

Artists define space from several perspectives

Story: CORINNE ABATT
Photos: DICK KELLEY

On one level the works by Ellen Phelan at Susanne Hilberry Gallery ask more questions than they answer. On another, they stand as monuments to an artist's ingenuity and creativity — to be enjoyed. The three dimensional

free-standing, tall, slim structures are best looked at from several positions, in various lights, at several angles.

The point at which the viewer realizes these pieces incorporate optical illusion is what Ms. Phelan calls "the magic moment."

It is an apt term for the flat surfaces fall into columns. In some instances

they move away from each other, recede or project.

"The question has been going around for years on whether my work is sculpture or painting," she said and tossed it aside as a moot point.

In addition to these tall wood three dimensional pieces, she has several

paintings, oils on aluminum panels and plywood, plus drawings and gouache

landscapes.

Except for the fact that the paintings on aluminum have some small flat cut

away, they could be easily accepted as two dimensional works of art. But, the

small cuts, sometimes in the center, sometimes at the side or end, become

strong three-dimensional forces. So they begin to define three-dimensional

space, at the same time altering perceptions of flatness. These paintings

Ms. Phelan said are really extensions of the large structures which, by

strange contrast open up and challenge flat space.

If this, at first, sounds like a paradox, it is because Ms. Phelan is chal-

lenging our preconceived notions, demanding that we look again, but our-

selves betricked, enjoy and then reeval-uate. She said that painters will accept,

even approve of her work, as long as they can label it sculpture, and

sculptors can accept it if they can call it painting.

That's why the discussion continues, and why she discards it as not particularly relevant. She's right, a single label might be convenient, but it would convey little actual meaning.

She described her interest as

"...analyzing and defining space in which a painting can occur," and

added, "It's about challenging assumptions

...the cuts dislocate a painting plane and the location of those planes gets

much more ambiguous."

And so, to fellow artists, Ms. Phelan's work may challenge the

definition of space, both flat and three-dimensional. To non-artists, her work

challenges the eye and the senses in an invigorating way.

Running concurrently with this exhibit at the Hilberry Gallery is another on the East Coast with a commentary

by Edward Albee. In his praise of Ms. Phelan's work Albee said, "Another

of the values of Ellen Phelan's work is its

"beauty" — its lyrical stoicism, its nonreferential way of announcing

"here I am," its way of being both intensely of the present and timeless

simultaneously."

Born in Detroit in 1943, Ms. Phelan received a BFA, MA and MFA from

Wayne State University. She taught there plus at Fairleigh Dickinson Uni-

versity and Michigan State. Currently she is teaching at California Institute

of the Arts. New York City is now her permanent home. She has no regrets about leaving Detroit, because the art scene in New York has provided the stimulation, the places to show and the "network of support" which has helped move her career along.

The city of concrete and steel seems to have whetted her interest in

landscapes. And she speculates that all

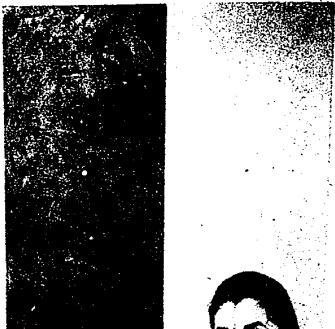
of her work has something to do with landscapes.

While in the middle of the contemporary action in the arts, she is still able to stand back and make an appraisal.

Ms. Phelan's paintings and constructions will be on display at the gallery

through April 7. The Susanne Hilberry Gallery, 555 South Woodward, is open

Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Both artist and teacher Ellen Phelan moves beyond traditional concepts of art's role in contemporary life.

Indoor gardening workshop planned

An indoor gardening workshop will be held at Farmington Public Library, 1-4 p.m. Saturday, March 17.

It is being given by the Michigan State University Extension Service in

cooperation with the Michigan Hobby Greenhouse Association.

Two programs will run concurrently at 1, 2 and 3 p.m. with a general ques-

tion and answer session on hobby greenhouses at 4 p.m.

Subjects to be covered include: "In-

door Light Gardening and Greenhouses,

Alice Aldrich; "Raising Holiday Plants," Gerald Draheim; "Raising Bedding Plants and Transplants," Bill Manthe; "Operating a Commercial Greenhouse," Bill Manthe; "Raising Orchids and Exotics," Gordon Dennis; and "Raising Flowers and Flowering Plants," Gerald Draheim.

