Travel

CONVERSATIONS



Pat Seiter's camera goes where few tread

Some people collect antiques, coins, dirty laundry and just about any type of memorabilia.

Pat Seiter collects souls.

They hang in black and white on the walls of her Bloomfield Hills portrait studio.

Seiter of Bloomfield Township is one of a handful of photographers in the country to employ a crafty method known as dramatic black and white photography, made popular by Californian Josef Karsh, whose work was shown at the Detroit Institute of Arts earlier this year.

shown at the Detroit Institute of Arts earlier this year. Technically, the approach is merely setting the mood to enhance a sub-ject's personality. A case of striking a dramatic balance among lighting, field of depth and a subject's natural expressions.



Dramatic: Black & white photographer Pat Seiter

Yeah, right. And painting is just a mundane exercise of putting paint on

Cetting a subject to open up and

Getting a subject to open up and show their natural personality, however, isn't something your typical photographer can read in a how-to guide. After years of experience and an innate ability to put people at ense, Seiter's work has a stark intimacy. Looking through her portfolio of faces from drooling infants to serious-minded executives. It's as if the essence of her subjects are known immediately, "I can reach into their personality," and the said. "It may take five or aix rolls, but I can get a part of their soul." Sound mystical? Maybe. But so are things called faith, art and life.

A look for posterity

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A look for postority

For a moment, when it's just her subject and her Hasselblad single-reflex camera, there's a calm assuredness. Staring into the lens for posterity, it's easy to be overcome with the foreboding of waiting to enter a confessional in search of redemption.

And that's not mere speculation.

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After talking Portraits of Pat Soliter Whet: Through August Process, 'she was dher charms to convince me that the best way to understand her art was to become one of her subjects.

Without missing a beat, she pointed me to the stool in front of the camera, then began to rearrange the lights in her studio, placing a filter on one of the three lights.

Suddenly, a flash and a click. Oops, she laughed. She was definitely having fun. As for me, I was definitely self-conscious.

"People will automatically show me their personalities," she said. "I just try to have fun with them. I ve made this place my little castle."

Click. Click.

For Seiter, more laughter, more fun. As for me, more self-consciousness.

It wasn't always easy for Sciter, 44, to laugh. She admits that her emotionally tough childhood forced her to grow up before her time.

Raised by her father in Southgate, she struggled to keep the fissures of

Picase see CONVERSATIONS, C2

SCULPTURE PONTIAC



Hung up: Veteran sculptor Hank Adams' cast glass art blends a devilish outlook and a craftsman's innovation.

PUTTING SCULPTURE BACK ON A **PEDESTAL**



Bare Bones: Matthew DeGenaro's "Bone Peo-ple," made from molds of turkey bones, resonates with a minimalist refinement.

War memories: Robert Bielat's "Blow the Boat," is a mixed media con-struction that recalls the chilling reality of war.

BY FRANK PROVENZANO

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STATF WAITE:

Add resourceful and tenacious to the gritty reputation of metro Detroit sculptors.

While many local galleries shy away from sculpture exhibits because of the perceived difficulty of selling the three-dimensional work, that's hardly deterred the proliferation of the most actile of all art forms.

On the contrary, the community of sculptors continues to thrive despite inadequate attention by private galteries and public museums.

The most compelling indication of the range of local talent can be seen in "Sculpture Pontiae," works from 66 artists in eight indoor and outdoor sites around downtown Pontiac.

"This simply needed to be done," said John Cynar of Birmingham, who co-curated the exhibit with Mary Fortuna, a sculptor and arts advocate from Royal Oak.

"We set out to do something on a large scale," he said. The sculpture community seems to be fragmented and we need to create some excitement." Cynar, who ran the Start Gallery in Birmingham until it closed last spring, is looking to relocate his moy gallery to Pontine.

In scope and aspiration, the 100-piece exhibit represents an impressive

What: Sculpture Pontlac '97, featuring 66

Whatts Sculpture Pontiles '97, featuring 66 Michigan artists When: Through September 27 Wheers Eight sites in downtown Pontiles, Including Terative Arts Center, 47 Williams St.; Hobetat, 7 N. Seginaw St.; Museum of Centernopary Art, 23 W. Lewrence St.; Industry Courtyord, 15 S. Seginaw St.; and Pontile Osteopethic Hospital (POH) Medical Center, 50 N. Perry St., bay POH Park and POH lots on N. Seginaw, Artist sectures; 2 p.m. Saturday, September 6, Seventh House, 7 N. Seginaw For Information, call (248) 333-7849

overview of established and up-and-

overview of established and up-andcoming sculptors, from veteran Hank
Adam's devilish hanging cast glass
and copper sculpture to newcomer
Jennifer Fitzpatrick's tenderly shaped
burlap diapers and clay baby bottles.
"We're back to the sculpture glamour days of the 1920s and 1930s," said
Cynar. "There's a renewed mystique in
craftsmanship. It's back to choosing
and exploring the right materials.
We're putting sculpture back on
pedestals again."

