

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS



LINDA ANN CHOMIN

## Artists draw crowds to Ann Arbor

This year for sure I thought I would beat the crowds by arriving early to interview the potters and painters at the Ann Arbor Art Fair. It's an assignment I look forward to every July. But one hour before opening, the streets were already filling with people. By 9:30 a.m. the line was nearly out the door at Amer's where art lovers were purchasing their last cup of coffee and a pastry before stepping into the throngs of people.

I was beginning to wonder if as in years past my sister and I would be swept along with the crowd heading down State Street with no way out. Had the Ann Arbor Art Fair downsized as organizers promised? Would rearranging the layout make it easier to leave the booths in the street for those lining the sidewalk? Time would tell as we prepared to work our way through more than 1,000 artists booths.

### Show stoppers

As always, there was something to suit every taste. Many of the regulars were back along with several new, exciting artists drawing dozens of people at a time to their booths. One of the show stoppers was Florida artist Randi Grantham's large scale metal sculptures of fruit. The huge mangos and apples looked delicious.

Karen Halt's humorous paintings drew this reporter into her Ann Arbor Street Art Fair booth for a good long look. A psychiatric nurse at Cleveland Psychiatric Hospital, Halt paints surrealistic scenarios with a double meaning. The one that made me stop, think and smile, was of three kangaroos feasting on oversized cartons of carryout.

Plymouth painter Tom LeGault was back painting up a storm on the corner of Main and Liberty. By 9:30 a.m. he'd already sold five of his contemporary landscapes.

"I'm having a booming day," said LeGault as he brushed on a good long paint onto the canvas. "Ann Arbor can't be beat when it comes to the crowds who come to do some serious shopping. I always sell well here."

If you missed LeGault in Ann Arbor you can watch him create tranquil northern Michigan scenes at Art on the Lake, Coolidge at Long Lake Road in Troy, on Aug. 26; the Art and Cider Festival in Depot Park, Clarkston, Sept. 15-16; the Handcrafters Art Show at Northville Recreation Center, Oct. 12-14; Frost School in Livonia, Nov. 3; and the Michigan Guild of Artists and Artisans Holiday Art Fair, Dec. 8-9, at Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills.

Whew, I grew tired just reading that schedule and looking at all the art. But once I stopped by Barbara Abel's booth in the Ann Arbor Street Art Fair, I knew that the five hours I walked the fair were nothing compared to the grueling schedule of the artists. Abel and her husband drove 12 hours straight on Sunday to make it home to Bloomfield Hills in time to set up her booth in Ann Arbor on Tuesday. Abel, who had just exhibited her work for four days in Pennsylvania, was taking a little rest before the crowds hit.

Her color photographs of mannequins in various stages of despair drew plenty of onlookers. Her tragic beauties touch the emotion. But see for yourself at Arts, Beats & Eats in Pontiac, Aug. 31 to Sept. 3; Art and Apples in Rochester, Sept. 8-9; and the Detroit Festival of the Arts, Sept. 14-16.

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Animal antics: Patricia Bombach captured the personality of this yellow lab in pastel.

# Frontier Metropolis



## Author takes readers back to Detroit's early years

BY HUGO GALLAGHER  
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A tall ship and music festivals celebrate Detroit's 300th anniversary, a spectacular new book takes us back to the city's early years through the eyes and minds of its early inhabitants.

"Frontier Metropolis: Picturing Early Detroit, 1701-1838" is a major publishing event from the Wayne State University Press, a work of detailed scholarship, superb design and state-of-the-art printing.

Brian Leigh Dunningan, a curator of maps at the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan, has compiled every known image of Detroit from just before its French settlement to just before the advent of photography. These images are supported by a well-written history of the development of a new city from its simple beginnings as an experiment in multi-cultural living to its emergence as an important American outpost.

Maps, fort plans, street plans, drawings, paintings and prints from the period are reproduced on fine paper in brilliant color in a large 18-by-13-inch format. The 248-page book is priced at \$125.

While developed as a tricentennial project, the book had its beginning many years ago at the Clements Library.

"The project has its roots really I'd say in the 1940s," said Dunningan. "Randolph Adams was the original director of the Clements Library and for some reason he took an interest in images related to early Detroit. It might be because the library over the years had acquired a few of these pieces, mostly under his tenure, including a very famous view of the Huron Church on the Canadian side with a Detroit background done by a British officer Edward Walsh."



Frontier Metropolis



Steamers: This engraving by William James Bennett done after a painting by Bennett from a sketch by Frederick Grain, depicts the City of Detroit in 1838. It's one of the images you'll find in "Frontier Metropolis: Picturing Early Detroit 1701-1838."

Adams was interested only in authentic images from the period, and collected nearly 60 such images before he retired from the library in 1951.

