

Sunday, May 20, 2001

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS



LINDA ANN CHOMIN

Hometown shows illustrate the many faces of art, nature

There are as many reasons for creating art as there are people painting, drawing, sculpting and photographing subjects only they can imagine.

All I have to do is look around at the many exhibits in our communities to know that whether it's done as a hobby or serious profession, art allows all of us to express our emotions and dreams, and to share them with others.

Take Regina Dunne and Donald Alley, for example.

Dunne, who's in the Visual Arts Association of Livonia exhibit at city hall, began her art career illustrating ads for Hudson's before going on her own to create graphics for agencies such as Ross Roy. Now retired, Dunne



Western Dreamer: Regina Dunne won first place in the Visual Arts Association of Livonia's spring show for this pastel portrait.

creates fine art - pastel portraits that touch the viewer with their sensitivity.

Alley began taking photographs as a hobby six years ago. For the last four years he's worked semi-professionally as a free lance photographer for the Observer Newspapers and Focal Point Studios in Farmington Hills. By day, Alley works as an electrical engineering technician developing controllers for air bag systems for TRW Automotive Electronics in Farmington Hills.

Exhibits Around Town

■ **Quicksilver Photo Gallery**, 1150 West Ann Arbor Road, between Main Street and Sheldon, Plymouth, (734) 465-3688

■ **Visual Arts Association of Livonia** at Livonia City Hall, 33000 Civic Center Dr., east of Farmington Road, (734) 466-2540

Hill, and the Art Center in Mount Clemens. In addition to the Plymouth exhibit, Alley has a photograph on display in "Animals, Vegetables and Minerals: A Focus on Our Environment" in the Alfred Berkowitz Gallery at University of Michigan-Dearborn through June 15.

"I'm not sure why I do photography," said Alley, who grew up in West Bloomfield and now lives in Plymouth. "It started as a hobby. I found myself going hiking and backpacking and taking a camera along."

The result of these forays into nature continues on display at Quicksilver Photo Gallery in a customers exhibit through June 1.

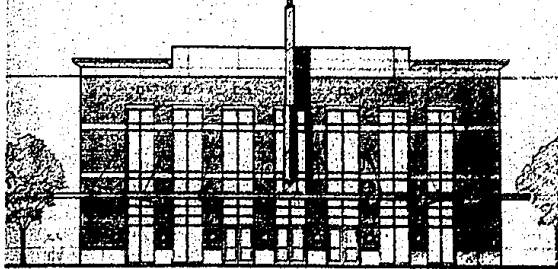
Captive audience

Patience was a key ingredient in capturing the screech and snowy owl, a red-tailed hawk, American kestrel and an osprey through the lens of his camera.

"These birds were taken at the Howell Nature Center, but in the wild you just need bait and patience. The birds in the show were ones that cannot be returned to nature due to injury. One was hit by the antenna of a car going down the road, the snowy owl, one of his wings is clipped."

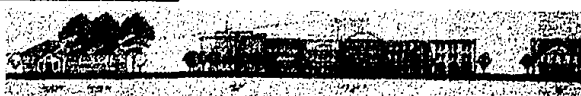
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PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ARTS



STAFF PHOTOS BY PAUL HUBSCHMANN

First look: This is a preliminary sketch of the Canton Performing Arts Center as designed by TMP Architects. It will be located on the northeast corner of Cherry Hill and Ridge roads.



CANTON DRAWS TOGETHER TO BUILD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER
lchomin@oe.homecomm.net

It all goes as planned, Canton Township will break ground for its long-awaited performing arts center in April 2002, and Supervisor Tom Yack couldn't be happier.

For more than six years, Yack has dreamed about building a facility to spotlight theater, dance and music performances, visual art, and educational programs.

Now it looks like there will be a 420-seat Canton Performing Arts Center to provide a home for groups such as the Plymouth Theatre Guild, Peter Sparling Dance Company, Vordt Opera Theatre of Michigan, and Canton Project Arts, the township's official arts organization. Located on the northeast corner of Cherry Hill and Ridge roads in Cherry Hill Village, the 50,000-square-foot arts center will be flanked by a line of commercial and residential buildings. The space, estimated to cost \$8 million, will house a variety of events and activities

■ **Partnership for the Arts will primarily be responsible for raising money to build and operate the center. To date, \$4 1/2 million has been secured from the township, a state grant, and local developers.**

including Plymouth Symphony Orchestra chamber concerts, and art and music classes to remain self-supporting. Eastern Michigan University is contemplating bringing its theater management program to the facility.

Function and style

An intense design and planning session by township officials, arts center architects, local arts groups, and the developers and architects for Cherry Hill Village, a community of homes inspired by the small towns of yesteryear, was

held in March to determine function and style. A curved facade will serve as the entrance and allows space for a restaurant, which would serve audiences before and after performances. Inside the theater, 100 balcony seats will provide intimate seating by bringing the audience closer to the stage. The main floor will hold the remaining 320 seats.

