

# Creative Living

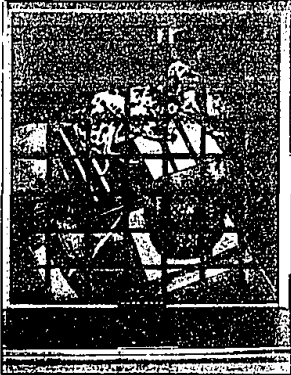
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## This kitchen artistry uses paints, not pans



One of Deborah Hecht's clients wanted this panel behind a stove. Done in a contemporary style, the tiled area depicts some of the client's most treasured possessions.



Deborah Hecht pauses for a moment in her studio. Her involvement in painting on

tile began when she decided to renovate her own kitchen.



Utilizing another medium, Hecht did this painting of her two young sons which hangs over the mantle in her home.

By Corinne Abett  
staff writer

While redecorating her kitchen, Deborah Hecht, artist, found herself another career. More a variation on a theme than an actual switch, it began when she hand-painted tiles for a double border above the counters and cabinets.

"The tile (painting) started because I couldn't find anything I liked," she said.

Her colorful, handpainted tiles created such a stir that she is now doing commissions and meeting with architects and builders. Her custom design on tile is available to interior designers through Beaver Tile in the Design Center of Troy.

But, all this isn't lucky happenstance. Hecht, a Bloomfield Township resident, is a career artist and designer with a substantial track record.

She has a degree in fine arts from Wayne State, studied at the Fashion Institute of Technology and the New York Studio School in New York as well as University of Michigan, Oxbow School and Center for Creative Studies.

She was a designer for Artcarved Inc. and Bulova Watch Co. of New York City and has had paintings in shows at Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association where she won the best of show award this fall in the Birmingham Society of Women Painters exhibit, Detroit Focus, Detroit Artists Market, Rubiner Gallery, Scarab Club and east coast galleries.

She is a versatile artist who can switch easily from one medium to another. As a painter, she likes to work in watercolor, is particularly

interested in interiors and calls herself "a pattern junkie."

As a result of this addiction, she fills her work with color and design. But her approach isn't traditional, because she presents her interiors from interesting vantage points in order to establish strong design qualities.

For her tile becomes just one more challenging surface.

"I'm going to do a bunch of paintings for the floor (on tile)," she said.

The tiles are already glazed when she starts. So what she puts on will look exactly the same after she fires it in the new kiln in her studio.

She doesn't sketch first, preferring to simply start, but she said, "For commissions I will have something for the person to approve."

To her the paintings on tile are variations on a watercolor interior. "I paint what's around me."

She has done paintings of the interiors of the apartments and lofts where she has lived and worked. She did a painting of her two sons, which hangs over the fireplace in her home.

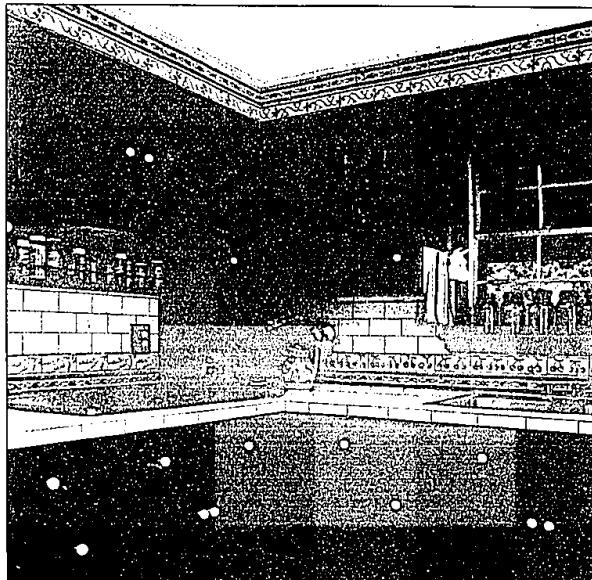
Her work, in a sense, documents her life and the environments she creates with great skill and flair.

She said she sees her work "as a service for people who think of their homes as a work of art."

Hecht and her mother, Margery Hecht Simon, will have an exhibit together in March in the gallery in Huntington Woods Library.

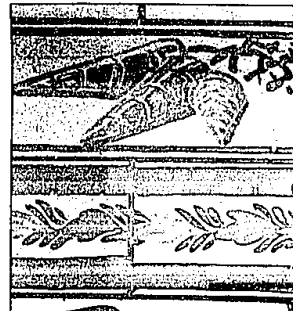
While Hecht deeply appreciates her mother's talent and shares her interest in art, she makes a concerted effort to avoid the old "siding in on the coattails" syndrome.

