

FRIDAY



"The Warped Tour" with Scaevend, starts at 1 p.m., Phoenix Plaza Amphitheatre, Pontiac, (313) 961-MELT.

SATURDAY



Mainstreet Comedy Showcase in Ann Arbor presents comedienne Judy Gold.

SUNDAY



Family fun, including displays of blue ribbon baked goods, farm animals and carnival rides await at the Michigan State Fair.



Hot tip: Gilda's Club presents Motor City Women of Comedy at Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle in Royal Oak, Sunday, Aug. 27. Call (810) 642-8900 for tickets.

SPECIAL EVENT



Swordplay: Piccolo played by Adam Barnowski (left to right), Allen Verschuere (Allinzo) and Rick Carver, (Ricardo) of Troy on the Griffon Stage at the Michigan Renaissance Festival.

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

WHAT TO DO, WHERE TO GO

KEELY WYQONIK, EDITOR • 313-953-2105 THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 1995 • PAGE 1 SECTION B

In focus: Tom Halsted has enjoyed success with his Birmingham gallery that presents the art of photography. The Halsted Gallery is marking its 25th anniversary this year.

Halsted Gallery: A picture of success

BY LINDA ANN CHAMIN

When Tom Halsted opened a gallery focusing on photography 25 years ago in Birmingham, he realized it was risky business. In 1969 an entrepreneurial venture specializing entirely in this medium had been tried by only a handful of galleries in the country.

In those days photography in many minds wasn't even considered a fine art so to open a gallery devoted to showcasing it was nothing less than living on the edge. In the early years Halsted, with a wife and two small children to support, gave up his day job as staff photographer at BBDO but maintained a commercial photography studio capturing banks and still life for Chrysler and Mopar on film to pay the bills.

"Back then, they were buying only the well known," said Halsted, who lives with his wife, Carol, in Bloomfield Hills.

"Today, people are more willing to take a risk. They're broadening their horizons a lot. Photography is a very exciting medium and other people are getting very excited and very passionate about it."

Beginnings

Halsted opened that first gallery in an empty old house since razed for a commercial development. He credits the seasoned wisdom of Lee Wilton of the successful Wilton Gallery, a photography-only space in New York City, for helping him get the gallery off the ground.

In the beginning The 631 Gallery at 631 E. Maple Road exhibited such masterful works as Eugene Atget's seductive portraits of Paris in the early 1900s, and Ansel Adams' breathtaking American landscapes. Along with the photographs, Halsted held seminars as well as stocked plenty of books on the subject.

"We sold books because how can you learn about an art form if you don't read a book? You have to spend a lot of time studying the history of photography and looking at it but it will enrich your life if you can get into the world of art a little bit."



JOHN BLOOMFIELD PHOTOGRAPHER

Gallery puts photos in the picture

Halsted Gallery

- Location: 560 N. Woodward, Birmingham, (810) 644-8284
- Hours: 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday
- Upcoming program: Tom Halsted will be the featured speaker at "When Image Is Everything: Investing in and Collecting Photographic Art," the next program in The Bank of Bloomfield Hills' 1995 Alternative Investment Series.
- When: 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 24.
- Where: The Townsend Hotel in downtown Birmingham.
- Cost: Admission is free but reservations are necessary; call The Bank of Bloomfield Hills at (810) 540-6224.

Variety

The gallery carries both color, and black and white gelatin-silver prints, a favorite of Halsted's.

"Black and white silver prints are much more dramatic. Color photography is something we see every day. Color doesn't separate the tonal values, and the black and white silver prints that are toned, it gives it a real romantic feel."

Photography is a relatively young medium. Invention of the daguerreotype, an ancestor of the modern negative-print system, in 1839 gave artists not only the means of recording an image, but heightening it as well. According to Halsted, this medium of multiples appeals to a lot of young people because it's affordable, they identify with it and it will probably increase in value. When the gallery first opened Halsted bought an Ansel Adams for \$150. He resold it 10 years later for \$11,600.

