

Scrimshaw

Ancient art has revival

Fine art on ivory requires skills analogous to cutting diamonds, artist Emmie Wick says.

Ms. Wick, though only 27, is one of the most prolific artists in ivory work in the Pacific Northwest. Her work and that of Kelly Mulford and other well-known scrimshaw artists is on display at the Venture Gallery, a division of Habitat Galleries, Inc. of Lathrup Village.

Scrimshaw, art on ivory, is the ancient art form both of the Eskimos and, more recently, of 19th-century whalers. It is enjoying a 20th-century revival.

Artisans from the Pacific Northwest, using basically fossilized mammoth and mastodon ivory, are working with endures and images that go far beyond what was done in the past.

Most of the current crop of ivory carvers got started by working for the Alaskan Silver and Ivory Company of Bellingham, Wash., the pioneer company in the rebirth of scrimshaw.

Starting with traditional motifs, the company branched into new ideas and techniques because the work-

ers largely were creative persons with art-school backgrounds. The new technology subsequently developed created new possibilities for the artists.

Kelly Mulford engraves birds with details that create an authenticity beyond what can be expected from a photo.

Born in Seattle, he began to draw at age 5 and helped develop modern scrimshaw in the mid-1970s. He attended the Derbyshire School of Fine Art and other schools and currently is enrolled at Western Washington University as a jewelry major.

Ms. Wick has lived in New Mexico and on the East Coast. She received a bachelor of arts in art in 1973, and her work is much coveted by collectors of art on ivory.

Along with other handcrafted items, the scrimshaw collection can be seen at the Venture Gallery, 28235 Southfield Road from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Saturdays and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Fridays.

For more information, call the gallery at 552-1151.



Emmie Wick's native women portrait (far left) captures subtle and important cultural details. Working on a surface smaller than the artist's hand requires meticulous technique and discipline, as in the miniature of a tiger by Karen Peterson (below). At left is Kelly Mulford's detailed rendition of a bird in its natural setting.

Staff photos by Mindy Saunders



American poetry is back as a popular art form

By Ira Lax
special writer

Lovers of the written and spoken word can expect a year of discovery, as "Lines: New American Poetry" at the Detroit Institute of Arts begins its second season on Oct. 5.

Lines is a unique series of monthly poetry readings and lectures, by writers with a wide variety of styles from across America.

Leading the series this year is Ntozake Shange, author of the Broadway play "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enough" and a book of poems titled "Nappy Edges."

Following her on Nov. 12 will be the renowned poet Allen Ginsberg, and on Dec. 3 Helen Adam will appear. The Seattle-born Adam is in her 70s.

She writes ballads and gothic stories," said George Tysh, 39, poet, teacher and director of Lines who is very enthusiastic about Adam and the rest of what is planned for this year.

Although Tysh hasn't heard Adam read before, he said friends who have say "it's like nothing you've ever heard

before in your life. It's really like a performance of singing."

Interestingly enough, after the first two, most of the poets Tysh has scheduled aren't well known outside the poetry community. This reflects his belief that the public will appreciate being exposed to the originality and depth of the new writing in America today.

Also, five out of the nine poets in the Lines series are women. Tysh's interest in exposing the public to good writing applies to the local scene as well.

"The first year was so successful," he said, "that we have added writing workshops and reading by Michigan poets for this year."

To Sarah Jones and Paul Lichter, owners of the Birmingham Little Professor Book Center, this new addition to Lines interests them most.

"Regional poetry is the most exciting and important art form just like the visual arts, and can be a 'healing experience' as well.

"It's important to hear the new

American writing," said Lichter, who carries one of the largest selections of poetry in southeastern Michigan.

"George (Tysh) is doing what we're doing," he said, "exposing a new generation of readers to what we consider extraordinary American writing."

Most of the Michigan writers in this year's program are from the southeastern part of the state, and are "very different kinds of poets," said Tysh. Surrealism emanates from the high energy, sometimes violent earlier poems of Faye Kiekoway, and the dream-like work of Edward Hirsch.

Judith McCombs uses wilderness themes in her poetry. Sol Lachman explores Jewishness, and Alvin Aubert's writing evokes the southern atmosphere of New Orleans.

The concept of Lines evolved out of Tysh's experiences over the last seven years. In 1974-75 he taught creative writing at Wayne State University. He discovered that, for him as a teacher,

the academic environment and grading didn't help writers.

"That same year Tysh inherited the late-night jazz radio show 'Dimensions' on WDET-FM from trumpeter Charles Moore. Tysh, along with fellow poets Glen Mannisto and Jim Wanless, shifted the emphasis to poetry, promoting the art for its own sake."

In 1976 he moved to Denver for three years, giving poetry workshops to young students as part of the poets-in-the-school program. Again, he was further developing his teaching ability in non-academic environments.

So when he and his wife, Chris, returned to Detroit in 1979, Tysh needed work and was ready to synthesize his past experiences into larger projects.

His friend, poet and carpenter Glen Mannisto, became instrumental in helping Tysh develop the Lines concept.

The Detroit Institute of Arts was the obvious place to begin.

"I felt that if we did it at the museum," said Tysh, "we could avoid all these academic problems. We could just get down to the meat of writing. What is it all about? And then we could start to put intellection on a level which is for its own sake; rather than for some ulterior motive."

Through Jay Belloli, curator of modern art at the DIA, Tysh met Linda Downs, the head of education there, who, Tysh said, "immediately turned out to be the exact right person."

