

Creative Living

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Bob Sklar editor/591-2300

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Hawthorne's epoxygraphs are on display

By Linda Ann Chomlin
special writer

GREGORY HAWTHORNE refers to his three-dimensional lithograph wall sculptures as epoxygraphs. His innovative lithographs, created in the futuristic medium of epoxy with figures in relief, are on exhibit at Posner Gallery in Farmington Hills.

"Hawthorne recently had a one-man show in Tokyo," said Karen Posner during an interview in her gallery.

Karen, of Farmington Hills, and her mother, Madeline, of West Bloomfield, co-own Posner Gallery. Originally in the Prudential Town Center in Southfield for four years, the Posners moved to Northwestern Highway in Farmington Hills one year ago.

Gregory Hawthorne describes his multi-faceted constructions as lithographs on hand-cut wood relief, then baked. According to Hawthorne, there is no casting. The pieces are hand assembled, one at a time.

Once Hawthorne applies the epoxy resin over the relief, then bakes it, the surface forms a strong, hard, resistant enamel finish, like polymer.

Hawthorne's "Music Box" is composed of one central female figure in relief with a bird perched on her extended leg as she reaches for the crank of a music box. A similar, but smaller, surrealistic figure floats in the background. Ultramarine blue floods the background while light crimson colors the main figure.

The "Music Box" is available in two sizes, 37 1/2 by 31 inches at \$2,500, and 4 by 6 feet at \$12,500. Both include the choice of a white or black lacquer frame.

IN HAWTHORNE'S "River's Inn," the male figure in relief is harlequin-like with drink in hand. The female figure in the foreground has two faces, one frontal-view imposed over a profile, cocktail with olive in hand.

"Little People" by Hawthorne has two character figures in relief,

'To give the gallery more appeal, we try to offer a full range of mediums and techniques.'

Madeline Posner
gallery co-owner

one male, one female. The female figure holds a miniature man in the palm of her hand. To her right on a pedestal, stands a leprechaun-size female.

In the composition, colored in violet and hot pink, Hawthorne uses thick Matisse-like lines to outline figures and objects. "Little People" retails for \$1,700.

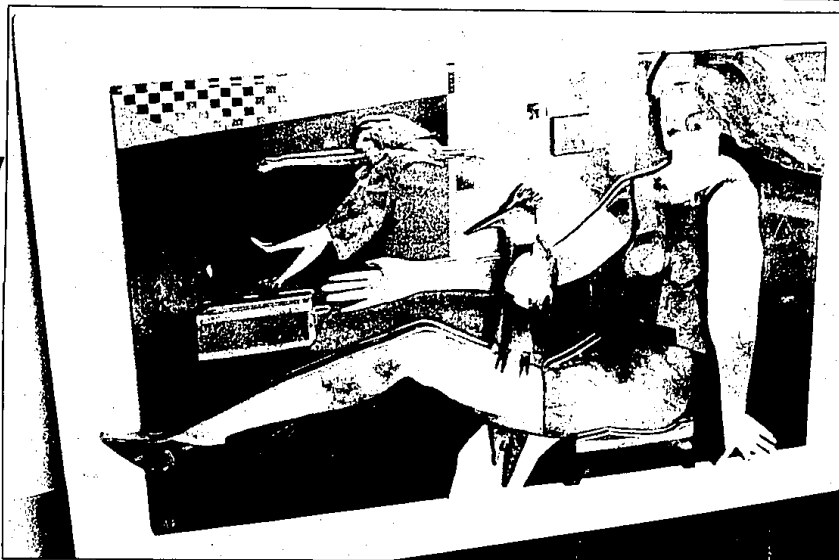
Although he now lives in California, Hawthorne originally is from Michigan. His epoxygraphs are in the collections of the Impression 5 Museum in Lansing, Michigan State University, Dow-Corning, and the Slinger Corp. in Chicago.

