

Thursday, June 13

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS



LINDA CHOMIN

Polar Blast is coolest party in town

The crowd cringed and let out a gasp as the polar bear sat on top of the see-through tunnel at the Detroit Zoo. What would happen if the act gave way and he fell through? Would we all be lunch?

Not to worry when the Arctic Ring of Life was in the planning stages several years ago, director Ron Kagan made sure visitors would enjoy plenty of up close experiences without any personal risk.

POLAR BLAST

What: The Detroit Zoological Society's annual Sunset at the Zoo fund-raiser features a strolling supper from many of the area's finest restaurants and a raffle.

When: 7-11 p.m. Friday, June 21

Where: 8450 West 10 Mile at I-696 and Woodward, Royal Oak

Tickets: \$75-\$500 per person, raffle tickets \$100. Proceeds will support education and conservation programs for the Arctic Ring of Life, the zoo's polar bear exhibit. Call (248) 541-5717

Still it's one thrill after another as polar bears and seals swim within inches of visitors. Since the \$14-million habitat opened in October, I've been there several times. Each visit was more exciting than the last as the bears became used to their new environment which includes three swimming pools.

Next to running at the park with my Irish Wolfhound Shamrock, the world's largest polar bear den is my favorite place to be.

Linda Wasserman Aviv knows exactly how I feel. The West Bloomfield resident frequently takes her children to the zoo and admits she's "knocked out" by the Arctic Ring of Life. In fact, she loves the zoo so much she's co-chairing the Detroit Zoological Society's annual fund-raiser Sunset at the Zoo 7-11 p.m. Friday, June 21, in Royal Oak.

It's a wonderful event that allows guests to have the animals all to themselves while tasting food from 35 restaurants including Fishbone's Rhythm Kitchen Cafe, Pesto, Mario's, The Whitney, Ritz-Carlton, Gail's Chocolates, Traffic Jam, Whistle Stop Cafe in Birmingham, and P.F. Chang's China Bistro in Somerset, Troy, to name a few.

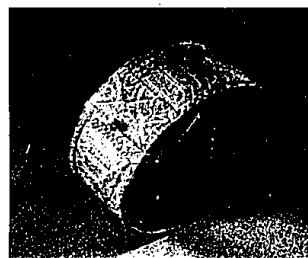
Last year my sister and I went from tent to tent trying the treats then walked around to see the animals. Docents were there to answer our questions about a wounded seal the zoo rescued. Mac would be kept apart from the rest of the harbor and harp

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Polar bears galore: Meet the Detroit Zoo's seven polar bears face to face during a fundraising event Friday, June 21.

ALUMINUM BY DESIGN



Versatility: Designers, architects and artists have used aluminum to create a variety of objects in the last 150 years. Pictured here is Marc Newson's limited edition Lockheed Lounge from the mid-1980s (above left) and a bracelet (above right) made by an unknown artist in 1858.

Exhibition documents material's history

By LINDA ANN CHOMIN
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Joe Houston wonders aloud about suspending the frame of an Audi A8 from the wall in one of the galleries at Cranbrook Art Museum in Bloomfield Hills. It is the largest of 200 objects in the exhibition *Aluminum by Design: Jewelry to Jets* and even though lighter than a steel automobile frame the installation presents a problem.

Preparators from the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh began unpacking the jewelry, sculpture and furniture two weeks before the exhibition opened but it's Houston's job as Cranbrook's curator to display the work, in this case, dramatically.

Organized by the Carnegie Museum of Art and sponsored at Cranbrook by Audi of America, Inc., *Aluminum by Design* is the first major exhibition to document the impact of the material on design and technology. The frame for the 2000 Audi A8 tells the latter part of a story about how aluminum inspired designers, architects and artists since the discovery of the lightweight, malleable

metal in the mid-19th century.

"There are lots of history lessons in this show," said Houston who recently left his curator position at the Rockford Art Museum in Illinois to come to Cranbrook. "The exhibition starts the history of aluminum with a replica of the cap to the Washington Monument (1894), the first object of any great size. It served as a lightning rod."

"Outdoor gates from 1929 were made for the Alcoa research lab which led the way for design and manufacture of aluminum," continued Houston.

"The lesson of the show is this infusion of art into life, design meant to be used. I think visitors will begin thinking about design differently and

about art being in their daily lives. I know, I see aluminum everywhere now."

