

Creative Living

Marie McGee editor/591-2300

CLASSIFIED REAL ESTATE



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Artist's life story written in calligraphy

By Virginia Lee Clark
special writer

Work exhibited at CCS

Elaine Grohman takes her own advice. As a calligraphy teacher, she tells students who don't think they can do something, "Yes, you can, you just haven't done it yet."

This philosophy is reflected in the almost-completed, 1,700-square-foot renovation built around her original 600-square-foot home in Farmington Hills.

It is apparent in the distance she has traveled from being an advertising design student taking a required calligraphy course at the Center for Creative Studies to having two pieces of her work accepted by the International Typeface Corp. for a cultural exchange exhibition with Russia that opens in Moscow in October.

This multifaceted artist grew up in Farmington and now lives in Farmington Hills with her husband, Richard, and their two children. She has been an oil painter and has worked with stained glass, but she said that when she walked into the late Joseph Firden's calligraphy class at CCS, "I fell in love with letters and knew what I wanted to do."

After she married, she taught painting in an art store while learning and practicing calligraphy on her own. She met other calligraphers in the area when she joined the Michigan Association of Calligraphers and sold one of her pieces the first time she exhibited in an MAC-sponsored show in 1981.

"My husband has always encouraged me," she said. "He feels I have a special talent and should use it. I am still embarrassed, though, every time I look at my own wedding invitation which I did. I thought it was so good at the time, but it just looks awful to me now."

Therefore, the first building

Janice Copperstone, Bloomfield Hills; Eileen Merline, Southfield; Jaci Sullivan, Rochester; and Claudia Williams, Southfield.

Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday. For information, call 874-1955.

block in the renovation of their home was a large, well-lit studio built by her husband where she turns out an incredible amount of work.

She has an innate sense of design and that coupled with her daring use of color makes her calligraphy vibrant and alive. She particularly likes to make her letters dance on a black background in her non-verbal paper and is now incorporating some paper-weaving techniques that produce dramatic results.

When using a quote as her central theme, she creates an overall mood for the piece based on her interpretation of the words.

SHE WORKS RAPIDLY and is constantly experimenting with papers, writing tools including popcicle sticks, and inks and paints to get the myriad of color effects she wants.

When doing commercial projects including logos, ads, certificates, invitations or brochures, she shows her clients preliminary sketches leading them away from the write and toward designs with "some pizzazz." Her clients run the gamut from the Wayne State Medical School Alumni Association to the Krook Boxing Team.

Like her customers, the New



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Elaine Grohman works at calligraphy in her studio in her Farmington Hills home.

York City-based International Typeface Corp. recognized her talents. ITC, one of the country's most-respected type design houses, issued a call for entries for a cultural exchange show with the Soviet Artist Union.

OF THE MORE THAN 600 entries from the United States, only 71 pieces from 54 artists were accepted. These included two by

Grohman. After the show opens in Moscow in October, it will travel to several cities in Russia for nine months, arriving in New York City in early 1991. The joint venture will then tour the United States for the next two years.

Closer to home, Grohman's work may be seen at the CCS Gallery in an exhibition entitled "Michigan Calligraphers." On display are 51 pieces by 20 calligraphers who

have won awards in Juried Michigan shows during the past five years. All are members of MAC.

The gallery is located in the Park Shelton, 15 East Kirby at Woodward in Detroit. The show closes Friday, June 8. For information, call 874-1955.

The "yes, you can" theory is obvious in the original concepts used in Grohman's newly enlarged home. But that's another story.

Mother bought him a flute — he's been playing it ever since

By Carolyn Barnett-Goldstein
special writer

"Music is for everybody. It belongs to everybody, and it's accessible," the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's principal flutist, Ervin Monroe, says emphatically.

"You don't have to take five years of college to be able to enjoy what you're going to hear. And when you talk down to somebody — there's no reason for it. If somebody has not had exposure to a Brahms symphony, you can talk about it. You should make it accessible to the person."

Monroe, being interviewed in the Troy house he shares with his wife Susan and their children, made it apparent that this belief is rooted in his childhood, his more than 25 years as a musician and teacher and his experience as past president of the National Flute Association.

With a hint of a Southern accent, he recounted the obstacles and lack of educational opportunities and accessibility to classical music he encountered growing up in Nicville, Fla., as the youngest of six. He revealed how his love for the flute helped overcome these obstacles and opened opportunities, making him one of the most successful flutists in the country.

In the great room, a fire glowed in the fireplace on a chilly spring evening as Monroe sat talking to a visitor. A tall man, Monroe is a gregarious host with an open manner.

HIS MOTHER, a school teacher and "real music lover," gave him a piccolo when he was 10. However, the instrument proved defective. Though she was the family's sole supporter by then, she agreed to buy him another instrument and told him to pick one. Realizing there wasn't a flute player in the Nicville Elementary School band, he chose flute. Immediately, he "loved it, and decided that was it."

