

Year yielded a bookshelf full of news

Looking back at the book world in 1989:

• **January** — The American Booksellers Association sponsored a national poll revealing that about 40 percent of the adult population in the U.S. either gave or received books for Christmas 1989. The poll backed up claims from bookstore owners that the holiday book business was brisk, despite dire media predictions that sales would slump. Sound familiar?

• **February** — The poetry of Robert Hayden was celebrated at a four-day conference at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. The conference marked the 10th anniversary of the Detroit poet's death. It included readings by Gwendolyn Brooks, Michael Harper and Rita Dove. Considered one of America's finest modernists, Hayden was elected a Fellow of the Academy of American Poets during his lifetime. He also served as a poetry consultant at the Library of Congress.

• **March** — The National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction went

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to E.L. Doctorow for his novel, "Billy Bathgate." In the general non-fiction category, Michael Dorris received the award for "The Broken Cord," a story centering on his adopted Native American son, born with fetal alcohol syndrome.

• **April** — Twelve years after a class-action fraud suit was initially filed, Vantage Press, the country's largest vanity press, was ordered to pay \$13.5 million in punitive damages. More than 2,000 writers were



book break
Victoria Diaz

represented in the suit.

Some of the writers testified that Vantage made no real effort to sell or promote their books, even when they received orders for the books.

Subsequently, the jury decided that Vantage had not fulfilled its role as a publisher, and the decision resulted in a legal definition of a publisher: "an entity in the business of making books and written material generally available and (one that) makes a good-faith effort to distribute books to bookstores."

Will Vantage and other vanity presses be adversely affected by the decision? Don't hold your breath.

• **May** — Critically acclaimed author Walker Percy ("Lancelotti," "The Moviegoer," etc.) died near

Lake Pontchartrain, La.

• **June** — Popular novelist Irving Wallace ("The Chapman Report," "The Word," etc.) died in New York. Grand Rapids crime writer Tom Kaskalis ("Michigan Roll" and "Crisis Cross") found himself \$235,000 richer after Dutton outbid at auction his original publisher, St. Martin's, for his next two novels.

• **July** — Olive Ann Burns, author of "Cold Sassy Tree," died at her home near Atlanta after a long illness.

• **August** — Elmore "Dutch" Leonard's "Get Shorty" was published. Set against a backdrop of Hollywood sleaze, Leonard's latest crime thriller received more applause from critics, and shortly made its appearance on bestseller lists across the country.

• **September** — After much controversy over the past several months, a bipartisan commission (set up by Congress) to review the National Endowment for the Arts, recommended that content restrictions not be placed on works of art supported by the NEA.

The commission also recommended that the NEA rescind its requirement that grant recipients pledge in writing that their funded work will not be "obscene." The group, however, did suggest that federally funded arts programs should be "sensitive to the nature of public sponsorship."

• **October** — Barnes & Noble opened a new "superstore" at Hampden Village Center in North Hills. The Rochester Hills bookstore was the second of a projected 20-30 such stores across the nation (the first opened Sept. 8 near Minneapolis St. Paul). About 100,000 titles will be available to customers in the 15,000-square-foot area. Regional manager Marc Winkelman said selection and customer service will be the watchwords in the new venture.

• **November** — Speaking of brouhaha, Simon & Schuster, reportedly after pressure from high man-

agement and concerned about bad taste and moral offensiveness, canceled official publication of Brett Easton Ellis' "American Psycho," even as the hardcover copies waited to be shipped to bookstores. Within 48 hours, Ellis' novel, which apparently contains super-explicit murder scenes after murder scenes, was snapped up by Vintage Books, which promises to publish it early next year. Ellis gets to keep the \$300,000 advance he'd received from Simon & Schuster, by the way.

• **December** — H.G. Bissinger, author of "Friday Night Lights," canceled a book signing at an Odessa, Texas, bookstore because of a death threat. Bissinger's bestseller focuses mainly on Odessa's obsession with high school football and its home-grown teen heroes.

"I don't perceive (the book) as an indictment of the people of Odessa," Bissinger said. Apparently, at least one football fanatic disagreed.

Victoria Diaz is a Livonia-based book reviewer.