Houston moves from object to object relating the extensive knowledge he's acquired over the last few months. Decorative objects from the 1860s greet visitors to the first gallery. Arranged chronologically, the exhibition continues through several spaces designed by Houston.

Liquore prototype boxes show influences of Art Nouveau. Arts and Crafts and Art Deco movements are also represented. A 1913 Boeing propeller blade came from the first aluminum airplane.

Advances in technology over the years made it possible for Audi to introduce the all-aluminum frame that reduced vehicle weight by 40 percent and made for a more fuel efficient vehicle.

"The biggest revolution was in transportation with aviation probably the biggest evolution because of the malleability of the material," said Houston.

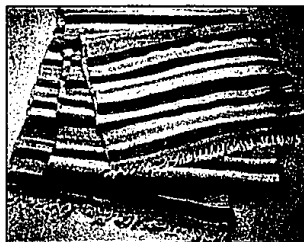
Inside the home, designers like Russel Wright began creating spun aluminum serving ware. A 1930 upright Kenmore vacuum made chores less taxing.

Furniture by Isamu Noguchi, fashion by Paco Rabanne and Salvatore Ferragamo, a 1994 chair by Donald Judd, and the highlight of the exhibition, Marc Newson's limited edition Lockheed Lounge from the mid-1980s, resulted from a dramatic increase in the production and promotion of aluminum. Visitors may recognize the Australian designer's streamlined chaise from Madonna's 1988 *Rain* video.

Preparators, wearing surgical gloves, handle it with care. The shiny lounge, its riveted surface reminiscent of an airliner's body, was a limited edition of 10 by Newson.

"Production during World War II grew as new uses were being discovered out of necessity," said

Please see DESIGN, B3



Colorful creation: This rug, woven from wood and aluminum thread by Marianne Strengell (1966), was part of Alcoa's Forecast Program for artists and designers to create prototypes out of aluminum. The exhibition was made possible by the generous sponsorship of Alcoa Foundation.

ALUMINUM BY DESIGN: JEWELRY TO JETS

What: The first major exhibition to explore how aluminum inspired art, architecture and design

When: Through Aug. 25

Where: Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward, Bloomfield Hills

Admission: \$5, \$3 seniors, students and children ages 6-17. Call (877) 462-7262 or visit the Web site at www.cranbrook.edu

SUMMER FESTIVAL

Smooth JazzFest spotlights national and local acts

By LINDA ANN CHOMIN
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Let it rain, says Suzanne Belanger. Jazz lovers will still turn out for the two-day festival presented by V 98.7 (WVTV-FM) at Freedom Hill Amphitheatre in Sterling Heights once they hear who's playing.

The fourth annual Smooth JazzFest features not one, but two headliners. Saxo-

phonist Boney James takes to the stage Saturday, June 15. Five-time Grammy Award winner Al Jarreau bring his mellow voice to the festival Sunday, June 16. Rick Braun, Down to the Bone, Guitar & Saxos, Alexander Zonjic's Detroit Smooth Jazz All-Stars, Fourplay (featuring Bob James and Larry Carlton), Jonathan Butler, Alfonso Blackwell, and Gerald Veasley round out the lineup.

"I'm so excited about this year's festival, the national artists and Alexander Zonjic's all stars," said Belanger, promotions/marketing director for the Farmington Hills-based radio station. Belanger began planning the festival a year ago. "Detroit loves Boney James. And on Sunday night Al Jarreau is back by popular demand."

"We have a new location that offers listeners perma-

nent seats as well as lawn. We had torrential downpours last year but we still had thousands and thousands of people."

Alexander Zonjic attributes that phenomena to Detroit's dedicated jazz fans. He's had plenty of opportunity to learn about audiences across the country during his more than 20-year career as a flutist. Zonjic plays several jazz festi-

Smooth JazzFest

What: Al Jarreau and Boney James headline the festival presented by V 98.7 (WVTV-FM Detroit)

When: Saturday-Sunday, June 15-16, gates open at 11:30 a.m., performances begin at 12:30 p.m.

Where: Freedom Hill Amphitheatre, 15000 Metropolitan Parkway (16 Mile), three miles east of Mound, Sterling Heights

Tickets: \$25 lawn, \$45 reserved seating, each day. Call (248) 645-6666

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