

CREATIVE LIVING

D

THURSDAY, AUGUST 26, 1993

GARDEN SPOT



MARTY FIGLEY

Flowers, vegetables take place of lawns

There are alternatives to having an expanse of green lawn. Many people are opting for areas that require less maintenance. Two of our readers have followed their instincts and successfully transformed their properties into attractive areas with flowers and vegetables.

Ellen Niemisto of Livonia says, "I don't like grass, it's a waster of soil," although she has kept a small patch of grass in the middle of the back yard in which her daughter Katrina and her pets can play. M. Armen Kasabach of Southfield says, "I always wanted a garden to be able to gather an armful of wild flowers when I wanted them. I did not want all lawn, it's too boring."

Transformation

Niemisto began the transformation of her back yard in spring 1991. Very little grass grew in this shady yard, so she just pulled it out and began improving.

This serene yard is small, but packed with lots of ideas. Every other board in the stockade fence that runs from the house to the garage was removed to let in light and air. The other sides of the yards are also fenced; the back is solid stockade.

Near a raised deck and around the rest of the garden are shade-loving hostas, lantana, rhodias, impatiens and astilbes. Foxglove and columbine provide spring color.

Under another shade tree in the rear, other shade lovers grow and are surrounded by wood chips that have been layered over newspaper, killing the grass as well as making a suitable groundcover.

Setting in this area is a large wooden structure that holds swings. Eventually, Niemisto hopes to install an adult swing or a hammock. Alongside, a clematis is growing; perhaps later, a hardy Kiwi vine will climb up the structure.

Along the sunny back fence larkspur, anemones, salvia, etc. grow with currants and raspberries (new this year). Raspberries will go in next year. Behind the garage in a well-protected sunny area where beans, broccoli, carrots and artichokes grow. Nasturtiums are planted to lure aphids away from the broccoli. Alyssum spills over the pathways to provide a white carpet.

Many of the plants self-seed and Niemisto saves seed from others for the following year. No chemicals are used. When necessary, Miracle-gro is the fertilizer of choice. Composting is ongoing. As one pile is being used, another is begun. One bonus is that it takes Niemisto only 20 minutes to mow the grass in both the front and back yards.

Meadow garden

Kasabach's meadow garden is a generous 20 by 30 feet, surrounded on two sides by tall over-

See FIGLEY, 2E



MARTY FIGLEY

Blooming success: M. Armen Kasabach of Southfield thought all lawn on her property would be too boring, so she raised a meadow garden.

Photographer has eye for artistry



Photographer Bill Rauhuser has made works of art with his camera over his 45-year career. A retrospective exhibit of his photos continues at the Halsted Gallery in Birmingham. The show, running through Oct. 12, features still life shots and photos of people and places, as well as cubist assembles.

BY MARY KLEMIC
STAFF WRITER

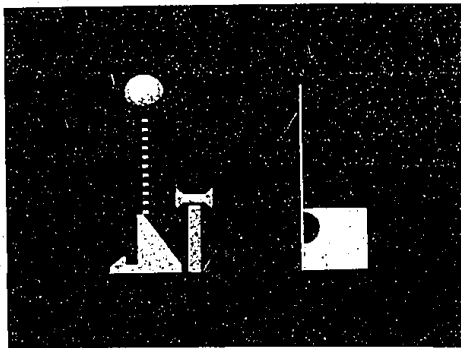
In Bill Rauhuser's hands, a camera becomes an easel. His black and white photos are arrangements of shadows, lines and shapes in expressive imagery.

A retrospective exhibit of photos by Rauhuser from his 45-year career continues through Oct. 12 at the Halsted Gallery, 660 N. Woodward in Birmingham.

Rauhuser, who turned 75 when the show opened this month, is one of the most recognized professionals in the field of photography. He is acclaimed as a photographer, photography historian, collector and teacher. He teaches at the Center for Creative Studies and Wayne State University.

The photos of people or scenes in the Halsted show hum with harmony

See PHOTOGRAPHER, 2E



Imaginative focus: Assemblies by Bill Rauhuser are among the photographer's newer work, featured in a retrospective exhibit at the Halsted Gallery in Birmingham.

Arkansas travel special for 2 artists

BY MARY KLEMIC
STAFF WRITER

Two area artists received a special taste of Southern hospitality at their joint show in Hot Springs, Ark.

Sculptor Joseph Wesner of Birmingham and painter Joseph Bernard, both professors at the Center for Creative Studies, are displaying large-scale works in an exhibit at Herr-Chambless Fine Arts in Hot Springs through Sept. 30. Each is presenting about 27 pieces.

Wesner, chairman of sculpture at CCS, is active in the art in public places project in Birmingham. He has exhibited works at the Hill Gallery, and one of his pieces is in the Michigan Outdoor Sculpture IV show at the Southfield Civic Center through Oct. 16. Bernard, former head of the CCS fine arts department, recently exhibited at the Pigeonson-Preston Gallery. Both galleries are in Birmingham.

"We're both real proud of what's going on down there in Arkansas," said Wesner, who earned a master of fine arts degree from the Cranbrook Academy of Art.

