

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS



LINDA ANN CHOMIN

Singers bear the message of hope, joy

Michael Gross is counting on the holiday season's message to draw a crowd for the 29th annual Plymouth Community Chorus concerts at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 30-Dec. 1 and 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 2, at Northville High School.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, much of life has changed forever, but a few of our most treasured beliefs remain the same. All you have to do is listen as hundreds of singers proclaim the uplifting news throughout the land.

"As a world, I'm curious to see what the holiday season is going to be like this year," said Gross, a Canton resident and director of the 135-voice chorus. "I'm not sure how people are going to celebrate the season this year. It's important to remember the hope that came with Christmas. That's what I'm hoping the concert will instill in an audience."

The "Christmas Tapestry" program reminds us of all we hold dear.

"The concert opens with *The Star-Spangled Banner* sung by a male quartet," said Scott Yamazaki, a chorus member since 1977. "It's called a tapestry because we're weaving together selections that are traditional holiday songs with pieces composed during the 1950s like *Silver Bells*, *Merry Christmas Darling*, and *I'll Be Home for Christmas* with more recent songs like *Somebody in My Memory* from the film *Home Alone*, *Jesus, Oh What a Wonderful Child* and a calypso piece *The Light Come Down*. It's like the music you'd hear in Jamaica. "And part of the \$10 ticket price goes to a scholarship fund for elementary, middle and high school students to encourage a career in the vocal arts."

Jazzy concerts

Ginny Lundquist is doing her part to bring cheer to audiences this holiday season by singing up a storm with three vocal groups - the Farmington Community Chorus and PRIME vocal jazz, under director Steve SeGraves, and the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Michigan led by Charles Whitmore.

Lundquist and 64 other members of the Farmington Community Chorus perform at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Dec. 14-16, at Merry High School, Farmington Hills. Guests on the program are the Motor City Brass. The chorus join the brass band for its holiday concert 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16, at the Southfield Centre for the Arts.

"There's a variety of music we sing - traditional Christmas carols," said Lundquist of Commerce Township. "There's small acts and solos. Out in front of the chorus we have people dancing or acting with numbers. There's a comedy number but also classical, popular and jazz with Perfect Blend" of which Lundquist is also a member.

In the mood for something a little different? Past and present come together when PRIME vocal jazz and the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Michigan present "An Oldie Jazz Christmas" 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 2, at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Livonia.

PRIME vocal jazz lets loose of traditional carols to sing everything from *Cool Yule* by Steve Allen to classical music such as the overture to the opera *The Marriage of Figaro*, while the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Michigan, composed of six male and six female singers dressed in Renaissance costume, perform madrigals, medieval carols and 14th- to 16th-century songs.

Community Choir

Shari Clason is especially excited about the setting for the first of two concerts by the Schoolcraft College Community Choir, under the direction of Gerald Custer. The concert begins at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1, at Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Detroit. A part of the Noel Night celebration, which runs 5-9:30 p.m. in the University Cultural Center, the concert is free.

More than 40 performance groups brighten the holidays with music and dance. Listen to the carolers strolling

Holiday art gifts

Spend a little, spend a lot

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER
lchomin@oe.homedecor.com

Ruth Price knows exactly what she's buying her family and friends this year. On Friday morning Nov. 30, she'll join dozens of thoughtful gift givers in search of one-of-a-kind artworks in the annual two-day holiday show at the Village Potters Guild in Plymouth. A potter herself, Price and 15 members of the guild will sell a variety of wares they've made throughout the year.

Running out of ideas for holiday gifts? Price and guild potters Donna Williams and Carol Long offer plenty of suggestions. How about filling a plate with cookies and giving it to the hostess at the next party or dinner this holiday season? Carol Ashworth's platters, decked with sprigs of clay holly, are perfect. Or how about her canoe ornament for your favorite outdoorsman or woman? Ornaments make an inexpensive gift or stocking stuffer, which can be tailored to an individual's interests. How about one of Tom Holleman's cat or dog ornaments for a pet lover, or a couple of his fish-shaped tiles to hang up in the bathroom, or a starfish, sea horse, deer or outdoor scenes including tall ships? Designed to look like a piglet, a covered jar by Leslie Greenstein, makes a whimsical gift to hold treats, for human or beast.

Prices in the show range from \$4 to \$300, but most cost between \$5 and \$20.

"Children buy for their teachers," said Price, show chairwoman. "Because it's really from your heart, it's a special gift."

