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CONVERSATIONS

FRANK PROVENZANO

Three words sum up Stone's years in gallery business

iven 24-hours notice before an on-the-record interview, Elizabeth Stone said she would definitely "give some thought to the meaning of the past 10 years." The topic: Lessons learned in the first decade of her gallery in Birmingham.

ham.
It's only fair to give Stone time to come up with some deep thoughts.

Her gallery of original, limited-edition lithographs and prints of children's book illustration is only one of



Soul food: Elizabeth Stone. (left), and artist Cyd Moore are dedicated to stories and illustrations that have a timeless influence.

three in the country.

The other two galleries are in LA, a.k.a. LaLa land, where illusion is reality, and reality in based on the findings of a marketing strategy. The strategy at Stone's gallery is refreshingly simple, and quite different from Every Picture Tells A Story and Storyopolis book stores in LA.

Feed your soul

Feed your soul

There aren't books derived from
Disney formulas or other gimmicks on
the shelves at the Blizabeth Stone
Gallery.
For Stone, if the story and illustrations resonant like those classic tales
that are read again and again from
generation to generation, then it finds
a place on the shelf.
At the Blizabeth Stone Gallery, the
person whose name is on the business
also serves as critic and curator.
The gallery is a
jewel, said Cyd
Moore or Beverly
Geievation,
Generating Michigan
Hard books

What: Tonth
Anniversary
Calcorosis
Calcorosi Hills whose illustrated books include "I Lovo You, Stinky Face," "What better way for a child to get turned on to art. This gallery is about books that feed your soul."

State of mind

Apparently
Stone is feeding
the souls of more
than the art collectors in metro
Detroit. Her reputation has

spread world-wide. Thanks, in part, she said, to her

wide. Thanks, in part, she said, to her web site.

Because of her in-depth knowledge of children's book illustrations and her first-hand grasp of today's most compelling artists Stone is also a popular speaker at schools and conferences.

Actually, if anyone can be considered as a diplomat of the art form, and a crusder for the civillizing influence of the stories and images of illustrated books, it's Stone.

Don't mistake Stone's warmth, friendliness or choice of promoting children's art' as reasons to believe her tastes are maudlin or that she's a softy.

You don't stay in the art callery business for 10 years simply because

of pretty pictures.

The art on the walls and on the pages of books could be considered as

Please see CONVERSATIONS, C2

Bloomfield Hills resident stars in MOT opera amson

n an unexpectedly ceel, blustery afternoon in late May, Irina Mishura sits demurely in the Madison Lounge on the first floor of the Detroit Opera House. Rohearal has enided early, and the mezzo-soprano whose passionate performances in "Carnon," Aida" and "Madame Butterlly" won her international critical praise settles into a reflective mood.

There is little hint of the defiant seductresses, Bellish, who Mishura will portray in Michigan Opera Theatre's Samson & Dellish," opening this Saturday.

this Saturday.

Not long ago, Mishura may have been content to just sit in the lobby of any opera house and talk about her aspiration for the stage.

So much for inevitability.

What: "Samson and Delifah," a three-act opera presented by the Michigan Opera Theatre, Music by Camille Saint-Seens, camille Saint-See conducted by Christian Badea, directed by Dejan Milandinovic. Milandinovic, When: 8 p.m. Saturday, June 5, Wednesday, June 9, Sunday, June & and June 13 Where: Detroit Opera House, 1526 House, 1526 Broadway (one block east of Woodward Ave.), Detroit Tickets: \$18-\$95, call (313) 237-SING or (248) 645-666

For the last three years, the Bloomfield Hills resident has strapped her career to a rock-theaded to the operatic strates houses in Sam Francisco, Toronto, Vienna, Lisbon and Brussels, Next fall, Mishura will make her debut at the Met.

Ask her about her schedule for the next six the next six months, and in her heavy Russ ian accent with

ina accent with near-perfect near-perfect she'll have to get back to you. Busy? There's probably an itinerary just to schoule the itinerary Mishura has just returned from trips to Helsin-



Temptress: Irina Mishura first neuptoss; Irna misnura first performed the role of Delilah in Tel Aviv last year as part of the 50th anniversary cclebration of Israel. She recently performed the role with the New Orleans Opera.