Light affects color; color affects feelings

Q: Does the quality of light in a room influence color? I am wondering what are the most flattering colors to wear for an evening that begins with a well-lit cocktail party and ends up in a soft candlelight, or even a darker disco setting? It appears to me that some colors look nice in brighter light but make me look sallow when the lights are low. Am I imagining this?

A: Your observations about how color can shift its appearance are not the product of your imagination. Some of the best color researchers have analyzed what happens to our perception of color under various lighting conditions. They've concluded that color will maintain its original appearance within a wide range of light levels.

But as the level of light becomes much dimmer, as it would in candlelight or at a disco, the blue and blue-green shades actually increase their value, or intensity, while the warm colors, such as red,

Some of the best color researchers have analyzed what happens to our perception of color under various lighting conditions. They've concluded that color will maintain its original appearance within a wide range of light levels.

decrease their value. However, it takes almost total darkness for while not to be perceived as white. How you translate this phenomenon to your own advantage is to wear evening clothes in soft aqua and teals on those occasions you



all about color
Helen Diane Vincent

know you'll be moving from the clear slightly blue light of a cocktail party into the very yellow-red light of candles.

In any event, blue-greens flatter most skin tones. Also, avoid too much sequins, which only look good in very dim light. Should you decide to wear red or even black, frame your face with something white or any other pale color to catch the reflection of whatever light there is in a room. Actually, reds, which are identified with the idea of brightness, darken considerably in dim light, and can appear to be nearly

black to even a slightly darkened room.

Q: I'm newly divorced and about to face the Christmas holidays alone, for the first time in my life. At the same time, I'm starting to furnish a new apartment in addition to decorating for the holidays. The problem is I've never fully exercised my color and style preferences without adjusting to someone else's opinions. Particularly in regard to the decorations, I want to avoid a false sense of merriment that just might exaggerate my loneliness rather than alleviating it. What do you advise?

A: Any attempt to duplicate the colors from your former home is bound to enlarge the sense of loss because it will force you to look back at a point in your life where you ought to be looking forward.

On the other hand, compensating with overly cheerful color harmonies or unfamiliar styles will make you feel like a stranger in your own

home. Further, overdoing your favorite color isn't entirely satisfactory either, because favorite colors, ironically, also represent a source of tension within your psyche.

Knowing all of this, where can you turn? To achieve the most suitable environment at this time of your life, you have to look within and accept a wide range of colors, both most favorite, and just acceptable. Then you will have to acknowledge to what extent do these colors genuinely reflect your self or to what extent are they derived from powerful advertising pressures, especially those that manipulate status drives.

Once you've thought this through, use as wide a range of final colors as well as can be accommodated into a harmonious interior scheme. The goal is to achieve a balanced color harmony open to new possibilities and future changes. You will need to create an environment for yourself that allows you to grow from this point, onwards.

Once your overall color scheme is established, try to coordinate your Christmas decorations as closely as possible to these colors. Don't just think of the traditional bright reds and greens, as nice as they are. More than likely, you've had this type of decoration in your former married life.

Take a look at what some of our local department stores are showing for the holidays. J. L. Hudson, in particular, has coordinated key home furnishings color and style trends in fully dressed Christmas trees. They even have the popular Southwest, or Santa Fe look, represented in a tree arrangement. Another one used the rose and soft teal shades accented by gold sculptured papier mache ribbons.

Of course, an important ingredient will be to invite friends to see what you've accomplished and share in the holiday spirit.

Helen Diane Vincent is a Troy-based furnishings writer.

Timpanist finds DSO 'so exciting' under Jarvi

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"I was hearing these wonderful sounds," he said. "To me classical

music has a more deep-rooted, sensitive feeling. And if you want to hone your skills, you can't do both (jazz and classical music)."

RABBIT LEARNED to play all the orchestra percussion instruments, including the timpani. In his senior year at Boston University, he

won a competition to play a timpani solo with the Boston Pops. After graduating, he worked with the Pops for a year. And when he

had a chance to join the DSO, which had an impressive national and international reputation, as principal timpanist, he jumped at it.

Even though he has played Beethoven's Fifth hundreds of times since then, Rabbio's love for classical music hasn't dimmed. He has shared that enthusiasm and his many years of experience with young musicians by teaching at the university level.

