analyst.

Elzelman began collecting lithographs as a teenager and is a long-time member of the Detroit Institute of Arts Founders Society. Her own pieces include contemporary water colors, pottery and paper sculpture.

"I'M JUST AN odd mixture, but primarily people (themes)," Elzelman said. "I'm not the least bit talented myself. But I love to surround myself with beautiful things."

Lyall contributes a good business sense. She is an accomplished baker and has a good eye for what will attract buyers, according to Elzelman.

The shop occupies just 700 square feet of space in a courtyard, or atrium section of the subdivided former Schrader Furniture Co. store at 113 N. Center in Northville. The entrance is off the city parking area at the back. Adjoining tenants are stores which sell antique furniture, home accessories, women and children's clothing and Victorian dolls.

Despite the small space there's



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

JoAnn Lyall (left), Heidi Elzelman and Pat Jania in the Atrium Gallery they have opened in downtown Northville.

an ambience of openness. The selection of pieces is eclectic.

"Finding the artists has been probably one of the most fun things," Jania said. "In many cases, the artists are friends of artists we know."

For example, Demgen is a colleague of Elzelman's in the Livonia school system. And Rochester artist Judith B. Riviere, who has a large pencil drawing at the gallery, is a sister who is married to one of Lyall's friends.

"That's what we're talking about — the network," Lyall said.

The partners have traveled to several states to obtain a wide selection of pieces. They also attend art shows and special exhibits to get fresh ideas.

PRICES START AT \$10 for a pair of handmade earrings to

\$3,500 for a 4-by-4-foot-long acrylic painting. The majority are in the \$100 to \$500 range, according to Elzelman.

"I know there are certain galleries whose league we can never match," Elzelman said. "We want to be the best we can be."

The gallery already has had several special exhibits. Several of Demgen's paintings of exotic and antique cars were featured in a show, and another exhibit focused on award-winning artist Ord. At Valentine's day, the theme highlighted jewelry.

Several pottery artists are represented, including the sun-washed, pink, aqua and ochre bowls, pots and vases of Bonnie Greenwald of Manchester. Prices range from \$24 for a bud vase to \$300 for a bowl.

Also exhibited are several unusual clay sculptures and wall hang-

ings of Eugene Kroick of Trenton, an artist strongly influenced by water themes. A \$79 wall hanging, entitled River Whiskers, resembles an anemone or coral-like creature. His blue, green and brown sculpture, called Sea Apple, costs \$980.

The stock is rotated at least once a month.

Business hours are consistent with the other shops in the mall, with some seasonal fluctuation. Current hours are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Thursday, and on Saturdays. The shop stays open until 6 p.m. Fridays, and is closed on Sundays.

"What we're trying to do is establish local credentials," Elzelman said. "Our shows have been well-received. What we hope is that people feel free to come and enjoy it with us."



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Currently on display in the new Atrium Gallery in Northville are charming fuzzies by fiber artist Lynn Spitz-Nagel. The work of over 100 artists — half from Michigan — is on display.

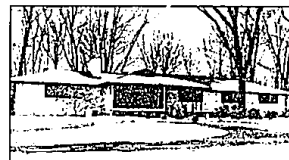
The Prudential Great Lakes Realty



FRANKLIN CHARM Overlooking Franklin Hills Country Club this Colonial features master bedroom with private balcony and bath, 2 fireplaces and wood burning stove, living room, hardwood floors, dining room and 3 1/2 baths. Includes guest quarter with kitchen and bath. \$330,000 626-9100



SPECTACULAR PRIVATE CUL-DE-SAC SETTING! Great for entertaining, this Contemporary home offers an open floor plan. Presents 2 fireplaces, custom paneling, parquet and hardwood floors, doorway to dock and Inground pool. Includes living and family rooms, 4 bedrooms and 4 baths. \$339,000 626-9100



GRACIOUS RANCH SET ON PRIVATE WOODED LOT! Franklin Village is the location of this special home featuring cove ceilings, hardwood floors, skylights, cathedral and beamed ceilings, walls of glass, great room, 3 bedrooms and breakfast area. Includes 2 stall stable and paddock. \$269,000 651-6100 06-B-3928



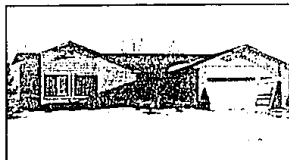
TRANSFEE'S DELIGHT! Better than new with all the amenities, this Tudor home presents hardwood floors, 2 bay windows, cathedral ceilings in family room and master bedroom, fireplace, wet bar, doorway to dock, gourmet kitchen, 4 bedrooms and library. \$267,900 626-9100 02-B-3662



