

# CREATIVE LIVING

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1993

PERSPECTIVES



MARY KLEMIC

## Open doors to talk about censorship

The question of "artistic freedom" and "censorship" is a subject that should be out in the air rather than up in the air.

Communication is essential, not only on that matter but in a democracy as a whole.

"That was brought out during a public forum, 'Censorship of the Arts?,' Thursday night at the Baldwin Public Library in Birmingham. The forum was a presentation of 'Viewpoints,' an ongoing series. It was co-sponsored by Baldwin, the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association, the Cranbrook Academy of Art and the Cultural Council of Birmingham Bloomfield.

Participants were Wayne Lawson, executive director of the Ohio Arts Council; Barbara Kratchman, executive director of the Michigan Council of the Arts 1985-91; Joseph Bianco Jr., executive vice president of the Founders Society of the Detroit Institute of Arts; John Urice, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of Oakland University and sculptor Robert Schofman of West Bloomfield.

"Communication, communication, communication," said Lawson, who has been chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts State Programs Advisory Panel. "An informed citizenry is what makes democracy work."

Lawson was director of the state arts organization during a controversial exhibit by photographer Robert Mapplethorpe. Dennis Barrie, director of the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, was indicted by a grand jury on obscenity charges stemming from the show.

This controversy hit at a time when "we had to change the way we thought about what we do."

"The recession in the late 1980s meant less money, and legislators with whom the agency had built support were leaving office because of an election turnover and term limits. Changing demographics and a cynical public added to the situation."

The agency saw itself as a purchaser of services, and chose to confront critics. Its members sent daily memos about Mapplethorpe and the Cincinnati arts center, explaining what tax dollars were paying for.

"Censorship talks about what is objectionable, not what is illegal."

The Mapplethorpe debate had effects elsewhere, Kratchman said. People on the radical right focused on controversies. Pat Robertson argued, "Why add to the deficit by funding obscenity?"

"It brought the arts to light in a context that was really uninformed," she said. "The arts were front and center and in time that became a very easy target."

"The most important thing we can do is keep (the public) educated what the arts are all about."

"To censor is not appropriate in our society, period," Bianco said.

He called for advocating a policy of federal and state support for the arts, but "also advocate that museums be sensitive to changing community tastes and interests." The U.S. representative from the area who voted to eliminate NEA funding "needs to hear from us."

The battle between government and the arts goes back to 1665, Urice said, and is continued over works by such individuals as Mapplethorpe and 2 Live Crew.

"The federal government has no business pitting its citizens against each other in the form of grants," Urice said.

"The way we judge art is how it challenges the intellect," said Schofman, whose sculpture was covered during a New Year's Eve display in Birmingham. "It's a very personal activity. If people wish to be challenged they go to an art show. They should expect for that to happen. It shouldn't be subject to democratic approval."

"The worst thing that happens because of censorship is that the artists will now censor themselves."

"You can't like everything."

How to communicate? Form a committee to develop a guiding principle on censorship. Stimulate public debate. Increase art education in schools.

It's important to consider that the First Amendment, which calls for freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the right to assemble, protects the audience as well as artists and arts organizations. If an artist's rights and freedoms are in danger, so are the rights and freedoms of individuals to decide what to view and appreciate.

See PERSPECTIVES, 8D

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Creative Living next week:

- An interview with Fay Herman of Farmington Hills, whose silver jewelry will be featured in the Birmingham Village Players Art and Gift Fair.
- Mary Klemic's Perspectives column.
- Exhibitions, art gallery event listings.

## Artist shows true colors in workbook



Artist Leslie Masters, a faculty member at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association, has written a workbook explaining some of the mysteries of color, as well as the process of painting. The book features exercises to help artists get the results they want when they paint in colors.

BY MARY KLEMIC  
STAFF WRITER

If you think you're too old for coloring books, think again.

An exception could be "How to Paint a Rainbow" by artist and teacher Leslie Masters. This is a workbook for acrylic, oil and watercolor painters that explains basic color theory and the process of painting.

Masters will autograph copies of the book 4:30-6:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 22, at the opening reception for the annual faculty art show at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association, 1516 S. Cranbrook Road in Birmingham.

