

# Creative Living

Marie McGee editor/591-2300



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(F1E)



Alice Nigoghosian quality is upmost  
JIM RIDER/staff photographer

## Serving 'town and gown' is Press challenge

By Joan Boram  
special writer

INTERESTING cities, like interesting people, reveal themselves slowly, surprisingly familiar with unsuspected vistas. Imagine learning that a dear old friend can juggle, or read Sanskrit. How wonderful! Why didn't they ever tell you? Your friendship takes a new turn, enhanced by discovery.

Detroit, too, behind the headlines and the ubiquitous Renaissance Center, holds pleasant surprises.

One such surprise is the Wayne State University Press, a secret so well-kept that even the Wayne State switchboard never heard of it.

"The Press was established in 1941 to publish books for the scholarly and literary communities," explains interim director Alice Nigoghosian. "Everybody knows the saying 'Publish or perish,' but what they don't know is who does the actual publishing. Generally, it's university presses.

The functions of a great university are teaching, research, and dissemination of the results of scholarly inquiry. To assist Wayne to achieve these goals, the Press publishes several scholarly journals, concentrating on such topics as the history of discoveries, 18th century German culture, and population biology and genetics. American Imago, "A Psychoanalytic Journal for Culture, Science and the Arts," was founded by Sigmund Freud and Hanns Sachs in 1939.

"OVER THE PAST, few years, the mission of the Press has been expanded to include books that are of general interest, but will never become blockbusters. Commercial publishers are less willing today than they were in the past to publish unprofitable books on the basis of literary merit, subsidizing them with the profit from best-sellers."

What would happen if a book assumed a life of its own and sold millions of copies? Nigoghosian and marketing manager Patrick Callahan exchange glances and each smiles knowingly. She doesn't name names, but at least one university press was almost wiped out by a run-away success, a Frankenstein's monster, as it were.

Their entire program for the year was put on hold. The marketing manager was delivering books to bookstores, and the senior editor was working on the loading dock. The best thing is to sell the rights to a commercial publisher as soon as possible," she said.

It seems that in university publishing, as in religion, nothing fails like success. Miracles (or catastrophes) aside, the average run of the Wayne State University Press is 1,500 copies, a typical number for a scholarly press. By comparison, the average run for a commercial publisher is 10,000 copies.

It came out in time for Christmas, as Callahan points out.

But we couldn't do as good a job of printing if we had to meet that deadline," Nigoghosian said firmly. She will not compromise the quality of the book, even if it means losing sales. Callahan nods. He knows she's right, but he is, after all, the marketing manager.

Nigoghosian, who lives in Troy, has been with the press since 1981, starting as a "gofer" while an undergraduate majoring in mass communications. She has been production and design manager, editor, and Jack-of-all-editorial-trades. Twelve-hour days are the norm, and she often leaves her Troy apartment early in the morning, returning late in the evening. "I still can't believe I made a career out of publishing," she said with the air of one counting her blessings. "When I was growing up, you could be a teacher, or a nurse, or a librarian, but that was about it."

"YOU HAVE TO be able to handle anything when you work for a small press," she said. "But we do call upon outside help to supplement our staff of 22 (the number includes clerical help). For instance, we would call upon a free-lance editor for a technical book, and we use free-lance book designers. The book designer for "America's Favorite Homes" was Mary Primo of Birmingham."

Libraries are the largest single type of customer for university press books, with library sales accounting for 30 to 40 percent of all press sales. For this reason, the Wayne Press has traditionally published mostly hardcover books. However, there has been more simultaneous hard- and paper-cover — publishing in the past few years, as the Press reaches out to the non-academic community.

Poetry, published mostly in paperback, falls into the popular category, although most commercial publishers won't risk it. Nigoghosian is proud of the poetry list, and relates that some of their books have had very good reviews in the New York Times. She and Callahan smile broadly at the memory.