Beginners and advanced gardeners are both welcome to attend. The li-

brary is at 32737 W. 12 Mile Rd. in

Farmington Hills between Orchard

Lake and Farmington roads.



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NOTICE OF SPECIAL ELECTION MONDAY, MARCH 26, 1979 CLARENCEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OAKLAND AND WAYNE COUNTIES, MICHIGAN

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF SAID SCHOOL DISTRICT:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a special election will be held in the Clarenceville School District of Oakland and Wayne Counties, Michigan between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, for the purpose of submitting the following proposal for Schoolcraft Community College District:

Schoolcraft College Capital Improvement

Tax Levy Proposal

Shall the Board of Trustees of the Schoolcraft Community College District, Michigan, be authorized, in addition to existing authorizations, to levy \$1.00 per \$1,000 (one mill per dollar) of State Equalized Value of all taxable property of the College District for 5 years, the years 1979 to 1983, inclusive, for capital expenditure, site improvement and maintenance purposes?

YES

NO

All qualified and registered electors of the school district may vote on the above proposal.

The places of voting for the special election to be held on March 26, 1979, will be as follows:

Precinct 1: Clarenceville Junior High School
22210 Middlebelt
Livonia, Michigan

Precinct 2: Clarenceville Junior High School
22210 Middlebelt
Livonia, Michigan

Precinct 3: Bedford Elementary School
19615 Lathers
Livonia, Michigan

Precinct 4: Bedford Elementary School
19615 Lathers
Livonia, Michigan

Precinct 5: Clarenceville Senior High School
20155 Middlebelt
Livonia, Michigan

Precinct 6: Clarenceville Senior High School
20155 Middlebelt
Livonia, Michigan

This notice is given as required by law.

BARRY M. SHERMAN
Secretary, Board of Education
Clarenceville School District of
Oakland and Wayne Counties

Published: March 15 and 22, 1979

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MON.-FRI. 8-5 SAT. 8-12

CITY OF FARMINGTON COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS-SUMMARY

A Regular Meeting of the Farmington City Council was held Monday, March 5, 1979, in the Council Chambers, 2600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, at 8:00 P.M. The following Councilmen were present: Mayor Richard L. Tupper, Councilmen Bennett, Buckler, Yoder, Councilman Hartsock arrived at 8:06 P.M. City officials present were: City Manager Deadman, Director Billing, Deputy Director Santamaria and City Clerk Viane.

The minutes of the previous meeting were received and/or filed.

A Public Hearing was held to review the Special Assessment Roll for the Whittaker Street Improvement; Resolution No. 5 confirming the special assessment roll was adopted.

A Public Hearing was held to consider the application for moving a house from 2501 Grand River to 3255 Shawansee; after which a resolution was adopted authorizing the issuance of the house moving permit.

Request was received from American Citizens for Honesty in Government.

City Manager Deadman and Councilman Bennett stated they would attend the meeting regarding future water and sewer rate structures being developed for the Detroit Board of Water Commission.

Mayor Tupper stated he would attend the Beautification Council of Southeastern Michigan Quarterly Meeting being hosted by the Farmington Beautification Committee.

The Preliminary Plat for the Hill View Subdivision was approved and a variance granted to allow a 27 ft. roadway.

Taxicab Bond Plates for 1979 were approved for the Yellow and Red Cab Company and the Suburban Checker Cab Company.

Director Earl Billing was designated Coordinator for accepting Federal Survey Property Assistance Program properties for the City.

Comments were made by Mr. Harold Polus, representing the Drake Heights Homeowners Association, Inc. regarding the proposed high rise and low income housing project to be located at Drake and Freedom Roads in the City of Farmington Hills.

Mr. Paul Schreiber, Mr. V.O. Bates and Mr. Howard E. Aldrich were re-appointed to serve three year terms on the Farmington Historical Commission.

Dr. Joseph Gadsbaw, 33265 Oakland, was appointed to represent the City of the Farmington Area Commission on Aging, term expiring May 15, 1981.