"Some people want to know that it will go up in value, and in most cases it has. Others just buy it because they like it. I like to tell people, look for something you really like that makes your life more exciting and better, then find out if it will be a good investment."

"Currently the market is getting to be for American daguerreotype as opposed to British. When many people think of

daguerreotype they think of portraits but daguerreotype is more than just the portraits. It's the landscapes and the occupations."

What does Halsted collect? Turn-of-the-century images from the industrial or mechanical age such as trains and factories. He also collects sports photographs. One day he'd like to acquire photos of the Civil War as well as ones by masters Edward Weston and Alfred Stieglitz.

Success

To what does Halsted attribute his running a successful gallery for 25 years? The answer is lots of initiative and hard work. Even though he foresaw the rise of this mechanical and somewhat magical medium on the art horizon, Halsted "didn't sit and wait for customers to come into the gallery. Instead, he took the gallery to museums and collectors, crossing the country from coast to coast to this day."

Today, he runs the Halsted Gallery, which opened in 1974 in its present location at 560 N. Woodward in Birmingham's Gallery Row, with the help of his daughter, Wendy. Throughout the years Halsted has shown the work of Yousuf Karsh, Edward Weston, Andre Kertesz, Michael Kenna and Lewis W. Hine (known for his documentary photos of child-labor abuses in factories that eventually helped win passage of laws protecting children from industrial exploitation).

Halsted's criteria for what makes a (good) photo starts with the heart. Craftsmanship or mastery of the medium mated with an eye-catching composition top his list. Several times a year he travels to California, Chicago, New York, Kalamazoo and Ann Arbor in search of such a photo.

"I look for an image that is visually stimulating, so it stays with you in your mind. Every day we're bombarded with thousands of images."

"If it's an edition of 50 make sure all of them are printed with the same quality. A good photo has a lasting impression. You keep coming back to it. You'd think there would be a lot of that out there but it's really hard to find."

Linda Ann Chamin of Canton Township is a freelance writer specializing in the visual arts.

Fun reigns at Michigan Renaissance Festival

Fun and merriment await in the shire of Hollygrove at the 10th annual Michigan Renaissance Festival in Holly through Sept. 24.

Travel back in time to the 16th century European Renaissance. Costumed artisans sell their hand-made wares and demonstrate timeless crafts including glass blowing, pottery, and weaving.

Eight stages on the 15 acre wooded festival site provide continuous entertainment including light-hearted drama, comedy, classical music, folk and courtly dance. Along the shaded paths, puppeteers, magicians, jugglers and others invite guests to participate in their follies.

Rick Carver has participated in the festival for nine years. This year he plays Ricardo, a French pirate who got involved with "two bunnies who have no idea of how to run a ship. The ship was

run around, and with audience participation they try to find who is best suited to be captain.

"We do the show twice a day, every day of festival on the Griffon Stage," said Carver who shares a home in Troy with the other two pirates, Adam Barnowski and Allen Verschuere. "We just can't seem to get away from each other. We met at Oakland University, and have worked in various shows together including Three Musketeers." We wrote a show that was a combination of illusion and combat. The festival had an idea for a pirate show, and wanted to work with us because we had worked together before. We had input into writing lines and choreography."

Carver said he enjoys the festival because it's

Festival continued on next page

Festival schedule

- Where: One mile north of Mt. Holly, Inc. on Dixie Highway (between Pontiac and Flint). Call 1-800-901-4848.
- Hours: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekends and Labor Day
- Admission: Adults \$12.95 at the gate, \$10.50 advance; Children (5-12) \$5.95 at the gate; \$5 in advance. Children four and under free.
- Highlights:
- August 26-27: Highland Ring
 - September 3-4: Peacock Olympics
 - September 8-10: Country Wine Affair
 - September 15-17: Music and Dance
 - September 22-24: Sweet Endings