

Tradition from page 1D

years since it would be impossible to assemble it in the gallery.

"Sergio is a major name in sculpture. He's one of the few doing the bas relief that has recognizable theme to it, and very Italian. The figures that come off the wall are just incredible," said Jack Olda, the former arts commissioner who invited De Giusti to show.

Shrouded figures wrapped in elements of moodiness and alienation speak of contemporary society. Adrift in an impressionistic environment, the haunting images intrigue viewers holding them steadfast in the eerie spirit's grasp.

"A lot of people have never seen my work. I wanted to show what 30 years of artistic conviction is like and images that reflect what I believe in," said the 52-year-old sculptor, who will teach five sessions on medallion sculpture relief at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association in Birmingham next month.

"I came out of a hard edge era of the '60s when nobody was using figures. My works are traditional with a figurative theme. There's a hidden message which deals with the anxieties of our time. People see their own psyche in what I do."

Seemingly at unrest, the figures trigger the mind to produce images of an underworld. Twisting and

writhing, bare female torsos surface to cast a totally different light on the work.

"In my work there's a certain kind of darkness, the wrapped figures reflect a warmth and isolation."

De Giusti became fascinated with relief, and the idea of images emerging from a plane, the first time he saw the medium as a child in Italy.

"I work in the tradition of Italian sculptural relief. I found relief mysterious. There's a mystery of what you see. The plasticity and freshness of clay is something I'm always going to love," said De Giusti.

"As far as the wrapped figures, wrapping is a very ancient way of treating the figure. It's a historical concept, shrouding and hiding the figure. In Christianity, there are two concepts of body and soul. Shrouding has always been associated with death, the afterlife and resurrection."

De Giusti quickly stresses, he "doesn't make religious works, but does reflect the Italian tradition of relief. I'm a link to the Italian experience, a product of 20th century Italy."

Born and raised in Maniago, Italy, De Giusti came to this country in 1954. He never forgot his Italian heritage or the long line of masters before him.

"My work has a certain historical derivation. Growing up in Ita-

ly, I was influenced by sculpture from Donatello on down. Manu and Marini are the people I admire. All of us are indebted to someone," said the Detroit Artists Market board member.

Medallions playing on opera by Verdi and Wagner will eventually be exhibited together in a show focusing on opera. De Giusti, who has designed official medallions for the U.S. Department of Treasury, primarily dramatizes obscure operas in this most current series.

"I tried to avoid standard operatic repertoire. I went for images from Verdi's 'Attila the Hun' and Wagner's 'The Flying Dutchman' that deals with the turmoil of a man doomed to sail the seas forever until a woman saves him."

Besides De Giusti's medallion sculpture and relief, three dimensional figurative work in the exhibit overwhelm with deep and darkly mysterious, shrouded imagery. "What Work Is" is a visual representation of a poem by Philip Levine. It is the first, three figures of six to come.

De Giusti is very involved with arts-related community events, donating work and serving as an advisor for fund-raising auctions, and curating exhibits. He recently gave a gift of his sculpture to the Italian Consulate in Detroit.

Since 1971, De Giusti has exhibited internationally as well as



JIM JACOBSON/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Abounding relief: Overflowing with relief, the Redford Township studio of Sergio De Giusti overwhelms visitors. Pictured here the Italian-born sculptor, who will teach at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association next month, are medallions based on obscure operatic repertoire by Verdi and Wagner eventually to comprise an exhibit focused on opera.

in Michigan. Local galleries include the Michigan Gallery, Detroit Artists Market and Detroit Focus Gallery, Bellan Art Center in Troy, Park West Gallery in Southfield, and the original Ha-

batat Galleries in Dearborn.

An educator as well as a sculptor, De Giusti has taught at Wayne State University, Center for Creative Studies/College of Art and Design, and the BBAA.

He taught his first class, welding, at the BBAA in 1964.

Library gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Thursday, and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday-Saturday.

Figley from page 1D

was made ready for this summer at the zoo.

A group of stalwarts continues to care for this area, which is No. 5 on the zoo map.

This is the second year for the ambitious project. This year master gardener Lisa Younger of Allen Park coordinated the effort with zoo personnel.

Typical plantings, bird houses and feeders, hiding places for animals, compost and brush piles and other examples of habitats for wildlife are in place for urban, suburban and rural settings. A grass prairie will soon add its charm to the gardens.

Book look

You may enjoy several books about gardening that are geared for children.

"Mouse & Mole and the Year-Round Garden" by Doug Cushman (Freeman, \$13.95) combines learning and playing — with learning subtly intermixed — for ages 4-8.

Summer has published "Best Kids Garden Book" and "Best Kids Love-the-Earth Activity Book" (\$9.99 each) that are well worth a look-see.

TIMELY GARDEN TIPS

■ Divide clumps of perennials that had smaller and fewer blooms.

■ Order bulbs for fall planting.

■ See Harrowsmith Country Life magazine (July/August issue) for an article about magnolias that are hardy for this area.

■ Prune out dead wood from hedges and shrubs. The damage from last winter just WONT' grow back.

■ Reseed lawns where necessary between now and the middle of September. Roots need time to grow strong before winter.

■ Take cuttings of favorite plants for next season.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then her mailbox number, 1859. Her fax number is (810) 644-1314.



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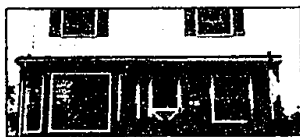
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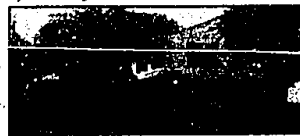
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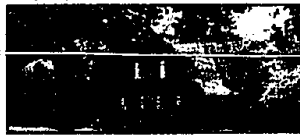
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