And she manages gracefully because she has plenty of talent and lots of fresh ideas.



For her own kitchen, Hecht chose a disarming combination of flowers, cherries and carrots. When doing work for herself,

she draws directly on the unfired tile. Clients, however, do receive renderings for their approval.



A detail of the carrot/flower motif from Hecht's kitchen shows each tile's subtly individual character.

## His involvement in art is a well-rounded effort



Arthur Greenblatt stands in his studio in front of a 1985 untitled work.

By Corinne Abett  
staff writer

Arthur Greenblatt's commitment to the arts cuts a wide swath. As academic dean, Center for Creative Studies-College of Art and Design, since 1976, he's been instrumental in giving the college international visibility.

As chairman of the board of Young Audiences of Michigan, he's helped bring theater, music and mime to elementary and secondary schools in the state.

As a working studio artist, he's shown his work at colleges, universities museums and galleries and is currently represented by Cantor Lemberg Gallery of Birmingham.

In essence, in the arts, he's an administrator, educator, volunteer, painter, writer and all-around booster.

If Greenblatt, 43, gets high on anything, it has to be on enthusiasm for what he does.

After visiting a studio type program for art students from nine member schools of the Alliance of Independent Colleges of Art in New York City, he was aglow with excitement.

Three first-semester seniors from the College of Art and Design are among the 25 working in a fourth floor loft in Tribeca, an area below SoHo in New York City. Supervising, the studio output is Susan Martin, an MFA graduate of California College of Arts and Crafts.

THE THREE local students in the program are David Marion, Lahser High graduate, a Kevin Meland and Coleen Miller of Detroit.

"They are learning a lot about living as an artist in New York, in a confined setting. There are so many artists visiting the loft. They are having such

a wonderful experience," Greenblatt said.

He had had lunch with a small group of them, including those from Michigan, and heard firsthand about the work they were doing, the big name artists they had met, the shows they had attended, museums visited and their impressions of the city.

He said that while this year the program is strictly a painting program, eventually it will be expanded to include design and photography.

This year was also the first official summer program in Europe for industrial design students. Five of them spent the summer working for Renault and Heuliez (a company that makes trucks and buses under its own name and automobiles for other companies) of France and Ghia of Turin, Italy.

The students, Greenblatt said, were given responsible jobs rather than menial tasks.

Still with all the changes and growth of the college in recent years, Greenblatt said, "One of the hardest problems was simply the change of name."

The school, which began as Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts, was renamed Center for Creative Studies and that was recently redefined as College of Art and Design. The name Center for Creative Studies was retained as the umbrella designation covering affiliated organizations, the College of Art and Design and Detroit Community Music School being the first two.

JAMES KELLY is president of Center for Creative Studies, Jerome Grove is president of the CCS-College of Art and Design and Greenblatt is the academic dean.

"The Center is essentially a service organization doing development and public relations," Greenblatt said. "The concept is still new. Organizations could be formed or existing organizations could join and get services."

Greenblatt said the one "perfect partner" would

be "a high school of the visual and performing arts. That doesn't exist in the the Detroit area — and that's certainly been discussed."

Another of the hard jobs for admissions people particularly, he said, is fighting the image Detroit has around the country.

"People never hear how beautiful it is where we are."

He is justifiably proud of the growth of the school since he came in 1976. The 1,350-member student body, including 950 seeking degrees, is made up of people of all ages from many parts of the world. The largest number are in graphic design, followed by industrial design and fine arts. Crafts is the smallest, Greenblatt said, "probably following a national trend."

Greenblatt, divorced, father of three young adults, lives in Birmingham where he has his painting studio.

He recalls how pleasant it was recently to walk into the offices of Anthony M. France Inc., a public relations firm, in the Renaissance Center and see one of his large paintings prominently displayed.

He looks forward to having blocks of time to work in his studio, but the demands on the art educator are constant.

He said that as he travels the world, people frequently ask what the relationship is between CCS-College of Art and Design and Cranbrook Academy of Art.

"I tell them we are the largest employer of Cranbrook graduates in the world," he said with a smile, adding that they were founded by the same people.

"We do more business related things for the artist than most schools do," he said. "We're trying to help students become immediately productive. I think we've played pretty much a leadership role in this."