

Creative Living

classified real estate and homes

Corinne Abatt editor/844-1100



(FYE)

The Farmington Observer, Dec. 12, 1985, Page 8

Performers

Who's acting and who's watching?

By Corinne Abatt
staff writer

Painter Deborah Kashdan's involvement with people is a back and forth game of fantasy and reality. Is she watching the people or are they watching her? Are they performing or are they merely the audience watching a performance? Are those clothes their costumes or are those costumes their clothes?

Whatever the nuances, Kashdan is blossoming as a first-rank documenter of the urban crowd. She recently had seven paintings juried at an international competition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in New York City, and she is working on a new series "Cafe Couples" and doing more for an ongoing "Performance" series.

Although it is always hazardous to say an artist is the only one using a certain technique, Kashdan is certainly among a very few adding real three-dimensional objects to her paintings — eye glasses, flowers, jewelry, clothing, hair — anything she finds that fits into her visual plan.

This could be distracting in the hands of a less-skilled artist, but Kashdan integrates these items so cleverly that they become a natural part of the painting.

"I don't add until I find the right pieces," she said. "I'll know which I'll put on them." And if the right pieces don't show up immediately from her sallies to garage sales, antique markets and roadside stands, she simply waits it out.

KASHIDAN takes almost a

ONCE THESE people fought their



The artist loves the patterns of tile which in this painting of the rather bored young couple are teal and red. The attention to pattern extends to his napkin, her purse, the dishes, even the chair backs.

perverse delight in being honest with her viewers. And her honesty becomes an integral part of the enjoyment of each painting.

The man in "Hellman and Hammett" from the "Cafe Couples" series, is obviously wearing a toupee (a real one), but he looks comfortable with it. He knows it, his lady friend knows it, the artist knows it and so does the viewer. And most would agree he looks better with it than without.

In the "Performance" series, there are some which Kashdan calls "volunteer" performance pieces. That's when the figure is posed, rather than caught off guard.

Her lady, clad in a scanty black lace outfit, sitting on the bathroom floor, is a volunteer.

"It's a very uncomfortable position; she would have to volunteer for it," Kashdan said sympathetically, adding that the position is the viewer's clue to the fact that this is a painting, not a reproduction of reality. "And the (lady's) delightful smirk tells you it's all just a jest."

Some such as "Mother and Daughter" in the "Cafe Couples" are much closer to reality. Kashdan said they're obviously discussing someone at another table.

There's nothing outrageous about these two; they're just enjoying their own world.

When Kashdan started seriously painting 8-10 years ago, she felt there were figures trying to break loose from her heavily patterned abstracts.



The man's toupee and sun glasses, his ring and his friend's jewelry into her canvas. This painting is part of a new "Couples" series she's been working on for several months.

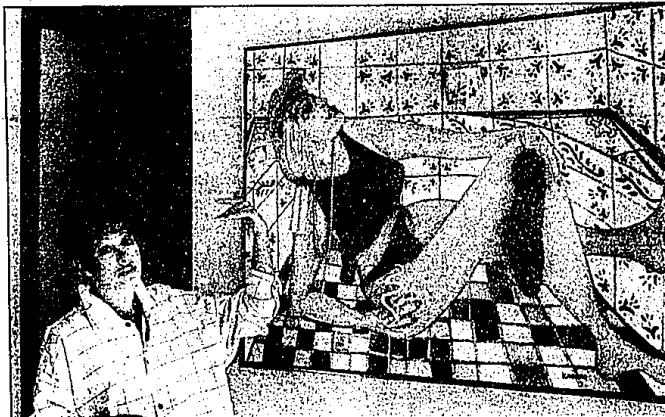
way to the surface, they took control. But the patterns remained as strong, colorful backdrops for their activities. In fact, Kashdan crams as much pattern and color into every painting as she can, never losing control of the design quality of the overall work. She is happy spending hours wedging bits of color and pattern into every corner.

Her longtime interest in tile patterns is showing up in many of her new pieces. In one she made a real towel to match the tile in the bathroom. In another the tile pattern is closely related to the clothes of the two people.

In addition to the museum crowds of Paris and New York in the "Performance" series, Kashdan has fun with groups she describes as "the old scotch and stridin' crowd" and "the Bayview Association crowd."

While she enjoys "the which is fantasy and which is reality" aspect of her paintings, their strength is in the visual commentary they make on today's urban society.

Kashdan's work is shown at Carol Hoebman Gallery of Birmingham and has been in group shows this year at Detroit Artists Market, Meadow Brook Gallery, Livonia Cultural League and the First Congregational Church of Birmingham's "Celebrate Life" where she won honorable mention.



Sometimes artist Deborah Kashdan almost becomes a part of the world she observes and paints. Is she the artist or is she part of the picture?

She said this one was done just for fun because no would normally assume such an unnatural position.

Staff photos by Jerry Zolynsky

Michigan art featured at new Novi Hilton



Michigan's outstanding printmaker, Emil Weddige of Ann Arbor, chose the artists whose works are in the new Novi Hilton.



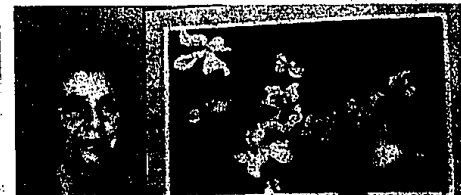
One of the artists who attended the unveiling of the art work earlier this month was Louise Nobili who stands beside her work, "Mirrored Grid."

The new Novi Hilton just off I-275 at the Eight Mile Exit is at the corner of four communities — Livonia, Farmington, Northville and Novi. The Michigan artists represented in the collection which premiered earlier this month represent an even broader area.

There are several paintings by Richard Kozlow of Birmingham, sculpture by Glen Michaels of Troy, paintings by Louise Nobili of Grosse Pointe, Barbara Keldan of Beverly Hills, Mary Jane Bigler, Zabel Kachadorian, Deena Morguloff-Kachadorian and Charles McGee of Detroit.

Among the other outstanding artists represented is Ann Arbor painter and sculptor, Gerome Karmrowaki, Vincent Hartgen, Sarkis Sarkisian, Mary Elizabeth Bodor, Jean Paul Slusser and Linda Heckenkamp.

Weddige has been a part of the Michigan art scene ever since he came to the University of Michigan in 1937 as a teaching fellow. The same year he received his masters in design from U-M and was appointed an instructor. In 1937 he became professor of art and in 1974 was appointed professor emeritus.



Barbara Keldan is well known for her large, dramatic paintings of flowers and flowering trees. This one in the new hotel is "Dogwood."