

Painter never experiences dull moment

BY MARY RODRIGUE
STAFF WRITER

This is the eighth in a series about the Farmington Area Arts Commission Artist in Residence winners.

When Tom Hale was named Farmington Artist in Residence in 1983, he was still designing autos full time for American Motors — painting during lunch hours and evenings.

By 1985, Hale abandoned a 20 year career as a corporate car designer and plunged into painting full time. He has never looked back.

"I've never for a moment been bored with my art," he said in his home studio in Farmington Hills. "I've been drawing since I was 7 years old. You'd think I'd be bored but I can't get enough of painting. My work continues to evolve."

"Art is challenging to me. There are things that I want to do but I don't feel there yet. I can visualize them, but I don't have

the capability at this point. I hope to some day acquire the skill to pull off these ideas."

About five years ago, Hale, and his late wife, Mickey, designed the magnificent 700 square foot studio that was built onto the rear of their home. With numerous skylights and large picture windows, it provides just the right atmosphere for his work.

Hale begins each day at 7:30 a.m. and paints until about 7 p.m. He follows the same schedule seven days a week. Sometimes, he spends a couple of hours in the evening painting, when his creativity is in sharper focus.

"Discipline is a major issue with lots of artists because there's not necessarily an agency to do anything on a daily basis," he said.

Discipline has never been a problem for Hale, but early on in his career he would spend as many as 100 days a year at art shows from coast to coast.

"There's a requirement to sell the work and show the work and

that takes energy," he said.

Although he has shown work locally at the Robert Kidd Gallery in Birmingham and is planning a major exhibit of southwestern themes in a Taos, New Mexico gallery, most of the time, Hale is his own agent. Through his travels to art shows, including the Ann Arbor art fair, he has made contacts over the years.

Automobiles are a major theme in Hale's work. He paints in acrylics using bright colors and interesting perspectives. Currently he is working on a large painting depicting a 1931 Chrysler Imperial, commissioned by a major automotive executive.

A graduate of the Art Center College of Design in California, he credits his education for giving him the discipline to establish good work habits.

Clients range from the moneyed to every day folks who appreciate art.

"The most fascinating part of this is the people I meet," he said. "In the automotive industry, I'd

meet a small segment of the population. Now I encounter a total range of people. Some could care less about cars but they like art. I'm really not trying to sell a picture of a car, but art."

Hale is not interested in photo-realism, he says, but enjoys "manipulating realism in a surreal sense, exaggerating things."

An interesting series pits highly reflective automotive sheet metal panels against delicate flowers and plants.

"The flowers are alive, organic, soft. The auto is cold, hard, metallic," he said.

Hale created the painting depicted on the poster for last year's Concours de Elegance at Meadow Brook Hall. His work has been featured in Automotive and Fortune magazines. He has won national awards, including first place for a painting of a desolate looking building in a competition at Walt Disney World.

"I remember being named artist in residence in Farmington. It's nice to be recognized in the place where you live," he said.



Tom Hale: The artist shows one of his works, which was featured on last year's poster advertising Meadowbrook's Concours de Elegance.

How about a new garage door & opener?

**STAY SAFE!
STAY DRY!
STAY WARM!**

**2nd TRANSMITTER
FREE**
With garage door opener

**UP TO \$50 OFF
EVERY DOOR**
With this ad

STANLEY
helps you do things right.

• Entry Doors
• Garage Doors
• Door Openers

Come visit our showroom at...

**11 MILE AT COOLIDGE
399-9900**

Berkley (313) 776-2210
Livonia (313) 523-0007
Troy (313) 523-3487
Waterford (313) 871-4815
Bloomfield Hills (313) 844-1100
Canton Twp. (810) 791-4430

CALL FOR FREE ESTIMATE

Meet The Creators Of

FINNIANS and **Veraphim Classics**

BLARNEY STONE Roman, Inc.

**On Their First Personal Appearance Tour
Both Artists will be appearing together at these**

Card & Gift Centers

Hallmark
GOLD CROWN

Tuesday, February 20th
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Oakland Mall, Troy, MI
(800) 313-6179

Wednesday, February 21st
Grand River at Halsted,
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Farmington, MI
(800) 313-6178

Vincent Hinson
Creator of Veraphim Classics
Heaven on Earth

Debra Frazon
Creator of Finni's
Finnians

CHIMNEYS ROOFS

- Cleaned
- Screened
- Repaired
- New

- Repaired
- Re-Roofed
- New
- Leaks Stopped

- LICENSED
- INSURED
- GUARANTEED

- Senior Citizen Discount

CROWN CONTRACTING, INC.

42810 W. 10 Mile, Novi
(313) 427-3981 (810) 344-4577

SINCE 1952

**SALON SEEKERS
GUIDE**

**MIAMI MOOD
TANNING SALON**
5946 S. Ford Rd.
2 Weeks Unlimited \$17.00
110 Oil a month special
110 Oil a year customer only
Cheerful Staffing with Safe
(overlook)
Tanning Lotens on Sale!

Open 7 days 10:00 am - 10:00 pm
Sat Sun 10am - 6pm
313-459-5650

From (Total 10 days each set)
Tanning Lotens \$49.99
Tanning Lotens \$49.99
Tanning Lotens \$49.99
Tanning Lotens \$49.99
Tanning Lotens \$49.99
Tanning Lotens \$49.99
Tanning Lotens \$49.99
Tanning Lotens \$49.99
Tanning Lotens \$49.99
Tanning Lotens \$49.99

To Place an Ad
in this directory
Please call Tony at:
(313) 953-2063

Rx.....THERAPY

Physical, occupational speech therapy. Whatever your physician prescribes, whatever is needed, is exactly what you will receive at Peachwood Inn. Working in our fully equipped therapy department or at your bedside, our therapists' goals are the same as yours. We want you to reach your fullest potential. We'll help you reach just that.

An added feature is our Restorative Therapy Program. Specially trained staff assists you in maintaining your current level of function.

Call now. Tour Peachwood Inn. Take advantage of our excellent therapy services.

Peachwood Inn
An Older Adult Health care Facility

3500 W. South Blvd., Rochester Hills

Medicare Certified 810-852-7800 Tours by appointment

THE MERRILL-PALMER INSTITUTE

Super Summers for Kids

A 1996 CAMP AND ACTIVITIES FAIR

**SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 25, 1996
11:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.**

Cranbrook Schools
1221 N. Woodward Avenue
Bloomfield Hills

Free Admission • Families Invited

A chance to meet with representatives of local and national summer programs who will help you choose the right summer experience for kids ages 3-18.

• Overnight Summer Camps
• Day Camps
• Specialty Camps
• Year Round Cultural Programs
• Teen Adventures and Tours
• Academic Enrichment
• Summer Employment

For further information call Sandy Schwartz at (313) 872-1790

SPONSORED BY
The Merrill-Palmer Institute

CO-SPONSORED BY **Observer & Eccentric**

The Merrill-Palmer Institute, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and Merrill-Palmer Magazine do not endorse any particular program.