Council approved March 15 and March 22, 1979 for meeting with the City of Farmington Hills Council to review budgets which are jointly funded by the two cities.

The following ordinance was adopted:

ORDINANCE NO. C-443-79
AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND TITLE VII CHAPTER 65-TAX-ICABS, SECTIONS 7.134-VEHICLE MAINTENANCE; 7.135-TAX-IMETERS; 7.144-TAXICAB DRIVER LICENSE: OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF FARMINGTON

THE CITY OF FARMINGTON ORDAINS:

Section 7.134. Vehicle Maintenance.

All vehicles licensed under the provisions hereof shall be in good mechanical condition and shall be so maintained when operated under the terms of this Chapter. Before any such vehicle shall be licensed, it shall be examined under the direction of the Dept. of Public Safety to determine the condition of the vehicle and its equipment, and shall have the approval of the Dept. of Public Safety as to its condition before being licensed. Inspections by other municipalities which are in conformance with the provisions of this Chapter may be accepted in lieu of inspections by the Dept. of Public Safety.

Section 7.135. Taximeters.

All taxicabs shall have affixed thereto a taximeter, and no person shall operate or permit to be operated any taxicab unless the taximeter has been first inspected, tested and approved by the Director of Public Safety; provided that a variance of three (3%) percent shall be considered correct; and for which service a fee of fifty cents (50cents) shall be charged for each inspection. No person shall operate or permit to be operated a taxicab equipped with a taximeter not having the case thereof sealed and the cover and gear thereof intact. Every taximeter shall be so affixed that the amount of the fare determined shall be plainly visible to the passengers thereof, and after sundown shall be illuminated by a suitable light. Taximeters shall be examined at least once each year, and the Dept. of Public Safety shall keep a record of all such inspections and approvals and disapprovals. It shall be unlawful for the operator of any taxicab to operate said cab with a passenger therein without first engaging said meter. Taximeter inspections from other municipalities conducted within the current year and which are in conformance with this Ordinance may be accepted in lieu of inspection by the Dept. of Public Safety.

Section 7.144. Taxicab Driver License.

Each person driving a taxicab or motor vehicle for hire must be licensed as such. Each applicant for a driver's license must be of the age of eighteen (18) years or over; and not subject to epilepsy, vertigo, heart trouble or any other infirmity of body or mind which might render him unfit for the safe operation of a public vehicle; be able to read and write the English language, be of adequate maturity, experience and background to function as a driver; be clean in dress and person and not addicted to the use of intoxicating liquors, narcotic drugs, and/or other drugs not prescribed for the treatment of disease by a licensed physician. The applicant shall fill out, upon a form to be provided by the City Clerk, a statement giving his full name, place or places of residence for the five (5) years next preceding, date of birth, height, color of eyes and hair, whether a citizen of the United States, whether he has ever been licensed as a driver or a chauffeur, and if so, when and where and whether his license has ever been revoked, and for what cause. Said application shall be filed with the Public Safety Department of the City of Farmington, and said applicant shall also file on forms provided by said Department, a full set of his or her fingerprints. Said application and the said applicant shall be examined under the direction of the Public Safety Dept. who shall have the power to approve or disapprove said application. If the Public Safety Dept. shall approve said application it shall endorse his approval thereon and deliver the same to the City Clerk who shall issue a license upon payment of the fees hereinafter provided. If the Public Safety Dept. shall not approve said application, it shall note such fact thereon, and deliver the same to the City Clerk who shall notify the applicant in writing at his or her address as stated upon such application. Said applicant may within ten (10) days thereafter, appeal to the City Council from the determination of said Public Safety Dept. and the Council shall have the power to approve such application, whereupon a license shall be issued as above provided or said appeal may be denied. The decision of the Council shall be final.

This ordinance was introduced at a regular meeting of the Farmington City Council on February 26, 1979, was adopted and enacted at the next regular meeting of the Council on March 5, 1979, and will become effective ten days after publication.

AYES: Hartsock, Tupper, Yoder, Bennett, Buckler.

NAYES: None.

The monthly bills were approved for payment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

RICHARD L. TUPPER, Mayor
NEDRA VIANE, City Clerk

Published: March 15, 1979