

THE BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC, BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN  
May 17, 1962 SECTION D

## Potpourri

by ROBIN BAHR



Good news about the opera. In spite of contradictory reports in last week's *Eccentric*, tickets—ranging from \$4.50 to \$12.50—are still available to three of the seven Metropolitan's performances. "Lucia di Lammermoor," "Salome," and "Cosi fan tutte." "Obstructed view" and "post seats" are available to all of the operas.

Also, for those who have not been able to purchase tickets of your choice, check with the box office on the night of each performance, in the event tickets may have been returned.

**TWELVE YEARS AGO** this month, Peggy and Albert de Salle moved into an old frame house on Maple and opened The Little Gallery. It has become one of the finest small, contemporary art galleries in Michigan.

The de Salles have consistently presented exhibits of outstanding quality—introducing to Birmingham unknown artists as well as prominent painters, sculptors, and potters from here and all over the country.

Two of their favorite and repeated exhibitors are being featured in a 12th anniversary show which opened Sunday.

**FRANCIS DE EDERLY**—a Hungarian-born artist who came to the U.S. in 1939 and was launched primarily by the de Salles, is represented by six paintings and 14 drawings—none of which have been exhibited in this area before.

Most of his work deals with people—strong powerful men and women painted in strong, almost masculine colors. The use of color, the sculptural fullness of the bodies, and particularly, to me, the attention he focuses on large working-like hands—give these people enormous vitality.

At the same time, there is simple grace and sadness about the faces and in the poses, that convey an aching sort of timelessness.

These are moving paintings that reflect skill and even more, De Ederly's overriding sympathy for the human being.

**THE SECOND** feature of the show is a collection of 40 (See **POTPOURRI**, 6-D)



## 'Overbearing Mother'

Enacting a psychodrama technique of the "Overbearing" mother are Mrs. Winnie Coffin, left, and Mrs. Jack Levan. The short skit was staged at Seaholm High School's annual Proscenium banquet last Thursday night. Psychodrama is a technique used for the cure of the mentally ill at Pontiac State Hospitals, as well as other institutions.

## Active Portrait Painter May Miss 1962 Festival

By WALLY FROMHART  
Arts Editor

The Birmingham Art Festival's most consistent contributor may not contribute this year, and the Festival would be left with a considerable void as a result.

Artis Lane, one of Birmingham-Bloomfield area's busiest portrait painter, has submitted about 45 portraits per year since 1960. But now, due to recent affiliation with Portraits Incorporated, New York City agency and gallery of 200 of the world's top painters, her time may be spread over too thin an area to supply work for the 1962 festival.

Artis has painted the portraits of more area residents than any other painter, and as to the quality of her work, BAAH vice-president Albert LaSalle says, "I've never known Artis to exhibit one of her works which I could consider less than excellent."

SHE WAS born and raised in Canada, won two Art scholarships, and after studying at Ontario College of Art and the University of Toronto, she came to Cranbrook Art Academy to work under Wally Mitchell.

Her professional start was gained in Birmingham, painting

personal and family portraits, and submitting numerous paintings to the Arts Festival. Among her past clients locally are Mr. and Mrs. George Romney, Henry Scripps Booth family, Fredrick A. Erbs, Howard Kresges, S. L. A. Marshalls and B. J. Naughtons.

**AFTER** A West Coast trip in which she did portraits of several prominent screen personalities, Artis went to New York to put together Richard Rodgers and Broadway star Mary Martin on canvas. There she joined the Portraits group.

Artis, a slim attractive woman in her mid-thirties, exhibits a quiet composure except in one instance. "And that is when my work is referred to as commercial art," she says. "I'm certainly nothing wrong with commercial art, but I am a portrait painter, and there is a very definite line of demarcation between the two forms."

This "definite" line of distinction between commercial and portrait painting is described by Miss Lane as "lying in the background and belief system, or soul of the artist." "I try to approach each portrait with sensitivity of line, color and design coupled with a meaningful likeness."



## 'Bloomington Newcomer' Tryouts

The script for "The Bloomington Newcomers" got undivided attention recently as casting began for the community-wide musical. Checking it over while actors read their lines are (from left) Martin Strandberg, Mrs. Charles Himelhoch, Director Mrs. John H. Warner, Mrs. W. C. Scott and Mrs. Edward P. Walter. A second tryout for all

Birmingham-Bloomfield residents interested in participating in the presentation was held at the Birmingham Community House May 12. "Bloomington Newcomers", by Dean Coffin and Mrs. Himelhoch, will be presented June 21-24 by the Birmingham Arts Festival. Rehearsals began Monday.

