

19th century art enriches decor

By Linda Ann Chomin
special writer

AERICAN PRINTS and pastels from the 19th century can brighten a home's decor while lending to a historical theme.



A drypoint etching (circa 1899), a portrait of Boardman Robinson, was created by Allen Lewis (American, 1873-1957). Robinson was a draftsman, illustrator and cartoonist who focused on social and political scenes. The portrait is priced at \$325.

Architectural etchings, impressionist oil paintings, engravings of Detroit and Oakland County landscape, portraits and figure drawings add authenticity to a home decorated with furnishings from the 1800s.

Availability of 19th century art and how to buy it are two of the questions that instantly darken thoughts when considering art from the 1800s for home interiors. But researching books and shopping galleries in quest of knowledge and a reputable dealer can lead to a pleasurable purchase of history.

"I regret that most people don't shop around," said Arnold Klein, co-owner with wife Karen of Arnold Klein Gallery in Royal Oak.

"I refer people to books and libraries," Klein said. "People have that choice to make an informed decision."

Before opening the art gallery more than 20 years ago, Klein worked as a curator's assistant for six years in the graphics department at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

"People should look at many places as they can and read books," Klein said.

READ BOOKS on print collecting to find answers to such questions as, "Is a 19th century print worth less if it is unsigned?"

"There are many books in the library and that are (in the gallery) here, reference books that people can use," Klein said.

The gallery offers a bookcase filled with art reference for the use of

potential art buyers.

After gallery hopping and shopping around, Klein's advice to buyers is to buy what you like, buy what they think is significant.

"I will not show people things I like or things that I think are of value," Klein said.

"People should look at many places as they can, as many cities as they can. If they can, go to the galleries in Chicago, they'll be surprised what they can learn. Information, they might not know like the fact hand-colored engravings were colored recently, not back then," Klein said.

They will learn signed prints are a 20th century phenomena. Artists of the 1800s typically did not sign their prints.

PRICE NEED not be a deterrent when considering a print purchase from the 19th century.

"You can buy anonymous wood engravings for a few dollars to a Toulouse-Lautrec for \$500,000," Klein said. "There are many prints for under a \$100."

An 1860 engraving of Detroit can be bought at the gallery for \$50. "We specialize in prints and drawings," Klein said. "Our focus is the late 19th century and first half of the 20th century."

Additional criteria need to be met when seeking to buy antique oil paintings not only for decorative purposes but for investment as well.

Mark Doren, owner of Gallerie 454 in Birmingham and Grosse Pointe, has some valuable advice for people

buying oil paintings from the bygone Victorian era.

"The more you're paying for a painting, the more you need to know about the painter. Buy books," Doren said. "Then establish a source for procuring a painting. Find a reputable dealer first."

"WHEN LOOKING for an antique painting, find out what's been added, what's been done to it. Look to see if it's been poorly restored. If it's for investment, make sure there is no inpainting," Doren said.

Investment paintings need to have an established history of changing hands. "Look for a provenance. There has to be a credibility established," Doren said. "There are many forgeries out there."

Of utmost importance, find out what the gallery policy is on returning a painting. "When you're dealing with art, you're dealing with emotion," Doren said. "Ask what is your policy on return because buying art is such an emotional thing."

Right: An etching (c. 1895) of a magnificent old tree by Ernest Haskell (American, 1876-1925) leads the eye into the center of the composition where lyrical lines wind and flow. Influenced by Rembrandt and Whistler, Haskell produced 414 prints, many of which featured powerful themes dominated by nature. The etching is priced at \$500.



Lenox offers historic pedigree

By Helen Diane Vincent
special writer

IN A MARKETPLACE besieged by many sophisticated imports, Lenox China, a thoroughly American company with a 102-year history, continues to occupy an important position with its new introductions for 1991.

Each of the patterns owes its existence to a historic legacy or to a disciplined interpretation of a cherished mood.

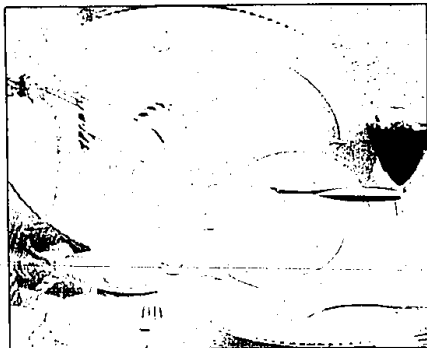
Lucia (TM), one of the seven patterns from Lenox's Grand Tier Collection, takes its inspiration from the dramatic power and grandeur of the opera, Lucia di Lammermoor. It is clearly intended to make dining a heightened and opulent experience.