Madeline Posner said the gallery staff prides itself on being "very contemporary, as opposed to traditional." The fine arts gallery leans toward abstraction with a vast array of three-dimensional wall sculptures, along with epoxygraphs by Gregory Hawthorne.

CALIFORNIAN BUCK Levine's circular wall sculpture is made from enameled aluminum. Geometrically cut pieces are interconnected, forming a metal collage of color in three dimensions. Levine's wall sculpture is priced at \$2,500.

New Yorker David Gerstein's one-dimensional, freestanding cat parade across the gallery floor. The cats, serigraphs on aluminum, are entitled "Braque/Van Gogh," "Early Miro" and "Kadinsky/Lichenstein." The floor cats are \$475 apiece.

"To give the gallery more appeal, we try to offer a full range of mediums and techniques," Madeline Posner said. "Clients are asking for wall art, paintings. We have a lot of requests for canvases in-



Gregory Hawthorne's "Music Box" is a lithograph on hand-cut wood relief, with epoxy resin applied by hand, then baked. When the epoxy dries over the wood relief, it creates

a three-dimensional effect. "Music Box," in a black or white lacquer frame, is priced at \$2,500 and \$12,500, depending on the size.

stead of paper, and also more representational art."

Dale Techner Sparage of West Bloomfield works in oil on canvas. She's creating a series of nudes entitled "Naked Bride."

"I, II, and III" from the series show a progression in color from dark to light, as well as a tendency to total abstraction. From burgundy and black, the nudes brighten to white, gray and flesh tones with tinges of pink in the skin. Sparage is working on a masters degree in art therapy at Wayne State University. Her nudes retail at \$1,200 each.

JOAN WIENZEL of Florida creates wall-size, three-dimensional wall sculptures from acrylic modeling paste over metal on wood. Her "Three Frames" uses positive and negative forms of squares, rectangles and spheres interposed on an open frame background, texturally painted in impressionistic style. The geometric piece, "Three Frames," is priced at \$7,700.

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One male and one female figure compose the central theme of Gregory Hawthorne's "Little People." Black Matisse-like lines outline his figures. Violet colors the composition, as does hot pink. "Little People" is priced at \$1,700.

Staff photos
by
Sharon LeMieux

Musicmaker's roots run deep

By Janice Tiger-Kramer
special writer

Little of Karen Nixon's musical career has been planned, yet the accomplished musician-turned-conductor couldn't be more content with the way things have turned out.

The 39-year-old musician-conductor, who originally played accordion, started playing the French horn during her sophomore year at Livonia's Franklin High for two reasons: she wanted to be in the marching band and the school needed another horn player.

"The accordion just isn't a marching band instrument," Nixon said, laughing. "So I took the horn home with a fingering chart and joined the band."

Since she already could read scores and was a gifted musician, Nixon was a natural on the instrument. She soon took a place in the school's symphonic band and orchestra.

Beside being a talented musician, Nixon was smart enough to earn a math scholarship to Lawrence Tech-

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JOHN STORMZAND/Staff photographer

Conductor Karen Nixon says she is "doing what I was intended to do."

Enjoy brunch with dulcimer music

By Linda Ann Chomlin
special writer

If you enjoy the music of medieval stringed instruments along with your Sunday brunch, circle Nov. 4 on your calendar.

That's when the Livonia Arts Commission will host a buffet-style brunch with dulcimer music by the Felicity Strings in the Atrium of the Livonia Civic Center Library Auditorium, Farmington Road and Five Mile.

The musical brunch runs from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost is \$7 per person. The brunch is a trial music event that "could quite possibly turn into a series like the Detroit Institute of Arts' Brunch with Bach," said

Livonia arts commissioner George LaForge.

THE DULCIMER group, Felicity Strings, consists of a hammered dulcimer, recorder, string bass, glockenspiel and folk harp.

Jim and Patricia Tait of Redford Township and Patricia Mallie of Livonia compose the musical ensemble specializing in dulcimer music. The group has been performing together for five years, most recently at Plymouth's Old Village Applefest in September.