He taught at Wayne State University for 21 years as director of the percussion division and now teaches one day a week at the University of Michigan. But even though Rabbio finds college students today are better prepared in a technical sense, he often thinks something is missing.

"Everything is in place and in order, but it's not musical because it's not coming from inside," he said. "There's no worth or beauty."

"It's happening to the world in general. No one thinks for himself anymore. It's all mechanical. But live music is not mechanical. It's the difference between music making and great music making."

"As long as it's exciting, why leave?"

GREAT MUSIC is what Rabbio thinks the DSO is about these days. The main ingredients, he believes, are Jarvi's skill and enthusiasm and his rapport with the orchestra.

"We've had very well-known conductors work with us, and the chemistry just wasn't there," he said. "Jarvi shows his honesty on the podium, his love for what he's doing. His attitude is, 'Let's really make music. Show me your stuff.'"

"You can see the audience respond," he added. "You get the audience jumping to its feet."

The audience has responded just as dramatically to Orchestra Hall, which reopened last season and was just completed this season.

"I've had patrons tell me, 'I've been coming to the symphony for 25 years, and I just really heard you for the first time,'" Rabbio said. "All the sections blend into one glorious sound just coming at you."

All of these developments have made playing with the symphony very gratifying for Rabbio. And they don't leave much time for thinking about retirement.

"As long as it's exciting, why leave?"

'Gardener's Holiday'

Gift certificates on sale for flower show

The University of Michigan's Matthaei Botanical Gardens offer gift certificates to the 1991 Ann Arbor Flower and Garden Show. The show will run Thursday-Sunday, April 11-14 at Yost Ice Arena, Ann Arbor. "A Gardener's Holiday" will be the theme. International travel, seasonal celebrations and festivals will be expressed in the exhibits.

Each gift certificate is redeemable for a show ticket that allows selection of a preferred viewing date and time. Titled tickets are a new innovation that will limit the amount of people at the show at one time.

Gift certificates are redeemable for tickets at the Michigan Union Ticket Office and can be exchanged either by mail or in person.

Show gift certificates are for sale at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro, Ann Arbor. Each gift certificate costs \$8 and comes with a brochure that gives detailed information about the show. The certificate and brochure fit easily into a greeting card.

The gardens also offer tickets to the show's opening night gala, 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, April 10. Guests can enjoy champagne and hors d'oeuvres as they browse. Landscape designers will be on hand to answer questions about major exhibits. Gala tickets are \$25.

After buying gift certificates and gala tickets for family and friends, don't forget to treat yourself. Admission to the show is \$8 for adults and \$6 for children 12 and younger. Tickets will designate specific dates and time periods to visit the event.

Advance tickets guarantee immediate entry, those who buy tickets at the gate risk long lines and the chance of sold-out days and time periods.

Tickets are available at the Michigan Union Ticket Office, all Ticketmaster outlets and at Hudson's department stores. To order by telephone, call 763-TKTS (Ann Arbor area), or 423-6666 (Detroit metro area).

Tickets to the opening night gala are available only at the Botanical Gardens. Note that in the interest of

public safety, strollers will not be permitted inside Yost Ice Arena during the show.

He shapes blown glass

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over the chemistry, no one works with my glass."

With furnace work, Schneider starts with molten glass, which is gathered from the furnace, or glory hole, and blown into shape. What once looked like a pear, takes shape as a vase.

RECENTLY, HE has become interested in thermally active glasses, including the timpani. In this process, Schneider attaches a vessel, such as a vase, to a rod, and puts it back into the furnace. Upon exposure, the metallic content of the applied glass surfaces to give the vessel a metallic effect.

The vessel is then put into an annealing oven to cool slowly so it doesn't crack.

"Furnace work is more meaning-

ful than lampwork. I'm much more enthused about the furnace work. It's more exotic."

GLASS, NO matter what form, interests Schneider.

"It's endlessly fascinating material. It can be functional as in a drinking glass, or non-functional, as in a sculpture. It all amazes me, everything about it is wonderful."

"I just want to keep making beautiful things that people will want to buy so I can continue working."

Schneider can often be reached at the Brookside Inn, 115 North Michigan, Dearborn, MI 48121, (810) 822-0688. His work can be found locally at the Michigan shop in Birmingham and during the holidays at the Detroit Artist's Market, in Harmony Park. Prices range from \$10 and up.

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