**Project revived**  
The project was revived in 1996 when the current Clements director John Dann suggested that Dunningan, who had recently come to work at the library, complete the project to mark Detroit's tri-

### Related Events

Book signing: Brian Leigh Dunningan, author of "Frontier Metropolis: Picturing Early Detroit, 1701-1838; David Lee Poremba, editor of "Detroit in Its World Setting: A Three Hundred Year Chronology, 1701-2001"; and Arthur Woodford, author of "This is Detroit, 1701-2000" will sign their Wayne State University books 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 24, at Barnes & Noble, 17111 Haggerty Road, Northville, Cadillac landed in Detroit July 24, 1701.  
Exhibit: Maps, sketches, engravings, ship models, a powderhorn and other artifacts featured in "Frontier Metropolis" on exhibit 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays at Dossin Great Lakes Museum through Sept. 4. Admission \$2 for adults, \$1 for seniors and children 12-18. For information, call (313)852-4051. The museum is at 100 Strand Drive on Belle Isle in Detroit.

centennial. Dann was on the board for the Great Lakes Press series at Wayne State and suggested that Wayne would be the right publisher as they were seeking tricentennial books.

The project was perfect for Dunningan, 51, who has pursued a lifelong love affair with Great Lakes history.

"I spent my summers on Mackinac Island, was raised on Mackinac Island in the summers, worked for the state park there and got interested in history during the years the fort was being restored," Dunningan said.

The crew on the restoration encouraged the young man to pursue his love of history at the University of Michigan. Forts became a central part of his professional career. Following graduate study at Cooperstown Graduate Program, Dunningan became director of Historic Fort Wayne, Ind., and then, for 17 years, Old Fort Niagara in New York.

He has written extensively about the forts at

Mackinac and Niagara.

"Frontier Metropolis" is a comprehensive history of Detroit's forts and how forts slowly give way to towns and military considerations give way to commerce. It is also a collection of evolving maps showing how the geographic understanding of the area grew with time and how important the city's river location was to its development.

### Tracking down leads

For Dunningan researching the book was like being a detective, tracking down leads, searching every known source.

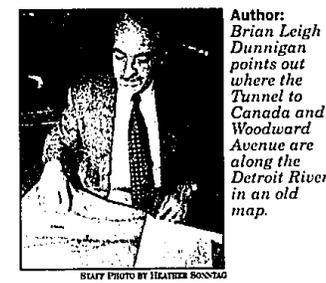
"I went looking for images, which is the basis of the book really. It would not be possible to decide how to start writing this until I knew what images I had," he said.

What he set out to do was create an "iconography," a collection of all images of the area before the advent of photography, dating approximately 1615 to 1838. In addition, Dunningan provides an appendix of works known to have existed that he hasn't been able to locate for reproduction.

He contacted every institution that might conceivably have images of early Detroit — in the United States, Canada, Britain and France. He traveled to London and Toronto in search of material.

"One of the most productive trips was to Toronto, where I went to the archives of Ontario, the Toronto Public Library, which has a major Canadiana collection," he said. "I did a lot by mail. You develop a network of people, like a reporter does, who know what you're doing, they send you tips."

Please See FRONTIER, C2



Author: Brian Leigh Dunningan points out where the Tunnel to Canada and Woodward Avenue are along the Detroit River in an old map.

STAFF PHOTO BY HEATHER SUNSTAD

## THEATER

### 'Madame X' returns to Detroit for world premiere'

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
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Jeffery Hammonds doesn't mind putting in 15-hour days to bring *Madame X* to the stage. The professional production is something he began dreaming about 10 years ago after falling in love with the story about a mysterious woman on trial for committing a murder to save her family. She's defended by a son who fails to recognize her because she deserted the family when he was a young boy.

Hammonds, who performed in the Dearborn Players Guild production of *Madame X* in 1991, knew if the tragic character moved audiences the way she moved him, he'd have a hit on his hands. Local theater

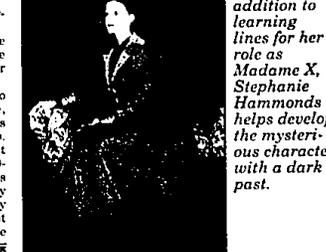
goers now have the opportunity to determine if Hammonds is right.

"The day the show closed I said, 'Some day I want to produce this show and take it to New York,'" said Hammonds, a former Canton resident.

Two years ago, he decided to try to do just that. Hammonds and his wife, Stephanie, formed AlleyCat Productions and before long were securing investors. The next step was to make a CD. Last December they hired 14 actors and a 20-piece orchestra to record Paul Bruce's music from *Madame X*. But before they could open in Chicago, and eventually New York, they had to develop and test the production on smaller audiences. Since

Please See MADAME X, C5

### Mystery woman: In addition to learning lines for her role as Madame X, Stephanie Hammonds helps develop the mysterious character with a dark past.



Please See MADAME X, C5