With money from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Founders Society Junior Council, the wheels for the first year of Lines were set in motion.

The success of that series, along with its unique publicity poster, attracted the attention of B. Dalton Booksellers.

"They said they would like to fund our program," said Tysh.

The Workshops in Writing and Po-

etics will take place on Saturday afternoons (except the first Apprentice Workshop, which will be on Thursdays after the Lines lectures), and will be designed to meet the needs of three groups: Workshop for Children, five eight-week sessions, the first beginning Oct. 17; Apprentice Workshop for serious adult beginners, high school age and older, three eight-week sessions, beginning Oct. 15; and Seminar in Poetics, for accomplished poets — three eight-week sessions, beginning Oct. 17. The teachers will be from the Michigan Poets Series.

The Michigan Poets Series will take place at 3 p.m. Sundays in the Holley Room.

The Lines series will be on Thursdays, with an informal talk by the poet at 3 p.m. in the Holley Room. The readings will be at 7:30 p.m. in the Lecture-Recreation Hall. For more information on any of the above, call 833-9804.

INSIDE ANGLES

BY MARY RODRIQUE

BAKERS AND HANDICRAFT MAKERS from the Farmington area displayed their award-winning talents at the '81 Michigan State Fair, and their efforts didn't go unnoticed. Ribbon winners include June D. Paulic, first place, carrot cake; Jane Autum Lewis, first place, brownies; Dolores L. Petuchenko, first place, any other handicraft contest, first place, china painted with fruits contest; Hazel Grace, second place, any other category of needlecraft; and Anne Smith, second place, handicraft contest. The fair wrapped up Labor Day Monday.

KUDOS TO BERNARD SALLOT of Farmington Hills who just received the Archimedes Award from the California Society of Professional Engineers. Sallot is director of professional and governmental affairs for the Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) in Dearborn. The award was presented to him for his work in making manufacturing engineering a recognized discipline in professional registration. Sallot also is executive director of the Robot Institute of America and is a graduate of the John Carroll University in Cleveland. The SME, with more than 60,000 members in 60 countries, will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year.

PIANIST KATHLEEN ROACH will be featured in the first artist lecture series at William Tyndale College this fall. Roach has performed in Europe and the U.S. and is recipient of numerous awards. She now teaches at California State University and Immaculate Heart College. Area pianists are invited to attend a piano master class conducted by Dr. Roach at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 26, on campus at the Kresge Chapel, 3570 W. Twelve Mile in Farmington Hills. The concert is scheduled the same day at 8 p.m. The music department of the college can provide more information: 553-7200.

MARILYN TURNER, the queen of morning TV as co-host of WXVZ's Kelly & Co., will narrate the Farmington Community Center's fall fashion show Sept. 24. Called "The Total Look," the show will include fashions and accessories from Leona's of Hunters Square, Roslyn's Intimate Apparel in Applegate Square, and Wiedenbaum Creations in Northwestern Highway in Southfield. Marjorie Feurman will coordinate the show at Vladimir's, 28125 Grand River. It begins with a cash bar and pantry shop at 11 a.m. Followed by Chicken Kiev at 12:30. Tickets are on sale (\$12) at the community center, 24705 Farmington Road, north of 10 Mile.

CHANNEL 56 salutes the International Year for the Disabled this month with a variety of special programs. "A Different Approach" examines the handicapped and their acceptance of themselves in society on Saturday, Sept. 19, at 12:30 p.m. and Sunday, Sept. 20, at 11:30 a.m. "Festival of Hands: The Silken Tent" presents a collaboration between actor Jason Robards and the National Theatre of the Deaf in a performance based on a Robert Frost poem. It will be aired Tuesday, Sept. 22, at 9:30 p.m.

PAIN CAN BE A PAIN The Birmingham Community House will present a program with tips on how to deal with it on Sept. 15 at 7:30 p.m. Sponsor is the Oakland County Subarea Advisory Council of the Comprehensive Health Planning Council of Southeastern Michigan. The meeting is free. Panelists include Allen Braverman, pharmacologist at the Gertrude Levin Pain Clinic in Detroit; Dr. Cassius DeFlon, psychiatrist and consultant in William Beaumont Hospital's pain program; John DeLorenzo, physical therapist at the Kenny Michigan Rehabilitation Foundation at Pontiac General Hospital, and Don Powell, a clinical psychologist and registered hypnotist. The community house is at 380 S. Bates.

A SWIMMING EXPERIENCE will be offered to youth of all ages by Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation this fall at the North Farmington High School pool. Lessons will begin on Saturday, Oct. 3, and continue Saturdays through Nov. 21. The fee is \$15 for eight weeks of lessons. The following guide should be used to determine the level of swimmer: 1, swims less than 10-12 feet; 2, learning proper breathing and stroking, swims less than 20 feet; 3, coordination breathing, swimming on back; 4, sitting dive, learning to swim 40 feet with coordination and kick extended on back; 5, learning confidence in deep water, standing dive and jump and level off in deep water; 6, improving coordination of crawl stroke to reach goal of 25 yards, learning to dive off board; 7, developing crawl stroke to 50 yards, learning back strokes, treading water and survival floating; 8, strengthening crawl, back crawl and elementary backstroke to 50 yards each. Swim continuously for 5 minutes; 9, developing good endurance skills and ability to swim 100 yards in good form of 5 strokes each; 10, learning to swim 400 yards in basic strokes, learning butterfly stroke, racing and diving skills. For more information, call the rec. office at 474-6115/1

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