

Kodak Wyronika Editor 734 953 2105 Fax 734 953 2105 URL http://www.fox.com/leisure/leisure.html Sunday, November 21, 1998

CONVERSATIONS



FRANK PROVENZANO

From aristocracy to the masses: The glimmer of Tiffany

Step inside the Meadow Brook Gallery and discover the rarefied air of early 20th-century American aristocracy emanating from the exhibit, "Tiffany: Essence of Light." By all indications, the exhibit has been a popular and critical success. Taking a cue from Robin Leach, the masses have turned out to gaze at what you get when you can pay any price.

According to Meadow Brook Hall Curator Ann Friedman, attendance for the exhibit has exceeded expectations, and more than a few art critics have written rave reviews. Apparently, the first-ever collaboration between Meadow Brook Hall and Meadow Brook Gallery has been an unqualified success.

Friedman expects that this is the beginning of a mutually rewarding partnership, although she isn't certain exactly when or what the next collaborative exhibit will be.

The display of glass vases, lighting shades and lamps created by Louis Tiffany, and purchased by Mattilda Dodge Wilson for her Tudor-style mansion, offers a view of where the decorative arts merge with fine art. (Dodge commissioned the building of Meadow Brook Hall in the mid 1920s.)

But there's something more lurking behind the glass surface of stained and slenderly sculptured glass.

Call it the prism of history.

Organic forms
Friedman, who arrived to her post in August from the Getty Museum, called Tiffany a "transitional artist."

In 1892, Tiffany was one of a handful of artists selected to redecorate the White House for President Chester Arthur. (Yes, his father owned Tiffany & Co., the famous jewelry and silver firm, which he later took over.)

As the prevailing late-Victorian ornamental style grew onerous, Tiffany searched for a more simple expression. A style, he explained, that reflected the organic forms of nature.

Trained as a painter, Tiffany decided to work with glass because of what he recognized as the potential impact for the emerging medium.

With the invention of Impressionism, photography in its infancy and mass electrical lines yet to be installed, Tiffany realized that glass was the ideal material to reflect the fleeting qualities of light and movement that was captivating the world.

Please see CONVERSATIONS, C5

Sidekicks on a mission

47th Annual Jewish Book Fair creates a literary community

BY FRANK PROVENZANO • STAFF WRITER

fprovenzano@oc.homecom.net

What: 47th Annual Jewish Book Fair
When: Saturday, Nov. 7 to Sunday, Nov. 15
Where: Jewish Community Center, 6000 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield, (248) 661-1000
Where: Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building, 15100 W. 10 Mile Road, Oak Park, (248) 997-4030

Events at Jewish Community Center unless noted:
■ 8 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4 - Dr. Henry Greenspan, author of "On Listening to Holocaust Survivors"
■ 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5 - Author Fredric Bronner, author of "Jew & America: Reexamination," and author Ron Agan, author of "At the Wall," Janis Church Book Fair Events
■ 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 7 - Diane von Furstenberg, author of "Dance: A Signature Life"
■ Sunday, Nov. 8 - 11 a.m., Dr. Steven Packer; 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Local Authors Fair; 1 p.m., Milliam Weis; 2 p.m., Dr. Steven Packer; Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building; 3 p.m., Katherine Wryse Goldman; 4 p.m., Gemini Concert Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building; 6:30 p.m., Jeffrey Weiss; 8 p.m., Raoul Bradley Giesfeld Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building; 8 p.m. Naomi Iragan.
■ Monday, Nov. 9 - 10 a.m., Jewish Community Center; 1 p.m., Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building, Yvira Halberstam; 1 p.m., Susan Isaac; 6:30 p.m., Rich Cohen; 8 p.m., Robert Rockaway Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building; 8 p.m., Thomas
■ Wednesday, Nov. 11 - 10 a.m., Marisa Weiss; 1 p.m., Max Appel; 6:30 p.m., Anita Diamant; 8 p.m., Brad Metzler; 8 p.m., Sandy Schuler Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building.
■ Thursday, Nov. 12 - 10 a.m., Jewish Community Center; 2-3 p.m., Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building, Pearl Abraham; 12 p.m., Honorat; 1 p.m., Anita Diamant; 6 p.m., Dina; 8 p.m., Rebbeitz Esther Jungreis; 8 p.m., U.S. Rep. John Dingens; 10-11 a.m., Gill Marks
■ Friday, Nov. 14 - 8 p.m., Wendy Wasserstein
■ Sunday, Nov. 15 - 11 a.m., Jewish Community Center; 2-3 p.m., Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building, Stephen Dobner; 1 p.m., Corinne Stanish; 3 p.m., Michael Lewenthal; 6:30 p.m., Naomi Levy; 8 p.m., Michael Medved