If that's the case, expect to see mostyabstract sculpture on the position of
high regard. While "Sculpture Pentiac
'97" presents a healthy diversity of
shapes, forms and materials, there's a
striking absence of figurative works.

Sculptural gems

While a group show provides a venue for artists who do not get many opportunities to publicly display their work, "Sculpture Pontiac" feels at times mere like taking inventory in a crowded warehouse.

That's not meant as serious criti-cism. Rather, that's the cold reality for the breakthrough exhibit bursting with many talented artists who can't seem to persuade purveyors of the local art scene of the merit of their

works.

For starters, there are several gems in the exhibit that demand a broader, less crowded space. Particularly, Nicolas Van Krijdt's sprawling "Inland Ocean," which needs more room to stretch.

Ocean," which needs more room to stretch.

The piece created specifically for the show features a sailboat-like vessel with a must that nearly stretches to the ceiling of Pontine's Creative Art Center. An easily accessible sculpture created as an homage to his father, Van Krijdt of Bleomfield Hills contrasts seemingly free-floating translucent vessels with wooden canocahapes in a reincarnation of a sailor's dreamy world.

Other standout works include:

Ma prototype of the human stick figure, Matthew DeGenaro's Bone

People," made from molds of turkey bones, resonates with the minimalist, existential refinement of Alberto Giacometti. The Ann Arbor resident and Art Institute of Chicago graduate continues his impressive development. Last year, DeGenaro's work in the Auto Show at Cranbrook Art Museum also drew raves.

If the exquisite craftsmanship of Matthew Holland, an instructor at the Center for Creative Studies, is truly a mystery. His wooden "Mystery Box of intricate compartments, hinges, pulleys and compass surprisingly stretches the traditional notion of sculpture.

loys and compass surprisingly stretches the traditional notion of sculpture.

The political puzzles of Jef Borgoau of Rochester, whose two pieces, "A Short History of Black Peeple," and "Sleeping Beauty (American)" offer an unexpectedly sharp yeintelligent social commentary.

"A Short History challenges visitors to get on their hands and knees to view a video played on a monitor inside a dog house. The video shows a series of violent acts committed against black people.

Equally disturbing, "Sleeping Beauty" is a chilling metaphor for child abuse. The piece was found so distanteful by some squeamish observers, that it was moved to an interior location from its location in the window of the Museum of Contemporary Art

the Museum of Contemporary Art.

(MGA).

In the outdoor venues at Pontiae.
Osteopathic Hospital Park, the virile.
Steel forms of Ray Katz ("Around the Gato"), and Susanna Linburg's scene bronzo work "Caryatid VII" offer resilient impressions that stand the test of Michigan's inclement weather.
Local sculptors in the oxhibit include Kathy Dambach, Ted Hadfield and Wendy MacGaw of Farmington Hills; Sergio Degiusti, Todd Erickson, and Wendy MacGaw of Redford; Christine Hagedorn of Troy; Sally Kaplan and Joseph Wesner of Birm.

Please see SCULPTURES, C

Please see SCULPTURE, Ca

Two men, two cultures: a case of cultural diplomacy

By Frank Provenzano STAPP WRITER

Growing up in Zimbabwe and traveling extensively throughout the south-central African continent, Dudley Moore learned about the various cultures, subtle skin tones and ingering disputes among the African people in their struggle for survival.

Meanwhile, far from the massive continent of the Nife and Niger rivers, Bill Murcko, a pale-skinned advertising executive from Birmingham, Jearned a whole different meaning of tribal warfare in the competitive race for market share.

What sounds like unbridgeable cultural differences looks more like the pieces of an abstract Pieasso rearranged into a realistic rendering of two men, their love of art and a budding friendship.
Today, Moore and Murcko are unlikely partners in a professional relationship based on shared artistic interests, an ability to look beyond racial differences and the promise of cultural diplomacy.

In May, Murcko's paintings of the Maasai people of Kenya was featured in a one-man show at Moore's Gallery in Birmingham. The

Sculptural diversity: Co-curator Mary Fortuna (right) and Carol Paster, executive director of the Creative Arts Center, one of eight exhibit sites in downtown Pontiac Nicolas Van Krydt's sprawling "Inland Ocean" sculpture is in the background.



Cross cultures: Artist Bill Murcho and Dudley Moore, As paintings of the Mansai owner of Moore's Gallery in Birmingham, have built a was featured in a one-man relationship based on their fascination with the Maasai tribe of Kenya. Moore holds dual citizenship in the Please see CULTURES, CZ US and Zimbabwe.