

# CREATIVE LIVING

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 1993



MARY KLEMIC

## Automotive art drives home many emotions

**T**o Charles Maher, the automobile is an art form in itself.

"I see 'em as a real sculptural piece," he said.

The cars put into the design of cars, their character, the emotions they generate — all add special meaning to Maher as he paints portraits of venerated vehicles, working from his Bloomfield Hills home.

He is one of 14 renowned artists whose automotive works are exhibited in the Concours d'Elegance Invitational Art Exhibition at the Somerset Collection, Big Beaver Road and Coolidge in Troy, through Friday.

The display is related to this year's Concours d'Elegance classic auto show and events, Sunday at Meadow Brook Hall, at Oakland University in Rochester. An art preview and awards presentation will take place Friday at Somerset, and an art auction and banquet Saturday at Meadow Brook. For information, call 643-6366.

"It's my first time (exhibiting) at Meadow Brook — I'm real excited about that," said Maher, whose work has been featured in a variety of shows. In Michigan these include Gallery Automana in Rochester and the Ann Arbor Art Fair.

Maher studied industrial design at the University of Notre Dame. His 14-year career as a designer started with Ford in 1968.

Maher's studio looks like an aesthetic garage, with a drafting table instead of a hoist, and brushes and tubes of paint instead of tools. He uses acrylic paint, which can be thick like toothpaste or thin and is easily mixed.

Maher's works are dramatic renderings of sleek, glitening automobiles that capture emotions and sometimes the feeling of motion. They are rich in color and detail. Even the tires in the paintings can be touched with light.

Maher's painting of a 1964 race includes champion racers A.J. Foyt, Phil Hill and Ken Miles rounding a curve in their respective cars, tires straining to hug the pavement. The piece almost makes the viewer lean with the direction of the car.

The artist works from photographs of vehicles. The background is important and is added later. Maher will place the auto in different settings — maybe near a landmark, maybe in front of a collage of money.

"Concours Sunday" shows a classic car in front of Meadow Brook Hall. A portrait of a 1937 Bugatti Atlantic Coupe features a watery setting with a bench umbrella, while a work of a 1969 Mustang includes a swimming pool. The cars in both paintings are reflected in the water.

A Porsche peeks out of the shadows like a star performer shedding a cloak. "Mears '91 — Indianapolis 500" has a multicolored background.

In two different paintings, a Ford Mark IV and a Ford GT 40 stretch by. One leaves a blur of faces in a crowd, one has multiple images of three or other features of the car. A different mood is conveyed in a painting of a 1935 Auburn Speedster, which is parked by a tree, a rag doll leaning against the car, the sky gently glowing.

Maher often adds personal touches in details that have meaning to him. A license plate could bear a significant number, faces reflected in paint and chrome could resemble people he knows.

"Everybody has thoughts about a car. Some cars are valued in their lives. A lot of emotion is tied up in it."

See ART, 5D



Geating up: Charles Maher of Bloomfield Hills drives home many different moods in his automotive art. Samples of his paintings are exhibited this week at the Somerset Collection, Big Beaver Road and Coolidge in Troy, part of Concours d'Elegance events this year.

## Kodak lauds kids' photographer

Children's portraits by Kimberly Jamieson of Livonia are framed to tell a story. Her own daughter is the subject of a national award-winning photo.

By JANCIE TIGAR-KRAMER  
SPECIAL WRITER



Near her bag of tricks and other kids' toys, children's photographer Kimberly Jamieson of Livonia has placed a coveted keepsake of her own: a Kodak Gallery Award for her entry in the portrait category.

Jamieson's winning photo, "I Can't Come Out and Play," is a fine art portrait of her daughter, Nicole, 7, peeking out of a grand-sized door at the University of Michigan's law library. The image is from a three-part series taken in March 1992 at several locations in Ann Arbor.