Note: Children & family programs held on Nov. 8-12 & 15.

In the half-moment after hearing that she'll have her photo taken for a newspaper article, Andi Wolfe reaches instinctively for her lip gloss, then puckers for the camera.

Without missing a beat, Wolfe's partner, Sylvia Gotlib, poses a self-deprecating challenge: "OK, we're not picking my best side. Do I have one?"

Then, Wolfe and Gotlib do what they do every chance they get - laugh long and hard, quips roll out so fast that a high-speed photographer would have to ask them to slow down.

Try if you dare to get them to shift to a lower gear, but there's really no chance. They begin, finish and interrupt each other's sentences with an incessant giggle. Sidekicks on a mission.

Wolfe and Gotlib, co-chairs of this

week's 47th Annual Jewish Book Fair, aren't your typical comedy team, although apparently, a healthy dose of humor is central to everything they do.

"We're not talking Lucy and Ethel. Next to a Wilma and Betty comparison. And there's not the slightest resemblance to misfits Laverne and Shirley."

With Wolfe and Gotlib, we're talking the hand-and-glove team of efficiency and high-energy. Word and page. Book and binding.

"Sylvia reads books and I collect them," said Wolfe, who first volunteered as a typist for the book fair, and, as she explained, couldn't say "No" all the way to becoming chair of the event five years ago.

A few days before the book fair opened, Wolfe and Gotlib were calling publishers

who still hadn't sent books, processing orders, organizing book cases - borrowed from Borders - and training two dozen volunteers in the high art of customer service.

"Book sellers aren't threatened by us," said Gotlib. "During the book fair (some local sellers) might lose some revenue. But everyone benefits when you promote literacy."

"The book fair requires year-long planning. If anyone was noticing, overtime kicked in about a month ago. Neither Wolfe and Gotlib, both of whom are full-time volunteers, flinch at the long hours and endless details to present the oldest and largest Jewish book fair in the country."

"It's a paper-trail nightmare," said

Please see FAIR, C2



STAFF PHOTO BY TOM HOFFMAYER
Taking inventory: Andi Wolfe, (left) and Sylvia Gotlib are co-chairs of this year's Jewish Book Fair, which features 60 national and 20 local authors, and more than 12,000 titles.

Local authors grapple with time

BY FRANK PROVENZANO
STAFF WRITER
fprovenzano@oc.homecom.net

Steven Weiss has gotten pretty good at looking for creative loopholes.

Indeed, he spends his days pondering legal positions at the Bloomfield Hills law offices of Hertz, Schram & Saretzky, or arguing his client's case in court.

As a litigation attorney, however, the holes he discovers have nothing to do with lawyer-like legerdemain.

The "creative loopholes" that Weiss finds have to do with pinpointing "writing

time" in an excruciatingly busy schedule which led to finishing his novel, "The Farewell Principle," published in August by Sterling House.

Weiss of West Bloomfield is among the 20 local authors spotlighted in this year's Jewish Book Fair. Weiss will give a formal talk on his book at the Jewish Community Center on Monday, Nov. 9.

Another attorney turned novelist comes to mind when reading Weiss' crime-fiction page-turner.

