

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS



LINDA ANN CHOMIN

Artists create work from a female perspective

Nora Chapa Mendoza went home haunted by one of the art works she juried into the exhibit presented by the Womencenter at Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills. Cheryl Gordon's installation brought back memories of Mendoza's mother who died when she was only four-years-old. Out of 455 entries in *From Our Perspective*, the woman lying on the bed moved the West Bloomfield artist enough to award it Best of Show, a decision she shared with co-juror Leslie Masters, an instructor at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center.

Mendoza is an award winning artist herself. She's currently working around the clock preparing for shows in Battle Creek and Detroit galleries, and the Plymouth Community Arts Council.

"A juror always looks for something new and fresh, something that talks to you whether it's because of the feeling and emotion or because it is well executed," said Mendoza.

From Our Perspective

What: Oakland Community College showcases works by women artists

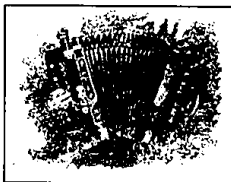
When: Through through May 31
Where: In the Smith Theatre Gallery on campus, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. For more information, call (248) 522-3642

Gordon's *Reflection* disturbs the viewer. Who is this woman with a body made of disjointed tree branches and tortuous projection roiling like a crown on top of her head? Family photos and a trunk of memorabilia tell the story of her life, but what's the significance of a vintage dresser with fractured mirror and bowl of faded rose petals.

"When I saw it I felt this emotion in my body," said Mendoza. "It was so powerful it almost moved me to tears. Afterwards I examined my feelings about it. It healed a part of my being I hadn't thought about in years."

"The purpose of painting is to bring joy, happiness, to heal and bring up issues not often thought about. The show is an opportunity for women to express and get into their own personal feelings, to have courage to paint about what they really feel. A show like this gives them a reason to paint (these subjects), to start exploring themselves."

Please see CHOMIN, B7



Cajun beat: Mary Schraffenberger hopes to make the viewer aware of Cajun and Zydeco music with this mixed media work *Jamming on the Porch*.



Playwright examines ethics in journalism

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER
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Berl Falbaum prides himself on never having used a "No comment" during all his years in journalism. The phrase implies guilt, a theme that runs through his first play. *No Comment* makes its world premiere at a benefit performance Saturday, June 1 at the Livonia Civic Center Library Theater then continues Thursday-Saturday, June 6-8 at the Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford.

Falbaum seems nervous as he visits one of the rehearsals at the Theatre Guild in Redford. He's chosen not to rewrite the script but let director Maxine Parshall interpret the material. His only input so far is to suggest that reporters use a narrower notebook.

"It's frustrating writing a play and other people interpreting your words," said Falbaum, a West Bloomfield resident who has taught journalism at Wayne State University for 34 years. "I'm going to be a basket case opening night, but this (theater) is not my field. I debated what to do (as far as being there for re-writes). They wanted to temper the language a little and they do but not at the end when it gets heated in the city room, because that's what you hear in the city room."

Falbaum's hands-off approach doesn't mean he's not serious about the subject of ethics in journalism. He stresses, reporters must remain objective especially when reputations of innocent people are at stake. In *No Comment*, Joe Castle crosses the line

Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford

What: World premiere of Berl Falbaum's *No Comment*, a play about ethics in journalism

When: 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, June 6-8
Where: At the theater, 15138 Beech Daly, south of Five Mile, Redford

Tickets: \$12, \$10 seniors, students. Call (313) 631-0554

Benefit performance 8 p.m. Saturday, June 1, at the Livonia Civic Center Library Theater, 33000 Civic Center Drive, east of Farmington Road. Tickets \$25, proceeds benefit the Theatre Guild renovation fund. An afterglow with the playwright follows the performance



STAFF PHOTOS BY JIM JACOBFIELD

Plotting: Jim Charles (left) and J.J. Reynolds rehearse the scene where they decide how much information to give a reporter. Charles plays a county prosecutor, Reynolds the assistant prosecuting attorney in "No Comment."

when he agrees to write about a gubernatorial candidate who's been accused of sexual harassment by a female student at the university where he serves as president. The prosecutor, who has political aspirations himself, promises an exclusive if Castle leaks the information - but his source must remain anonymous. It's important to note that no charges have been brought by the prosecutor but a search warrant for the man's home revealed a plethora of pornographic material. Circumstantial evidence, letters written to the student on the university president's computer, clinches his guilt in Castle's mind.

"It's an ethical issue," said Falbaum. "We don't deal with it. We just talk about it. If there's any institution beyond reproach it should be the media. The reason it's so important is the media affects our lives. I base my decisions on how to vote for candidates based on the media. Media can destroy reputations. I think a reporter has no idea of the power they wield."

"I hope a lot of journalists come. There are a lot of issues with media that need examination. It takes little to change it."

Ethics in journalism rates a high priority in Falbaum's classroom at Wayne State University. It's a subject he wrote about in his first novel *A Matter of Precedents*.

Ten years as a reporter for The Detroit News gave Falbaum an insight to the inner workings of government and ethics in journalism. He eventually resigned from his position as chief of the City-County Bureau to write speeches and handle media relations for Michigan's then lieutenant governor. Today, he's president of Falbaum & Associates, a public and media relations firm in Farmington Hills.

"All my subjects are around journalism," said Falbaum. "I've spent 45-years in journalism. I have a passion for it but there are a lot of things wrong with it. I'd been thinking about this theme for some time, it's an expansion of the theme in the

novel that deals with ethics and was written three to four years before Enron occurred."

The subject of ethics is fresh in Please see THEATRE, B2



Berl Falbaum

CONCERT

Long-standing tradition: Preservation Hall Jazz Band brings the music of New Orleans to Southfield. The band first began playing in the historic hall 40 years ago.



Jazz band carries on New Orleans tradition

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
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Benjamin Jaffe grew up in New Orleans loving the jazz that flowed out of the clubs and onto the streets. For him, the music paints a picture of the history of the city where his father Allan and mother Sandra began holding jam sessions in a historic home which was then an art gallery. Built as a residence

in the heart of the French Quarter in 1760, the structure survived the War of 1812 as a tavern. Allan and Sandra bought the building in 1961 and turned it into a place to enjoy jazz, New Orleans style. Jaffe carries on the tradition of offering the music to locals and tourists every night of the year in Preservation Hall. He took over management of the establishment in 1993 when his mother semi-

retired after the death of his father.

A string bass player, Jaffe and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band bring the sounds of New Orleans to the Southfield Pavilion Thursday, May 30. The band recently recorded a CD at Preservation Hall to allow people to experience the New Orleans sound if they

Preservation Hall Jazz Band

When: 8 p.m. Thursday, May 30

Where: Southfield Pavilion, 26000 Evergreen
Tickets: \$25 reserved, \$22 general admission. Call (248) 354-9603

Please see BAND, B5