Selections, which will be represented by the dulcimer group at the Sunday brunch, include the seasonal music of Christmas and traditional folk music.

THE DULCIMER, which appeared in Western Europe in the

12th century, originated in the Orient. The instrument is strung with wires that are struck with wooden hammers.

Dulcimer strings do not have dampers. When a note is struck, it continues to vibrate as the next note rings out, creating a note upon note effect.

The sweet melody of the dulcimer sounding through the Livonia Civic Center Library's bright and airy Atrium is sure to enchant the audience. "There are only 200 tickets available," LaForge said.

Tickets are available at the Livonia Civic Center Library Gift Shop, through Livonia City Hall Community Resources, 421-2000, Ext. 351, and by calling the Livonia Arts Hotline: 425-2327.

Balustrade, brunch, Baker House: all very special

ROUND TOWN:

● Going up — Gov. Fred Warner, Farmington's favorite son at the turn of the century, would be proud if he were alive today.

Thanks to a major grant secured by the Quakerstown Questers, a balustrade once again will adorn the front porch overlooking at the Farmington Historical Museum in downtown Farmington.

Adding a new wood railing will make the 123-year-old, two-story mansion appear the way it did in 1910, when Gov. Fred Warner, Michigan's first three-term governor, called it home.

The home's architecture is an example of Victorian Italianate. And balustrades are a Victorian feature.

The Quakerstown Questers, dedicated to historic restoration and

preservation, landed a \$6,000 grant from the International Organization of Questers to add the railing. The local chapter will chip in \$50 to meet the \$6,050 cost.

Says Dick Carvell, the museum's tireless curator, "It makes me feel good when someone or some group steps forward on the museum's behalf."

Me, too.

A Farmington Historical Society member, I join Carvell in applauding the Questers for taking the reins of significant historical restoration effort.

Thanks to the Questers' initiative, the Farmington City Council has last week earmarked \$4,400 from the museum budget to improve the porch's roof and cornices to accommodate the balustrade, which should be up by December.



Bob Sklar

Community plaudits also are appropriate for Farmington architect Carl Gaiser, who donated his professional services and found a qualified contractor.

The Questers, incidentally, aren't strangers to the mansion. They provide not only museum docents but also steady contributions.

With \$6,700 in other exterior improvements nearly done, the Farmington Historical Museum indeed should, as Carvell put it, "look slick

as a whistle" by the holidays.

Ironically, the TLC given to the museum is reflective of the era when the balustrade first went up. That's when Gov. Warner, the English-born foster child of Rhoda Botsford Warner and P.D. Warner, "resumed life in Farmington with the affection and interest with which he always bore his hometown."

● Music watch — Thinking big. That's what I like about the Livonia Arts Commission's latest endeavor: a brunch with dulcimer music.

The buffet brunch, with dulcimer music by the Felicity Strings in the Livonia Civic Center Library Atrium, is billed a trial event that could become another Brunch with Bach in the DIA.

The sweet sounds of the dulcimer,

a medieval stringed instrument, will provide the perfect melody for the trailblazing musical journey.

The price is right, \$7 per person. And the setting, the Atrium, is a fitting backdrop for the chamber music-style program.

For tickets, call the Livonia arts hotline: 425-2327.

● Historic gem — I can't help but admire how dashing the historic Baker House in downtown Plymouth looks.

The Italianate-style house, built in 1875, is the centerpiece of a picture-postcard setting at 235 S. Main.

"It's a great example of adaptive re-use, restoring an old house for use as a business but keeping the historic

character intact," says Beth Stewart, Plymouth Historical Museum director.

The state and national historic site is the former home of Henry Baker, founder of the Plymouth Iron Windmill Co., which later became Datsy Manufacturing, famous maker of BB guns.

Attorney David Frost, whose law offices are inside, deserves a salute for not only restoring the site in 1982, but also maintaining the original design: the peaking roof, bay windows, small porch and decorative friezes.

Bob Sklar is the O&E's assistant managing editor for special projects.