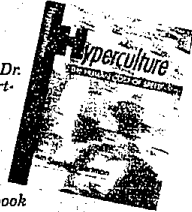
"I hope the book is a Grisham-type with a soulful message," said Weiss, who pointed to the book's theme of racial tolerance.

Actually, it took a great deal of tolerance, and, especially, discipline for Weiss to pull himself to the word processor after his four sons (ages 2, 6, 8 and 10) went to bed, and his wife wanted a companion to watch "ER," said Weiss.

The drive to "create a story and send your message" without being confined by legal technicalities and a client's contentions is nothing short of liberating, said Weiss.

"Right now, I can't give up my day job," he said. "Writing fiction enables me to write creatively and about what I want to write about."

Slow down: Dr. Stephen Bertman's book, "Hyperculture," is among the most compelling at this year's book fair.



- Local authors and their new books
- Dr. Stephen Bertman, "Hyperculture: The Human Cost of Speed"
 - Edith Covatsky, "Poetics"
 - Ben Faberman, "A Matter of Precedents"
 - Linda Grekin, "Lost and Found: The Sense of Direction Book"
 - Ronald D. Hongman, "University Secrets: Your Guide to Surviving a College Education"
 - Lori Kilsman Ellis, "Laughing While Learning"
 - Robert Levin, "The Lizard and the Fly"
 - Claire Levine, "The Bud That Stays: Poetry, Prose and Drawings"
 - Mary Moss, "The Rights of Women and Girls: Hand book for Young Americans"
 - Tim Penick, "Art Media... What to do with it?"
 - Jerry Tobias, "I'm a Child Protector"
 - Men Wechsberger, "Banned Books"
 - Steve J. Weiss, "The Farewell Principle"
 - Ronald H. Yoles and Murray Yoles, "You're Retired. Now What? Money Skills for a Comfortable Retirement"

Please see AUTHORS, C2



Holding on:
Author Steven Weiss has held on to a dream of becoming a novelist. His first book, "The Farewell Principle," was published in August.

STAFF PHOTO BY JERRY ZOLNOR

Artists fill 'Empty Bowls' to fight hunger

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER
lchomin@oc.homecomm.net

John Hartom believes as strongly today as he did in 1990 that an empty bowl is a powerful metaphor for hunger.

At a dinner at Bloomfield Hills Lahser High School, Hartom held the first Empty Bowls event to fight hunger eight years ago after the school district instituted a community service requirement for students. That first year Hartom and his students made 120 bowls. Encouraged by the \$600 raised in one lunch period at Bloomfield Hills Lahser, Hartom and his wife, Lisa Blackburn, manager of the education studio at the Detroit Institute of Arts, decided to make it a national event.

"The school food drive was looking at ways to make money so I spoke with my wife about making some bowls and serving soup and bread," said Hartom. "We asked them to keep the title a reminder of all the empty bowls in the world."

In 1991, Hartom and Blackburn began a

grassroots movement to involve potters in an effort to alleviate hunger by sending packets of information to friends and family nationwide. Hartom and Blackburn chose World Food Day, Oct. 16, an annual commemoration of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, by which to raise one million dollars to feed the hungry.

"We began sending letters and telling everyone one we knew and thought it would be one day and one year," said Hartom, a former Franklin resident now living in Oxford. "We didn't raise a million but that first year there was more than \$200,000 to \$300,000 raised. Everyone can be involved with the fight for justice. Hunger really is an issue of justice. Everyone can vote for leaders who've demonstrated they're dedicated to bringing about an end to hunger."

That same year then Peawabic executive director Ron Sirevitz initiated Empty Bowls at the historic pottery to benefit Gleaners Community Food Bank. On Friday, Nov. 6, 400 bowls will be available for a donation



PHOTO BY BOB HOLCOMB

Spinning away: Diana Faris works on a bowl at Peawabic Pottery. She led an effort by volunteers to create more than 125 bowls for a fund-raiser to benefit the hungry.

Please see BOWLS, C2



PHOTO BY THE TIMES
Refined: A slender floral vase is among the 35 pieces in the exhibit of Louis Tiffany's glass artistry.