"We met with the architects last Friday," said Yack. "We're working on development materials to be completed by June and working on changes for the theater. We hope to bid it in February and start construction in April."

"The challenge is coordinating Billmer & (developers of Cherry Hill Village) and their architects and the construction of liner buildings - working out details like how to deliver product to retail - with the construction of the arts center and our architects, TMP (in Bloomfield Hills)."

Coordinating the two projects could mean cost savings for the arts center, which will spend \$1.2 million on the stage alone. Prudent planning has been key to the project since March 1995 when Yack gathered together a group of residents to see if a region could support a cultural venue. After a series of feasibility studies, the nonprofit Partnership for the Arts was formed to oversee the project.

"We always thought the township would own the facility and run it similar to the DIA, which is owned by the city, but eventually the Founders Society took over the operation," said Yack.

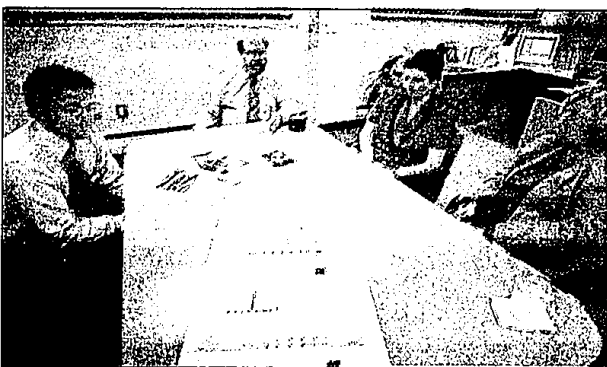
Partnership for the Arts president Bryan Amman recommends an almost-identical plan to that used by the Detroit Institute of Arts for the day-to-day running of the Canton center. It is based on visits to successful facilities near Denver in early May.

Ownership

"The last round of feasibility studies showed people want a distinct ownership," said Amman, a Canton attorney. "We looked across the country for models, then I took a day trip to Colorado to look at the organization and bylaws of arts centers in Arvada and Lakewood."

"We found trying to establish a nonprofit, that art groups had a hard time making a commitment. They said, 'We're not going to participate if we don't have control.' My recommenda-

Please see PARTNERSHIP, C2



Moving ahead: Bryan Amman (left), Tom Yack, Joan Noricks and Elaine Kirchgatter recently met to discuss plans for building a performing arts and education center in Canton.

CONCERT

Quartet swings into town for evening of 'eclectic' jazz

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER
lchomin@oe.homecomm.net

Lucky for Thomas Knifec and the rest of the Western Jazz Quartet, that summer vacation here. The break gives the Western Michigan University music professors the opportunity to play venues across the country and Europe without having to worry about scheduling substitutes to take over their classes.

When they're hot, they're hot - Jazz lovers from across the country and Europe long to hear standard tunes and originals by the musicians - and Farmington Hills is no exception. On Saturday, May 26, the quartet will treat audiences at Birmingham Temple to sounds ranging from Duke Ellington to a Latin inspired suite by quartet saxophonist Trent Kynaston. The concert concludes the Vivace series for the season.

"It's an eclectic repertoire with classic swing, and tango influenced jazz from the new CD *Sophie's Dance*," said Knifec, who's managed and directed the quartet for the last 10 years in addition



All that jazz: Trent Kynaston (left), Stephen Zegree, Tim Froncek, and Thomas Knifec will perform everything from Duke Ellington to original compositions in a concert at the Birmingham Temple.

to playing bass. "Trent wrote a suite based on music heard in Buenos Aires in 1994. We'll play the final movement, also a piece from *The Waning Moon* CD released in Europe in 1999 and two weeks ago here. It features elements of

Polish culture fused with jazz."

The quartet's toured Europe twice promoting *The Waning Moon*, which premiered at the International Association of Jazz Educators in Los Angeles. The CD is one of three the Western Jazz Quartet's released in the U.S. along with two in Europe since the early 1990s.

It's a wonder, group members have time to record with their busy performing and teaching schedule. After playing Birmingham Temple with vocalist Sunny Wilkinson, the quartet, which includes pianist Stephen Zegree and drummer Tim Froncek, goes on to a jazz festival in Saugatuck and then a date with the West Shore Symphony in Muskegon. The quartet is currently

Western Jazz Quartet

What's Performer with vocalist Sunny Wilkinson
When: 8 p.m.
Where: Birmingham Temple, 28611 West 22 Mile Road, Farmington Hills
Tickets: \$18, \$15 seniors/members, \$12 students.
(248) 788-9338 or (248) 280-3953

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