Its highly theatrical Art Deco design, accented with salmon, black, turquoise and 24 karat gold, coordinates with Lenox's fine crystal as well as antique linens and silver. For a firsthand view, Lucia can be seen at Slade's in Applegate Square, Southfield.

In quiet contrast to the Grand Tier Collection are the many other collections that pay homage to various historic periods and are uncompromisingly designed for sophisticated taste.

For example, the Citation pattern from the Temple Collection, with its intricate fluting, draws heavily on the image of ancient Greek columns. The Ambassador Collection becomes a veritable tour of old French courts and English castles.

THE CLASSIC Collection, consisting of 14 patterns, sports the



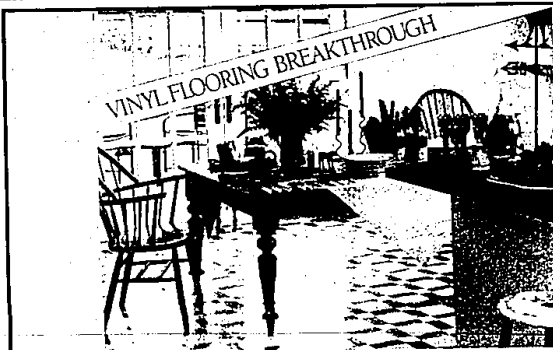
Citation, a classic new pattern in the fluted Temple Collection with 24 karat-gold bands. A five-piece complete place setting No. 105, Lenox lines can be seen at Slade's in Applegate Square in Southfield, Jacobson's and Hudson's.

entire scope of history from 700 BC Greece, with its Aegean Cobalt pattern, to the 1920s Art Deco captured in the Lenox Classic Modern pattern.

Along the way, the Collection stops at the 18th century with its Georgian Shell and Federal Platinum lines that reflect the graceful styles of Queen Anne and Chippendale furniture, so very well established in home furnishings.

Lenox anticipates the new lines will appeal to yet another generation of Americans as the company embarks on its second century of creating fine handcrafted china and crystal.

After all, Lenox's own tradition has not only become intertwined with the White House by providing commissioned table settings, as it has since 1918, but continues to bring some of that history for to consider using in our own homes.



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'Feel' saved

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The addition is somewhat of a departure for builder and developer Paul Norman, who specializes in new, million-dollar and multi-million-dollar custom lakefront homes. Another home he is just completing, also on Cass Lake, will be featured in national magazines this fall or winter.

But whether adding on or building new, Norman prides himself on well-thought-out details that make each house suit its owners. In this case, that meant creating many attractive spaces throughout the home and taking full advantage of the lake.

THE ORIGINAL kitchen of the home is now a sunny sitting room alongside a windowed hallway that bridges the two parts of the house and faces the lake.

The raised tub in the master bath looks out on the lake from a huge window and is surrounded by green marble. And outside, the lawn is edged by rows of large boulders that curve down to the lake and serve as a border for the many trees and wildflowers behind them.

The owners are quite pleased with their home and enjoy sharing it with family and friends.

"When we bought the house, our kids and we were nuts," the woman of the house reports. "It's just an old house," they said. Now they absolutely love it. It's like being up north, but you don't have to drive. It's quiet and private."

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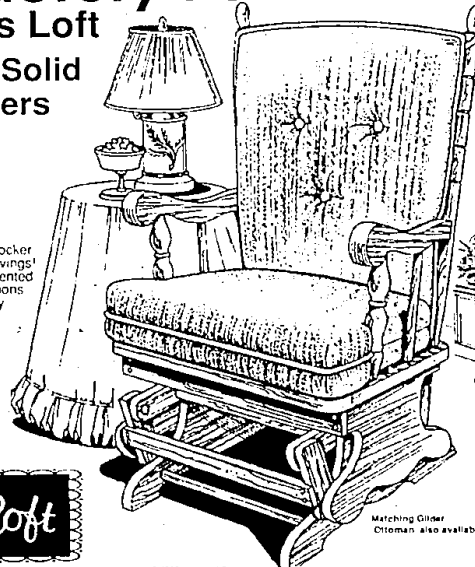
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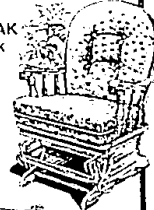
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