LET THE SUNSHINE IN! Stunning Contemporary is accented by lots of large windows. Highlights vaulted beam ceiling and natural fireplace in family room, 4 bedrooms, master bedroom with dressing area and bath, library with built-ins and neutral decor. \$249,900 626-9100 02-B-3926



RAMBLEWOOD LAKE ESTATES. New construction Contemporary Townhouses and Ranches. Showcases skylights, vaulted ceilings, marble fireplace, jacuzzi, 3 doorways and wet bar. Features great room, library, 2 bedrooms, 2 baths and 2 car garage. Prices range from \$199,900 to \$229,900. 478-5000 07-B-0418



Beautiful wooded area and pond set the stage for this truly wonderful contemporary Ranch. Showcasing whirlpool in dramatic master suite, 3 skylights in vaulted great room with marble fireplace and formal kitchen. Three bedrooms, 2 baths and formal dining room complete this beauty! \$184,900 626-9100 02-B-3344



ESTATE/PROBATE SALE of house plus lots of acreage. Opportunity for developer, builder or great investment. Could facilitate a 19.5 cluster home community. Current residence offers 4 bedrooms, large living room with fireplace, formal dining room, library and 2 1/2 baths. \$175,000 626-9100 02-A-3822



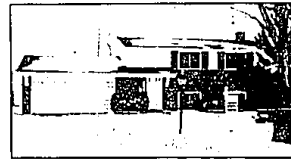
ONE OF THE AREA'S FINEST! Recently remodeled spacious Colonial showcases many amenities. Presents expansive living room with bay window, arched fireplace and bar in family room, formal dining room, library could be 5th bedroom and doorway to inviting patio. One year warranty! \$169,900 626-9100 02-B-3882



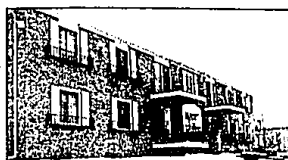
ALMOST NEW AND IN EXCELLENT CONDITION. Two bedroom Condo in FARMINGTON HILLS features most private location, great room with fireplace, formal dining room, all appliance kitchen with snack bar and vertical blinds throughout. Complete with 2 car garage, central air and patio. \$113,900 626-9100 02-B-1952



LOVELY DOLL HOUSE WITH BIRMINGHAM SCHOOLS! Nestled among mature trees, this sharp 4 bedroom, 1 1/2 bath Cape Cod is decorated in neutrals. Features remodeled kitchen, hardwood floors, living room with fireplace, newer roof and furnace and 2 car garage. Move right in! \$81,900 688-8900 05-A-3785



CONTEMPORARY FLAIR THROUGHOUT! Professionally decorated this residence boasts mirrored doors, track and recess lighting, new kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, large living room and breakfast nook. Includes 2 car garage, security system, patio and many updates! \$78,000 626-9100 02-B-3842



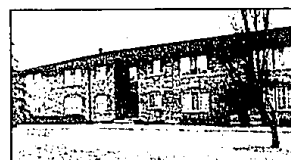
START OUT RIGHT! Immaculate and adorable describes this upper Farmington Hills Condo. Features 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, beautiful parquet floors, living room with doorway to private balcony, formal dining room and delightful kitchen. Quiet adult setting with lovely grounds. \$87,500 626-9100 02-B-3684



PEACEFUL LIVING! Quiet adult complex condo offers courtyard views. Located on the main floor this home features living room with doorway to balcony, formal dining room, 2 bedrooms, kitchen with eating area, lots of storage and 2 full baths. Convenient location! \$63,000 626-9100 02-B-3454



CHARMING DOLLHOUSE CONDO! Wonderfully decorated this upper unit condo offers a comfortable lifestyle. Features include spacious living room, formal dining room, delightful kitchen, bedroom, central air and 1 bath. Complex has pool and tennis courts. \$49,900 626-9100 02-B-3898



WHY RENT WHEN YOU CAN OWN! Close to shopping, schools and expressways this Condo is sure to go fast. Features include 2 bedrooms, master bedroom with private baths, expansive living room, 2 baths and wonderful kitchen with breakfast nook. \$47,000 626-9100

The Prudential

Great Lakes Realty



BIRMINGHAM/BLOOMFIELD
1520 N. Woodward
(at Long Lake)
646-6000

ROCHESTER
1460 Walton Blvd
(at Livernois)
651-8850

FRANKLIN/FARMINGTON
31000 Northwestern Hwy.
(at 13 Mile)
626-9100

WEST BLOOMFIELD
4316 Orchard Lake
(at Lone Pine)
851-8100

TROY
3150 Livernois
(at Big Beaver)
689-8900

NOVI NORTHVILLE
37000 Grand River
(at Halstead)
478-5000

OPEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9 a.m.-9 p.m. SATURDAY 9 a.m.-5 p.m. OPEN SUNDAYS
The Prudential and are service marks of The Prudential Insurance Company of America