Nicole is wearing boy's Victorian-era clothing and a brimmed cap to conceal her shoulder-length hair. Her shirt and suspenders harmonize with the clay-tone door and brick building, only the child's full porcelain-colored face, with a pensive expression, stands out against the stately architecture.

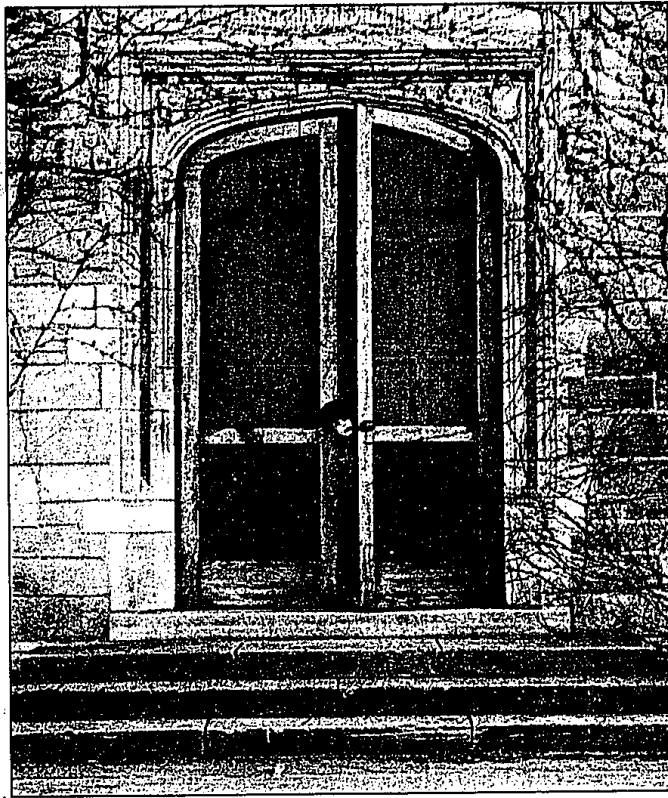
"I did the series for myself," said Jamieson, 33. "I wondered how my daughter, who always looks so beautiful, would look dressed like a tough little boy."

She shot the series with available light using a Hasselblad camera and Kodak's Vericolor 400 professional film. Kodak receives up to 1,000 entries per state in its annual Gallery Award competition, a contest for professional photographers in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. A winning photo in four categories (portrait, commercial, wedding and unclassified) is selected from each state. Photos are judged by the state's professional photographer's association.

Top award

This year, Jamieson also won Best Children's Portrait from Pro.

See PHOTO, 5D



Peek-a-boo: Livonia photographer Kimberly Jamieson won a Kodak Gallery Award for "I Can't Come Out and Play," a portrait of her daughter, Nicole, peeking out the door of the University of Michigan Law Library in Ann Arbor.

## Authors to visit B'ham library in pilot project

By MARY KLEMIC  
SPECIAL WRITER

Books will come to life in a special way at Baldwin Public Library, 300 W. Merrill in Birmingham, starting this fall.

Four acclaimed contemporary authors will come face to face with the public when they visit Baldwin in "Writers Live at the Library," a pilot project sponsored by the American Library Association with a grant from the Life Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund. Baldwin is one of only 19 libraries in three Midwestern states — Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin — selected to participate in the project.

"One of the reasons we were chosen was because of our (reading and discussion) 'Let's Talk About It' series," said Stephen Kembarer of Baldwin. "We had an established track record for author discussion programs."

The "Writers Live" program will begin 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 14, at The Community House, 380 S. Bates in Birmingham, featuring Tobias Wolff and Geoffrey Wolff. The two men are brothers who were raised apart. Tobias Wolff wrote "This Boy's Life: A Memoir," which was recently made into a movie with Robert DeNiro and Ellen Barkin. Geoffrey Wolff wrote "The Duke of Deception: Memories of My Father."

The next two writers, both teachers at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, will appear in the Baldwin Library Rotary Room. Stuart Dybek, author of "The Coast of Chicago," will be featured 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 28, and Jaimy Gordon, author of "She Drove Without Stopping," 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 11.