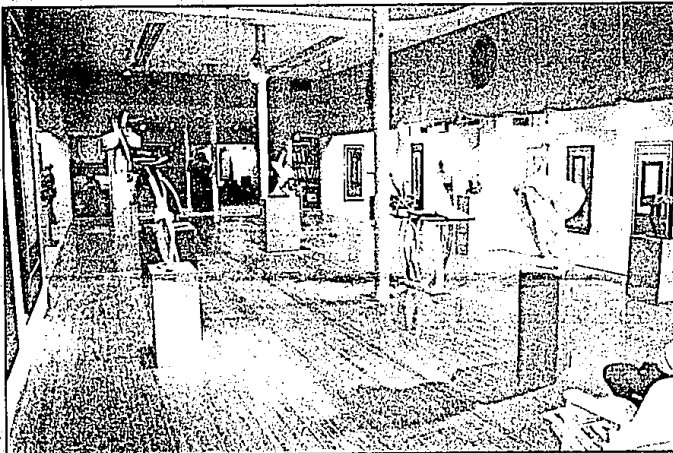
Michigan representatives

The exhibit presented an opportunity for a "hometown boys make good" story, as the two artists visiting Arkansas for the show talked about Michigan and met Virginia Kelly, President Bill Clinton's mother. They had dinner with Kelly at a party of 10 hosted by a Hot Springs artist who knows her.

"She's a wonderful person, very alive and very entertaining," said Bernard, who earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the University of Hartford Art School and a master of fine arts degree from the Art Institute of Chicago. "(Hot Springs) was the president's childhood home for a good number of years so she felt comfortable and made us feel comfortable too."

"She's a very colorful, really down-to-earth," Wesner said. "She seems very kind." The two artists ended up being ambassadors for this area and the art that exists here. Visitors to the show came from all over, including such places as Memphis, New York and Chicago, and many people asked about Michigan. Bernard and Wesner were proud to talk about their home.

"The art here and the schools, with the Center for Creative Studies and Cranbrook and Wayne, it's a pretty impressive area and, in terms of art," Bernard said.



JOSEPH WESNER

Artistic balance

Wesner's largest sculpture in the show is about 9 1/2 feet tall. Bernard's largest painting about 8 by 4 feet. Both artists achieved a lightness and balance in their works. The sculptures and paintings went well together.

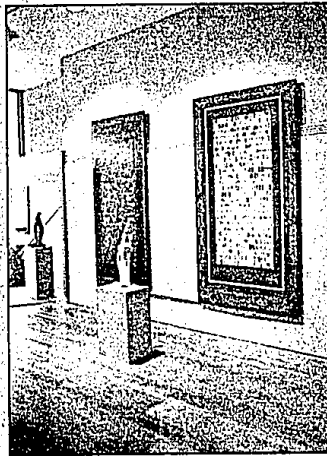
Wesner uses such materials as steel, bronze, coal, tons and bamboo to make flowing shapes. They resemble an Oriental building or letter, or an abstract figure.

Before he returned to painting, Bernard received awards and recognition for his filmmaking. His colorful paintings incorporate strips of 35mm film and thread, petals and feathers, among other collage materials. The works are mounted on wood panels in an arrangement of rectangles, looking like tapestry or a series of doorways.

Malinda Herr-Chambless, gallery director, called the exhibit a combination of "Detroit's best and Hot Springs' best." Visitors admire both the beauty of the individual pieces and how the works relate to each other, she said.

"The joy for me is seeing the reac-

See ARTISTS, 2E



Southern exposure: Sculpture by Joseph Wesner of Birmingham and paintings by Joseph Bernard have plenty of room in their joint exhibit in the large space at Herr-Chambless Fine Arts in Hot Springs, Ark. Visitors are enjoying the works both individually and in how well they go together.

Arthbeat 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.

BOOK SIGNING

Philip Handelman of Birmingham, a pilot and recognized authority on aviation history, will sign his newest book, "The Book of Airplane," 7 p.m. today at Borden Book Shop, 13 Mills and Southfield Road. In the work, Handelman's dynamic photography encompasses the variety of aircraft from around the world, as well as the aircraft and pilots participating in national air shows. For more information, call 644-1616.

Art Beat

WEARABLE SCULPTURE

Former Farmington Hills resident and West Bloomfield High School graduate Carla Newman will show her collection of unusual pins and earrings noon to 7 p.m. Friday, Aug. 27, and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 28, at Lynn Portney's, 4 Washington and Fourth in Royal Oak. These imaginative, sometimes whimsical, often geometric jewelry constructions crafted of various metals grew out of a sudden burst of creative energy two years ago. Newman's talent and artistic flair are natural as she is the daughter of West Bloomfield artist Sybil Mintz.

CLARIFICATION

The Aug. 12 article on the Celebrate Michigan Artists exhibit at the Paint Creek Center for the Arts in Rochester should have said that Sally Kaplan's work is titled "Solo Spirit" and features a wolf on a bed.

HOME INTERIOR CLASSES

Interiors by Design of Rochester will conduct a series of three classes 7:15-9:15 p.m. Tuesdays, Sept. 28 and Oct. 6 and 12, at the Rochester Community House, 816 Ludlow. The class will give a professional look at how to update with the latest ideas, colors, techniques and styles. Decorating problems will become creative solutions with the design staff. Call 651-0622 for information.