

Expert displays antique posters Friday

BY MARY KLEMIC
STAFF WRITER

Today billboards are often thought of as eyesores or oversized obstructions.

But about 100 years ago, posters — predecessors of TV commercials — were wonderful outdoor "commercial celebrations." Such artists as Toulouse-Lautrec, Adolphe Cassandre and Jules Cheret put their talents to work to publicize products, people and events. The posters were works of art as well as of advertising. Today, these works are housed in museums and sought after by collectors.

The Print Gallery, 29203 Northwestern Highway in Southfield, will show samples of such treasures 5-10 p.m. Friday, May 5. James Kennedy, one of the leading and most knowledgeable antique poster dealers in the country, will present his current collection of more than 300 vintage French and Italian posters. Call (810) 356-5454 for information.

Visitors will have the chance to see the selection, learn the history behind each poster and buy the art works.

"They cover the gamut," Kennedy, a full-time antique poster dealer for 20 years, said recently

in a long distance phone interview.

The posters date from 1880-1950, measure three to six feet tall, cost between \$100 and \$10,000 and have been professionally restored with linen backs.

The interest in antique posters is relatively new, starting in around the 1960s, Kennedy said. He said this had to do with the increasingly quick travel to and from Europe provided by jets. Kennedy goes to Paris at least 10 times a year to get the classic posters.

"Buy what you like," he advises.

Topics included liquors, food, fashion, travel and automobiles.

"Famous artists were commissioned by leading manufacturers to create memorable billboards," said Diane DeCillis, owner of The Print Gallery. "There was competition among the various artists to be creative and the end results were extremely eye-catching, clever and colorful. The posters were not mass produced (they were lithographs) and luckily, even though many were ripped off of buildings and discarded, some people had the foresight to save many of them."

Wooden creations featured at fair

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The phrase "wooden expression" has a different meaning when applied to the wood creations by Charles Hall of Birmingham.

Hall makes attractive, functional kitchen and desk accessories out of wood that are as lively as they are useful.

"Everything is functional, everything I make can be used, not just . . . decorative type thing," said Hall, who teaches at a high school in Waterford.

He is one of 275 artists and craftspeople taking part in the 17th annual Ann Arbor Spring Art Fair, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, May 6, and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, May 7. Admission is \$5, free for under age 10. The art fair, presented by Audrey Levy, is in a new location this year in the Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, 5055 Ann Arbor-Saline Road.

Other local artists in the event and their media include Nina Mann of Southfield, jewelry; Stan Messall of Westland, glass; Kathy Phillips of West Bloomfield, watercolors; Frank Yanke of Franklin, jewelry; and Heather Farrant of Redford, baskets.

Hall has been in the fair several times. One of the new items he will be offering this year are series of "shaker baskets" in different sizes that are half-round with

slats, to be used for "everything from newspapers to magazine holders," he said. Smaller boxes can be used for decoration.

Among Hall's works are containers, lary saunas, knife blocks and bread boards. Different woods appear in stripes of varying widths and colors.

"I incorporate a half-dozen woods literally in everything I make. I use the same six woods."

Among these are maple, red and white oak, walnut, cherry and a couple of exotic woods, such as purpleheart (which really is purple). The pieces are designed so that buyers can add to their collections over a few years.

Hall has been making wood objects for almost 15 years. He is basically self-taught in the art.

What does Hall like about working in wood?

"Everything I enjoy working with. I enjoy the challenge of trying to (turn out) something that's pleasant looking and useful and affordable."

Those three elements are key to Hall's work.

To get to the Ann Arbor Spring Art Fair, take I-94 to Exit 181-A (US-12), go west for eight miles to N. Ann Arbor Street and turn north to the council grounds. Or, take I-94 to Exit 177 (State Street), and turn south to Ellsworth Road, right to Ann Arbor-Saline Road and left (south) to council grounds.

Pick up tips on planting at free seminar today

English Gardens will give garden enthusiasts an opportunity to pick up planting tips from the experts.

Doug Jimerson, editor-in-chief of home garden magazine, will demonstrate different ways to plant strawberry jars 4-5 p.m.

Thursday, May 4, at the West Bloomfield store, 6370 Orchard Lake Road.

Jimerson will offer insight on preparing, designing and maintaining a strawberry jar. Space is limited. To reserve your seat, call the store at (810) 851-7506.

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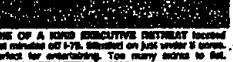
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Rose society sets meeting

The Metropolitan Rose Society will meet 7 p.m. Friday, May 5, at the Royal Oak Senior-Community Center, 2500 Maple, east of Crooks and north of 13 Mile, behind Kimball High School.

The speaker will be Frank Von

Kosa, who will present his new and revised program on old garden roses. He is currently national chairman of the Old Garden Rose Committee of the American Rose Society in Shreveport, La. The public may attend.

Musicale members to perform

Members of the Birmingham Musicale will perform at Tel-12 Mall, Telegraph and 12 Mile in Southfield, during National Music Week.

Scheduled performances are Irene Mattiot and Marian Slatkynski, 2 p.m., and Sally Geden and Harriet

Geden, 3 p.m., Sunday, May 7; Patricia Dunsing, 1 p.m. Monday, May 8; the Birmingham Musicale Chorus, noon, and Joan Bowers, 1 p.m. Wednesday, May 10; and the Birmingham Musicale String Ensemble, 10 a.m. Thursday, May 11.

Deadline near for area festival

Entry deadline is Monday, May 8, for the 15th annual Arts in the Park in Warren.

For more information, call (810) 674-1823 or (810) 977-1827.

If you do original art work or crafts

(no kits), this festival is for you. It will take place July 8-9 at Halmich Park, on 13 Mile between Ryan and Daquidre. The event is co-sponsored by the Warren Cultural Commission and Warren Tri-County Fine Arts Inc.

Mother's Day brunch planned

The fourth annual Mother's Day Brunch at the District Institute of Arts will occur 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, May 14, at 2200 Woodward.

Tickets, \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. Cost is \$18 for D.I.A. members, \$21 for non-members. \$7.50 for children ages 5-10. Free for children under 5. Call (810) 855-5224.

Tickets include a full brunch buffet of eggs, potatoes, sausage, breakfast breads, orange juice, coffee, tea, milk, assorted fresh salads, chicken breast with wild rice and beef stroganoff, admission to the D.I.A.; discounted tours 1 and 2 and 3; and a special performance by actress Robin Lane in "Artful Liar: Portraits of Women Artists" 1 p.m.