Put some thought into whatever you give and it will be treasured for a lifetime. Ask yourself, what makes that person special, what does he or she cherish? Long's wheel-thrown bowls and vases reign supreme with Christians and Jews. Known for her carving into clay style, Long creates Seder and Blessings cups, Rosary cups with Mary and Baby Jesus, crosses and a framed tile of Mary and Jesus surrounded by angels.

Cooks will love Price's sushi dish with curlicues for holding serving utensils. Know someone who feeds the birds? How about Price's bird bath, or tiles in the shape of stars that deliver a message of joy. That's a gift anyone would appreciate.

"People come and buy for all year-round for wedding gifts, casserole dishes for everyday, not just for the holidays," said Long.

"People can always use a plate to hold fruit on the counter, or a dish to put a vegetable in the oven then serve it," said Williams who brings sculptural and functional work to the show including covered jars. Williams will be in a four-woman clay show in the Livonia Civic Center Library Fine Arts Gallery in December.

"All of the glazes we use are food safe, no lead."

B u y American
A n e t t e Horn, co-owner since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, she's seen an increase in purchases that bring comfort and joy. At Native West she sells both all year long. Looking for a gift with a history, her Native Amer-

ican jewelry, home accessories, art (including black-and-white vintage photographs of chiefs and children), tell a story of the original people of the land. Their storyteller dolls, jewelry, ornaments in the shape of horses, moose and chili peppers, are all available here.

A dreamcatcher will trap all those bad dreams in its web. Carved from stone, a fetish in the shape of the bear will bring strength to the owner. Another of a lizard helps one persevere through the toughest of times. A wall mask made from a gourd and feathers adds vibrancy to a room.

"What I'm seeing is that people are looking for bright, colorful things," said Horn, co-owner with her husband, Ken. "Color makes you happy. With what has been going on in everyone's life since Sept. 11, they want to bring that happiness back. People want to be good to themselves. That's the case every year but more so this year."

"People are getting back to their roots. They want to buy things that are made in America - Peruvian blankets and throws, things that will help keep you warm and cozy. These were originally trade blankets made to trade with Native Americans. Natives loved to wear them during ceremonies."

In the background, Alice Gomez's compact disc, *While the Eagle Sleeps: Night Songs and Lullabies of the Native American Flute*, sends out a soothing stream of sound. Music is one of Horn's favorite gift ideas, especially CDs by Gomez, who was in town recently for a performance of one of her compositions by the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra, and a drumming workshop at Native West.

Please See ART, C2



STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL HURCHMAN

Pot pourri: Ruth Price (left), Carol Long and Donna Williams show off some of the ceramic pieces available in the Village Potters Guild holiday show in Plymouth.

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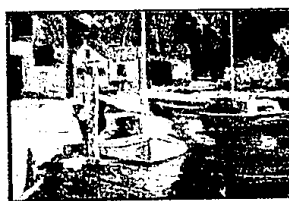
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Please See ART, C2



Made in America: Trader Jonathon Cox will bring a variety of jewelry to Native West.



Affordable art: Tom LeGault reduces the size and price of his paintings for the Michigan Guild of Artists and Artisans show at Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills.

CONCERT

Around the world: This photo was taken when Genevieve Chinn and Allen Brings performed in Switzerland last summer. On Dec. 1, they arrive at Birmingham Temple.



BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER
lchomin@oe.homedecor.com

Genevieve Chinn won't say exactly when she first played Allen Brings' *Pussacaglia*, *Interlude* and *Fugue* for four-hands, but it's a day she will treasure for the rest of her life. The composition eventually brought the two pianists together as husband and wife.

They will perform the piece, along with music by Schubert and Dvorak, at 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1, as part of the Vivace Series at Birmingham Temple in Farmington Hills.

"It was written for organ and rearranged for piano," said Chinn in a phone interview from the couple's Conn. home. "It's a marvelously inventive piece, easy for the audience to follow."

While the audience won't have any problem listening, Chinn and Brings will be put through their paces. Even though they've played together since college - he as a graduate student at Columbia University, she as an undergrad - four-hand piano requires timing and talent.

What: Vivace Series presents pianists Allen Brings and Genevieve Chinn
When: 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1
Where: Birmingham Temple, 28611 W. 12 Mile, between Inkster and Mid-diebelt roads, Farmington Hills
Tickets: \$15-\$18; Call (248) 789-9338 or (248) 694-3348

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Please See PIANISTS, C2

Pianists prove 4 hands are better than 2