"I was trying to come up with a theme (before deciding on) 'Writing

One's Life: The Facts and the Fiction,' the art of writing autobiography," said Sarah Ormond, head of adult reading at Baldwin, who was responsible for bringing the model project to the library.

Some of the authors in the program will introduce other authors, she said. "I'm excited about people having access to writers," Ormond said. "This program is more than a luncheon or a book signing; it is an opportunity for readers and writers to interact. It is a credit to Baldwin to be chosen for this innovative project."

Baldwin's "Let's Talk About It" series will give the public a chance to familiarize themselves with the works before hearing the authors. Wilma Garcia of Oakland University will lead a discussion on "This Boy's Life" and "The Duke of Deception" Wednesday, Sept. 22. Richard Sax of Madonna University will lead a dis-

cussion on "The Coast of Chicago" Wednesday, Oct. 6, and Ross Pudaloff of Wayne State University on "She Drove Without Stopping" Wednesday, Oct. 20. Each session will take place 7:30 p.m. in the Baldwin Rotary Room.

For more information, call Baldwin's Adult Reading Department at 647-1700.

Baldwin and Borders Book Shop in Beverly Hills are partners in presenting "Writers Live." Ormond and Elaine Morse, assistant manager at Borders, attended a training and planning seminar in Traverse City in October. Gordon was also at the seminar.

Morse said she was "just delighted" about Borders' participation in the project.

"I've always believed that bookstores and libraries are in the same business," she said.

Arboret features various happenings in the suburban arts world. Send news leads to: Creative Living, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009, or fax them by calling 644-1314.

For information and reviews of musical performances, turn to the Entertainment section.

### RENAISSANCE SPIRIT

The 14th annual Michigan Renaissance Festival is displaying the 1992 Perry Photo Contest winners and entries through Aug. 12 in the lobby of the New Center One Building on West Grand Boulevard in Detroit. Alan Lowy of Farmington Hills won second place in the black and white category. Winning photos were chosen from 160 entries shot by 40 festivalgoers. Prizes will be awarded 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 16, on the Griffon Stage at the Michigan Renaissance Festival.

Entry forms for the 1993 photo contest will be in the Playbill, available at the festival weekends Aug. 14 through Sept. 26 and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Labor Day. For more information, contact the

## Art Beat

Michigan Renaissance Festival, 700 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009, phone 645-9640.

### SPECIAL DISPLAY

Beginning Sept. 21 and continuing through Oct. 2, the O.K. Harris/David Klein Gallery, 430 N. Woodward in Birmingham, will host an exhibit of handmade paper works by Mary Fisher, one of the most prominent voices being heard on AIDS and AIDS research. Fisher, spokeswoman for AIDS at last year's Republican National Convention, will be present at an evening reception Tuesday, Sept. 21.

Fisher uses the ancient art form of paper making to create medium- to large-size paintings. Her subject matter consists of various floral arrangements done in an array of colors. A percentage of the sales from her display at the gallery will benefit Family AIDS Network, to provide

counseling for the families of people with AIDS and to further the research in finding a cure for the disease.

### DANCE SCHOLARSHIP

Birmingham resident Megan Leehn, who studies with Jacob Lasco, was awarded a scholarship to the internationally renowned 24th Summer School for the Performing Arts/Festival of Dance at Marygrove College in Detroit, July 5 to Aug. 6. Leehn has the opportunity to train in a variety of dance techniques with internationally acclaimed master artists, including Jurgen Schneider, Gregory Robinson, Gina Bunta, Barbara Pontecorvo and Tommy Gomez.

Other scholarships were awarded to Andrea Supernaw of Rochester Hills and Michelle Esper of Farmington Hills.

### SHIRTING THE ISSUE

Debra Clarey of Clinton Township has won the \$200 first prize in the Art 'n' Apples Festival T-shirt Contest sponsored by Rochester's Paint Creek Center for the Arts.