Hair today, gone tomorrow: Irina Mishura, (left), performs the role of Delitah in all six performances of MOT's "Samson and Delitah." The role of the long-haired Samson will be performed by Mark Lundberg, (right), and Ian Denolfo.

by Mark Lundberg, (right), and ki and Munich, After her upcoming Letroit Opera House performances, she'll head to Lisbon to perform 'Aida.' For the moment, however, Mishura is content to be home — both in Bloomfield Hills and the Detroit Opera House, where she initially performed three years ago at the gaid opening celebration, which featured Luciano Pavarotti.

"That was one of the most amazing moments of my life," ahe said. Watching Pavarotti sing, I had tears rolling down my face.

Wait until you hear Mishura.

A bad-hair day

A bnd-hair day
In February of last year, Mishurn
first performed the role of Deillah in
Tel Aviv as part of the 50th-year celebration of the state of Iarnel. She has
also performed the role earlier this
year at the New Orleans Opera.
The allegory of Samson is ideally
suited for the extravagant spectacle of
opera. The myth, mystery and passion
finds a seductive expression in Camille
Saint-Saens' opera, first performed in
France in 1890.
As the curtain rises, the Philistings

Saint-Saena' opera, first performed in France in 1890.

As the curtain rises, the Philistines in Gaza are forcing the Israelites to work. Rousing his fellow Jews from the depths of despair, Samson rallies the Hebrewa to resist their oppressors.

Samson, endowed with the strength of 10,000 men, overcomes the onslaught of the Philistine earmy, but falls prey to the most seductive Philistine maiden, Delliah.

Eventually, Delilah learns of the secret source of Samson's strength.

Soon, Samson suffers the ultimate

an Denolfo.

"bad hair day," loses his self-esteem (along with his hair) and the respect of his fellow Hebrews.

Meanwhit, amid a Bacchanal orgy, the Phillistines revel in their victory.

Weakened and ridiculed, Samson prays to God to restore his strength. His prayer is answered. Samson regains his strength, pushes over the pillars holding up the temple where the Phillitines are celebrating and buries his people's enemies.

The morality tale on the rewards of persistence iast' lost on Mishura, who has overcome great odds in her rapid rise in the open world.

rise in the opera world.

Prayers do get answered.

Gift from the Gods

Gift from the Gods
In many ways, Mishura's life could be translated into an opera with a happy ending, a tale whereby the hero with the gift from the Gods actually gets to live her lifelong dream.

"I have been so sutuborn," said Mishura, who immigrated seven years ago from Moldavia as a political refugee. She was forced to flee as anti-Russian, anti-Semitic sentiment swept through the former Soviet republic, where Mishura spent seven years as the leading mezzo-soprano at the Moldavia Opera, a 4,000-seat house.

"There was no way I wanted to do anything else. I had a dram like everyone else. I just couldn't have imagined how hard it would be."

Despite a profession where an impressive vocal range amid the upper-scale octaves is as legendary as diva-like snitz, Mishura is not only

Please see OPERA, C2

A masterpiece of fascinating rhythms

By Alice Rhein Staff Writer

His work has the symmetry of classi-al style, the warmth of folk art, and

cal style, the warmth of folk art, and
the simple approach to form and content that is primitivism.
Yet Andrew Lidgus said his artwork
is simply his way to tell a story.
His 'American Popular Music Series'
at Birmingham's Masterpiece Gallery
runs through July 10. The exhibit pays
ribute to the stories and songs of
America's greatest composers including
George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Harold
Arlen and Duke Ellington.
Using layers and strips of hand-made
paper, oil pastels, crayons and panels of
rich wood, Lidgus wenves elegant collages, or more appropriately, musical
montages.