In 1986, the Press launched "Great Lakes Books," an imprint of original and classic regional history. "Regional" doesn't mean "dreary," as the selection of subjects proves. Titles include "Walnut Pickles and Watermelon Cake, a Century of Michigan Cooking," "The AIA Guide to Detroit Architecture," and "Coleman Young and Detroit Politics." A recent publication is the stunning "Edsel and Eleanor Ford house," with photos by Balhazar Korab and Dirk Bakker, available in both paperback and hardcover.

TECHNICALLY, THE Wayne State University Press is a non-profit institution, and therefore cannot turn a profit. The goal is to break even. Currently, the university provides 25 percent of the Press's operating budget, plus services such as parking and building maintenance.

"A university press faces a continuing challenge to strike a proper balance between its role as representative of its parent institution and its role as a popular publisher," said Nigoghosian. "Increasingly, we're serving both 'town' and 'gown.' Scholarly publishing is a test of editorial wisdom, sound management, and financial acumen."

## Environmental statement Photos bring imagery into drawings

By Corinne Aball  
staff writer

Barbara Dorchen knows about patience. She knew her new work should be seen as a unit and not mixed in with that of other artists. So, she waited for the right opportunity. Her show at Cade Gallery, 214 W. Sixth, Royal Oak, through June reinforces her belief.

Dorchen has traditionally expressed herself in black and white or monochromatics. In the new work, she adds subtle bits of color, and collages photographs on a number of her pieces. She has also gone from pastel and prisma color on charcoal background to oil pastel and prisma color on acrylic background. While these changes are relatively subtle, the photographs are a new and strong element.

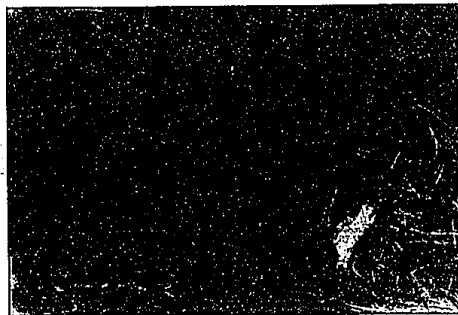
Dorchen said, "I've been taking photographs for a number of years for my own reference." She never thought of using them as any more than that until recently. Now, she said, "I feel the photos are an important aspect of my intent... the whole series is the 'Found Object Series'... They're more about nature and environment. The titles indicate a landscape connotation."

But, she said she doesn't think of them as that at all. "When I'm drawing, I'm just drawing — it just comes out that way."

She added, "The photos are a conscious effort to bring content into my work. This is an important concept for me." She said she sees this as the beginning of a whole new body of work.

"Content is something I have been wanting to happen and I didn't know how I wanted to do it." She said she is careful not to try to make things happen or to make her efforts look contrived. She succeeds when she has a lot of things such as found objects around her and lets them fall naturally into place in her work.

What looks initially like masses of random lines on dark paper in each drawing gradually begins to coalesce into an individual entity. The viewer becomes aware of more color, strong unseen light sources and deep shadows. There is an organic quality to the several large ones, as though things are moving and changing just beneath the surface. This is especially true of the largest work in the show, "Moonrise." There is no photo in this one, nor is one called for. This sensitive work stands out in a room full of good pieces. The photos in some works are better than others, but there is no doubt about the addition of color. She handles that like a pro and it mellows her style a bit without taking anything away from her statement.



Barbara Dorchen (above) with "Moonrise." She recently moved her studio from Farmington to Pontiac. At left is "Found Object," using photographs with the drawing.

pressed through personal concern."

Dorchen completed a bachelor's in art at Center for Creative Studies, has been represented in many regional exhibitions and has work in many private and corporate collections.

Staff photos by Jerry Zolynsky

All of the elements she uses she said mesh together "to create a personal statement which signifies awareness about the fragility of the environment, the state of nature's precarious balance, the mortality of life and the profound sensitivity ex-

Cade Gallery hours are 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

## Functioning art

The "Flock of Furniture" show at Ariana Gallery, 388 E. Maple, Birmingham, features 10 artists from throughout the country who add art and color to function. The "feeding fish" cabinet and the "cocoatoo" chair are both by Greg Jarvis. The child's chair, done in a barrage of color, is by Pamela Morris of New York. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Saturday. The show continues through June.

