

Festival spotlights 'funky not junky' art

BY LINDA ANN CHONK
STAFF WRITER

Connie Mettler knew the minute she spotted Jim Shores' tin can people, the Georgia artist's work was perfect for the Jambalaya Street Art Fair. More than 40 exhibitors will show art with an edge in downtown Pontiac this weekend during the festival.

"It's a new event, sort of a New Orleans type of thing and we didn't want it to be like a serious art fair. It's funky not junky," said Mettler, who recently co-organized exhibitors for the Greektown Art Festival.

Unlike the Greektown festival, Mettler looked for artists like Shores, who works with unusual materials, for the Jambalaya Street Art Fair. Shores creates metal sculpture from found objects including squashed soda cans and old fuse boxes. He began showing his work 10 years ago, and has been doing art full-time for the last seven years. One of his



Kimberly Rorick's 'Painfully Pots' brighten mornings.

most popular works is an angel made from cast iron radiators used to heat homes.

"It's made from everyday things people throw away," said Shores. "I look at something and see potential. When I looked at the fuse box I saw something looking back at me. I put hair where wire used to come out and used glass fuses for eyes."

Shores mainly crafts faces and figurative sculpture from six-inches high to life-size and up. His squashed soda can lady walks a bunch of dogs called CanMines with heads made out of coffee cans. The leashes are chains knitted from pop can tabs.

"I've always had a knack for making one thing out of something else," said Shores. "My

JAMBALAYA ART FAIR

What: Dozens of exhibitors display fun, affordable arts and crafts including ceramics, fiber, glass, jewelry, metal work, painting, and printmaking

When: 4-10 p.m. Friday, May 30; 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, May 31; 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday, June 1

Where: Downtown Pontiac. For more information, call (248) 334-4600 or visit the Web site at www.pontiacfestivals.com

step father was a mechanic who operated a garage. I was intrigued by the trash trucks that would come in with things tied to the back and eventually

began visiting the dumps where I was amazed at the acres of things being bulldozed. I loved tearing things apart and seeing what's inside. Later I began making things. My scale faces are from scales people use to weigh themselves. People will come into my booth and guess what's that."

Art fair goers will have no problem knowing Kimberly Rorick's mugs are meant to brighten mornings. The Indiana potter nukes mugs that bring smiles to even the sleepiest head.

All of Rorick's porcelain work is meant to be used including the bowls, plates and tea pots which are primarily hand thrown.

"They're very colorful, bright and cheery," said Rorick who earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from Purdue University in Indiana in 1999.

"Some people say it's a reflection of my personality but I don't think I'm that bubbly. I'm inspired by a lot of dif-

ferent artists that are whimsical and then do them so they become my own.

"People usually come in my booth and say how cheery. They like to wake up to a coffee mug that brightens their day and starts it off on a good note."

Here's a list of the other artists Mettler is excited about.

■ Doug Phillips (Florida), whimsical furniture and accessories incorporating found objects

■ Becca Strachan (Indiana), hand-painted clothing with a modern twist

■ Nancy Bundy and Bob Paris (Florida), whimsical jewelry made from milliflore polymer clay

■ Wendy Carrington (New York), hand tailored one-of-a-kind hats, packable and crushable

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Blood, Sweat and Tears headlines festival

BY KEVIN BOOHN
STAFF WRITER

Big bands performing rock music? It's a familiar thing, if you're hip to the swing-influenced Brian Setzer Orchestra or the Cherry-Poppin' Daddies. But back in the late '60s, jazz-rock pioneers Blood, Sweat and Tears were the first to score hits *Spinning Wheel* and *You Made Me So Very Happy* by performing scorching rock with big band arrangements.

Roll over Tommy Dorsey - and tell Glenn Miller the news. "Blood, Sweat and Tears were the inventors of it," said Larry Dorr, band manager for 21 years. "A lot of people want to see where it started."

"To give the people what they want, the nine New York City-based band members leave home for weekend shows, doing 80-90 per year.

Blood, Sweat and Tears featuring original lead singer David Clayton-Thomas, will headline the JAMBALAYA Street Festival, May 30-June 1 in downtown Pontiac.

The band is scheduled to perform 9-30 p.m. Friday, May 30 at the Chrysler Stage.

Blood, Sweat and Tears traces its history to 1967 when

JAMBALAYA STREET FESTIVAL

When: 4 p.m. to midnight Friday, May 30; 11 a.m. to midnight, Saturday, May 31; 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday, June 1

Where: Downtown Pontiac

What it is: A kick-off to summer in Pontiac. The theme is a Taste of New Orleans as JAMBALAYA. Activities include live entertainment, fine arts show, carnival, Mardi Gras theme parade, Southern and Cajun foods.

The music: A wide range of bands perform on three festival stages, 4-11 p.m. Friday, noon-11 Saturday, and 1-8 p.m. Sunday. Featured performers include Spyro Gyra, 9:30 p.m. Saturday, Chrysler Stage; the Kentucky Headhunters 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Chrysler Stage; KEM 7 p.m. Sunday, Chrysler Stage; and Saoco, 9 p.m. Saturday, at the Latin Quarter stage.

For more information: And complete entertainment schedule, go to www.pontiacfestivals.com

Bob Dylan sidekick Al Kooper and drummer Bobby Colomby joined classically-trained jazz horn players with former members of The Blues Project, including guitarist Steve Katz.

The arrival of Clayton-Thomas - a blues singer from Canada - brought success.

Blood Sweat and Tears has sold more than 35 million albums and won several Grammy Awards.

After album sales peaked by the late '70s, several band members left to pursue their first music love - jazz, classical or conventional rock.

Clayton-Thomas is the only original band member, but Dorr said that's not unusual. "This band has always been a school for musicians," he said. "They learn what they have to do, cut their teeth and move on."

The lead singer himself has twice left the fold, to take a break from touring. Knowing the band had reached its creative peak, Dorr came on board in 1982 to oversee the change in Blood Sweat and Tears' focus to that of a live touring band.

The longest serving member next to Clayton-Thomas is band director Steve Guttman, who has worked 15 years on trumpet.

The show is a mix of the band's hits along with material featuring Clayton-Thomas on vocals. His soon to be released 9/11 tribute song *The Lights on Broadway* will also be featured.

The song evokes the sight of the Statue of Liberty covered with dust and ashes, as the lights of Broadway shine on through the smoke. It has been distributed to radio stations across the country. Broadcast royalties will go to the families of the victims of 9/11.

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