"I love to tell sto-

What: 'Rhythms of Life,' works by Andrew J. Lidgus When: Through Seturday, July 10 Whens: Masterpleco Gallery, 137 W. Maple Road, Sirmingham, (248) 594-9470. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondry-Saturday, open to 8 p.m. Thursday

"I love to tell sto-ries," said Lidgus, who is also an accomplished

pianist.
"I did my own
storytelling of
what I thought the
lyricists and com-

what I thought the hom, (264) 5649470. Hours are 10
9470. Hours are 10
9470. Hours are 10
9470. Hours are 10
9470. Hours are 10
95 pm. Thousday

rhythm with undulating waves, forest and sky. In another nod to Gershwin, his "Summertime" above fish jumping and a man reaching out of the water towards the sun in reference to the classic "Forgy and Bess" refrain about spreading your wings.

For Duke Ellington's "Day Dream," Lidgus used patterns based on Ashanit textiles to shows a man floating between two castle walls.

His tribute to Harold Arlen's "It's Only a Paper Moon" shows the entrance to a tent and, of course, apper meon, sailing over a forest of trees.

"I use a lot of trees. Nature is a big."

paper moon, sailing over a lorest of trees.

"I use a lot of trees. Nature is a big theme in my work," said Lidgus, who grew up in a Chicago neighborhood, one of eight children.

"It's one of the few things in this world that is honest. We can't corrupt it. We can, in terms of the environment, but a tree is still a tree."

And a rose, by any other name, would smell as sweet. Lidgus also draws heavily on classic literature, including Romeo and Juliet. In his largest work, a four-panel folding screen 12-feet wide and 7-feet high, Lidgus captures the Please see MASTERPIECE, C2



Literary Montage: Andrew Lidgus's four-panel screen depicts Romeo and Jul:et at the moment after they were mar-

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION,

Detroit Women Writers celebrate a 'Century of Voices'

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN STAFF WRITER

Alice Elinor Bartlett would have probably gasped in horror over the graphic language and sexual descriptions in Julia Grico's suspense novel "Jagged Light."

"Authors On Stago"
What: Crenbrook Writers
Guild and the Birmingham.
Villags Players present
works from the Detroit
Wormon Writers recently put-lished anthology, "Century
of Voices."
Whent 8 p.m. Seturday, June
5.

Where: Village Players The-rter, 752 Chestnut, Birming-

ham. Tickets: \$25, \$50 (aponsor), \$100 (patron), \$150 (bene-factor), Call (248) 646-0658. Proceeds to benefit the Cranbrook Writers Gulid and the Birmingham Villege Players.

In 1905, Bartlett, a founding member of Detroit Women Writers, was writing flowery poems about the parson coming to tee

about the parson coming to toa.

Ninety-nino years to the day, the Detroit Women writers will kick off a year-long celebration of their 100th anniversary with a literary evening. The Birmingham Village Players and Cranbrook Writers Guild will present both works along with selections by Margaret Hillert, Elizabeth Kane Buzzelli, Naomi Long

Madgett, Kathleen Ripley Leo, Joyce Carol Oates, Linda Nemec Foster, Ruth Ryan Langan, and S.K. Wolfe of Livonia.



Century of Voices: The

Detroit Women Writers cele-

brate their 100th

anniversary with the release of an anthology and the lit-

erary evening "Authors on Stage."

Bob Carington's job is to put the authors of the Detroit Women Writers recently published anthology "Century of Voices" on stage and "make it entertaing," As director of the Birmingham Village Playars production with his wife, Jerri, Carington realized his biggest challenge was to trim the selections chosen for "Authors on Stage" Saturday, June 5. The book stands on its own when it comes to taking the reader through a roller coaster of emotions from hughter to surprise.

"There's everything from tough hard-hitting stuff to fun things. From soup to nuts, there's a lot of variety," said Carington of Bloomfield Village. "We're making them into little one acts. From Julia Grice's hard hitting Jagged Light' to a poem by the first making them into little one acts. From Julia Grice's hard hitting Jagged Light' to a poem by the first light of the stage of the

Evolution of a project

EVOLUTION Of a project
Originally "Century of Voices" was intended to
chronicle 100 years of Detroit Women Writers history, Marion Tuttle Marzolf had been taking oral
accounts from older members for a decade when Carolyn Vosburg Hall, who calls herself an idea person
because of the 12 published erafts books she's orches-

Please see WRITERS, C2