"This is what I've been teaching all

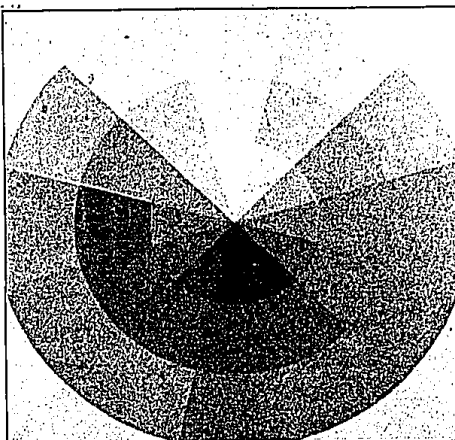
these years," said Masters, who has been a BBAA faculty member for 25 years.

"I really don't know of anyone who's done a real practical application of what happens when you mix the colors."

Masters is also available to teach a one- or three-day group workshop, using the book.

"How to Paint a Rainbow" was written for "beginners or people who have been painting a while and just paint intuitively," Masters said. She recommends it for ages not younger than eighth grade. Elementary school art teachers may find the book useful.

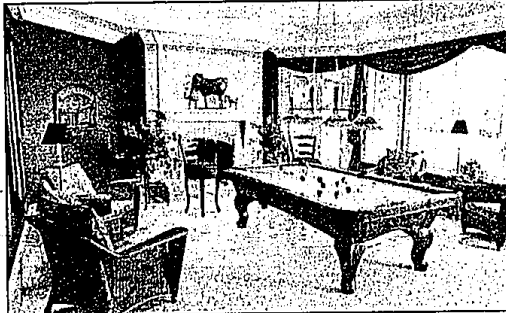
See COLOR, 8D



Color wheel: Artist and teacher Leslie Masters explains the color wheel and other color-related topics in her workbook.

## Symphony showhouse displays classic style

Cue to relax: The Billiard Room by Roy Allen Hanks Interiors of Troy sports a 4-by-8-foot mahogany billiard table, cozy wicker chairs, brass table lamps and accessories.



BY LINDA ANN CHIMIN  
SPECIAL WRITER

If you're ready for a whirlwind romance with an Old World beauty, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hull Volunteer Council has the ticket for you.

For the price of a \$12 tour, the 1993 Detroit Symphony Designer Showhouse in Bloomfield Township is sure to send you swooning with 13,000 square feet of design ideas ripe for the taking.

Villa Barrona, the council's major fund-raiser for the DSO, has been brought to life by 24 of the area's finest interior designers. The tours continue through Oct. 24.

As you step inside the three-level showhouse built after a historic French chateau, the opulent charm of its European architecture, furniture and fine fabrics whispers elegance.

See SHOWHOUSE, 8D



STAFF PHOTOS BY JERRY ZOLYNSKY

Master suite: The master suite sitting room by Meyer Interiors of West Bloomfield uses a traditional European color palette. Aubergine walls provide strong contrast to the ivory loveseat, Chippendale sofa and window treatments.

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

### WRITERS VISIT

Goldie and Sylvan Kalib and Ken Waschberger, the authors of "The Last Selection," a book about a Holocaust survivor who was among the last group selected for the gas chamber, will be at the Bloomfield Township Public Library 7:30-9 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 19. The library is at 1099 Lone Pine Road at Telegraph. Call 642-6800 for more information.

## Art Beat

### CRANBROOK CONNECTION

"Global Connections with Jonathan Swift," a show seen on Bloomfield Community Television and WTVS-TV Channel 56, will feature a visit to the Yoko Ono exhibit at the Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum in Bloomfield Hills. The show, airing Oct. 21 on Channel 56, will include a tour by Ono of the exhibit.

### ODD BALL

The Odd Ball, to benefit the building fund at

the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association, will take place Saturday night at the Birmingham Country Club. Hours d'oeuvre, a cash bar, a silent auction, dinner, dancing and a live auction will be featured. Tickets are \$100, \$150 and \$200. Call the BBAA at 644-0866 for information.

### MYSTERIOUS EVENING

The Point Creek Center for the Arts is sponsoring a masked ball 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 22, at Rochester's Great Oaks Country Club. Enjoy an evening of magic and mystery. Black tie optional. Masks will be provided for guests (or bring your own). Cocktails, dinner, dancing and psychic encounters will be featured. Make reservations by Tuesday, Oct. 19, with the PCCA at 651-4110.