By 12 he said, "I was so serious about making this my occupation in life, I went to find out where you go to make a living playing flute. So I was told, you play in an orchestra." Since there weren't orchestras where he lived, he saved the money he earned at his job and bought a \$11 set. "I went to a Fort Wallers Beach record shop and told the guy I wanted to play in the orchestra and wanted to hear orchestral music. I

had never heard orchestral music in my life."

The salesman recommended Brahms' Second Symphony, Beethoven's Third Symphony ("Eroica") and Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony with Beethoven's Fifth on the flip side. "Still to this day I never get tired of Brahms' symphonies," he said.

"The Second Symphony I used to turn up — wide open when I would get home from school. I was the only one there and I would just blast it out into the woods. We lived in the woods. I would go out and run with my dogs. You could hear it through the woods."

Meanwhile, at that time in the mid-1950s, what Monroe could listen to on late-night radio was jazz from New Orleans and rhythm and blues, including B.B. King "long before he became popular," on a black station out of Galveston. Today, he likes playing blues.

His "first real exposure" to orchestras also came the summer he was 12, at Florida State University's Tallahassee Camp. By the seventh grade he played in a nearby high school band. In the 11th grade he was performing in the Pensacola Symphony and playing saxophone in a high school jazz band. It wasn't until he went to Oberlin College in Ohio that he studied with a private teacher.

MONROE'S DETERMINATION again is shown in his story of how he satisfied the requisite audition for Oberlin. Hearing the Oberlin Woodwind Ensemble was to perform Hattiesburg, Miss., he took his flute to the performance, thinking he might be able to audition. Impressed, he went backstage to the dressing room of one of the players, "who was washing his hair in the sink," and announced, "I'd like to play for you."

He said, "So play." That particular musician turned out to be the bassoon teacher. He liked what he heard and the school accepted the "dressing room recital," since Monroe couldn't afford to travel to Ohio. His studies at Oberlin opened the opportunity to study in Salzburg, Austria, for a year, and to learn German. As a student, Monroe said, his attitude was, "Wow, I've got this opportunity to do this. I'm going to really work hard. I'm going to do it."



BLAKE DISCHER/staff photographer

Ervin Monroe loved the flute from the first time he tried it at age 10.

For his master's degree he went to the Manhattan School of Music in New York, because that's where all the orchestras used to hold auditions.

During that year, impresario Sol Hurok contracted him to play with the Ballet of London tour, the Royal Danish Ballet and the Bolshoi Ballet. By 1965 he joined the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

Monroe is editor-at-large for the "Flutists Quarterly," and has a music publishing company, for which he arranges and transcribes compositions for flute that he distributes internationally.

HIS ARTISTIC CONSULTANT

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Jo-Anne Pier
seminar speakerJoseph Ruggiero
redesign is topic

Home remodeling in '90s highlighted

"The state of RE: Redesign, Redecorate, Renovate" will be presented in a special program by Home Magazine on Friday, June 1.

The event, part of the Schoolcraft College Design Directions '90 series, will take place at the Michigan Design Center in Troy. Fee for the all day seminar is \$55 per person including lunch and is open to the public. A descriptive brochure is available by calling Schoolcraft College at 452-4468.

Home Magazine is coming from New York to present the program, just in time for the warm weather when remodeling jobs both small and large are tackled. The seminar addresses all areas of remodeling whether it is designing a new kitchen or bathroom, adding important windows for effective lighting, making the old new again, building a deck for those summertime cookouts, or creating a totally different living pattern.

The program begins at 9 a.m. and includes a brief slide show focused on 1990s design trends for the home as well as remodeling projects. A three-part demonstration on Texture and Finishes, Euro Country and Naturally White Looks using furniture, fabrics and accessories selected from Michigan Design Center show rooms will be presented, plus the all-important question and answer segment.

ALSO INCLUDED WILL, be a dis-

cussion of home living trends, styles of decorating, furniture, fabric, color and tabletop. There will be live demonstrations of accessorizing with fabrics; mantel and tablescaping; and entertaining ideas for the table.

Jo-Anne Pier, Home Magazine's retail merchandising editor, and Joseph Ruggiero, editor-in-chief, will present the comprehensive program. Ruggiero, a versatile designer and artist whose editorial work includes designing interiors for numerous prominent shelter magazines, is also author of a style and source book, "Found Objects." He has designed a textile collection, developed an audio-visual magazine for Ethna Allen Inc., and conceived and produced television's first series on decorating and entertaining, "Living Magazine."

His most recent award-winning work includes his role as chief decorating consultant for the PBS series "This Old House." His diversified background includes editorial design projects with participating manufacturers such as J.P. Stevens, Lane Furniture, Drexel Heritage, Levelor/Lorenzen, Dupont Antron and other major home furnishings companies. Internationally, Ruggiero has organized design trips and directed photo sessions in Europe for major editorial features in House Beautiful and House and Garden magazines.

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