## BAF Tryouts End, 60 Actors Chosen

An advertising executive went to "Citizens for Romney" meeting and ended up capturing a lead. The script for "The Bloomington Newcomers" Saturday at Birmingham Community House.

The leading man of the musical comedy, to be shown nightly at the 1962 Birmingham Arts Festival, is Robert Dearth, 310 Martell Drive, Bloomfield Hills.

He joins a cast of 60, chosen after three tryout sessions. His co-star will be comedienne Winnie Coffin (Mrs. Dean Coffin), who delighted audiences at "The Bloomington Eccentrics" and is featured in several popular television series.

**OVER 100 ACTORS**, dancers and singers came from as far away as the sponsoring Bloomfield Art Association. Both local theatre groups, St. Dunstan's Guild and Birmingham Village Players, are cooperating in producing the musical. Rehearsals began Tuesday night.

**CURIOSITY LED** Dearth to drop in on the "Newcomers" tryouts Saturday. "While I was at the meeting upstairs, I heard good voices singing below," he said, "so I stopped in to see who it was." Dearth said he was impressed by the "Newcomers" music written by Mrs. Charles Himelhoch and the lyrics of author Dean Coffin. He tried out for the role of Herbert Rice and won it.

Mrs. Coffin, 1159 Puritan, Bir-

mingham, plays his wife, Fannie. The plot of the suburban spoof centers around the twosome as they become newcomers to Bloomington and its 215 organizations.

**THEIR STAGE** children will be Anne d'Yverre, 541 Wimbeldon, and Jeffrey Gilbert, 656 S. Chester, both of Birmingham. Other important roles went to John A. Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Francis J. Matosow and Mary Ellen (Mrs. Arthur N.) Hill.

L. James Schneider, general chairman of the musical, said it would be a "real community-wide effort."

"Only about half those who showed up for tryouts were members of Birmingham Village Players and St. Dunstan's Guild," Schneider said. "We had a tremendous turn-out of talented kids from Groves and Seaholm High Schools."

Discussing the difficult choices facing the casting committee, Mrs. Carl T. Blauman said, "We wished the show could have been rewritten to include them all."

**Lillian Rodgers' Art In Lake Orion Show**

Works of members of Renee Radell's Saturday morning MSO class will be on display May 20-26 in connection with the Lake Orion Art Show.

Included in the exhibition will be a work by Lillian Rodgers, of Birmingham.

Miss Rodgers has had her art shown in the Birmingham Art Festival and the Montgomery County (Maryland) Art Association shows.

## Local Best Sellers

**FICTION**  
Ship of Fools—Katherine Anne Porter  
Agony and the Ecstasy—Irvine Stone  
Prologue to Love—Taylor Caldwell

**NON-FICTION**  
In the Clearing—Robert Frost  
The Rothschilds—Frederic Morton  
Frank Buckman's Secret—Peter Howard



**WORKING ON A SKETCH** for a future oil painting is Artis Lane, one of the Birmingham-Bloomfield area's busiest portrait painters. She has done approximately 50 local portraits in addition to being the Birmingham Art Festival's most quantitative exhibit contributor for the past three years. When not working in Birmingham, Artis accepts portrait commissions anywhere in the United States.

## Book Best Seller Third Week in Row

"SHIP OF FOOLS," Katherine Anne Porter, Atlantic-Little Brown, \$6.50.

Reviewed by Margaret R. Moran  
Biographical material about Katherine Anne Porter, an American writer noted for her short stories, lists among her works as of 1942, the anticipated first novel, "No Safe Harbor"—which book, in fact, only now appears, as "Ship of Fools."

Its publication after so long a time was actually started in 1932 has caused a stir of applause from the book world. It has been accorded the prompt attention of the foremost critics and has been selected as a Book of the Month.

Miss Porter has never been one to rush at her writing. We can be grateful to her for the fine craftsmanship which results.

"SHIP OF FOOLS" is a book that addresses itself to the mind, rather than to the emotions, with the detachment of a newspaper reporter. Smooth and cool, the description of each day of a sea voyage from Mexico to Germany is conducted in prose that flows as impartially as the water beneath the ship.

Events, and especially the human climate, are vividly rendered in a broad and appropriate choice of words. This is not a book with a hero. The assortment of persons set to rub against each other in the artificial confinement of the vessel, offers scarcely more than one, for whom the reader has sympathy.

**THEY ARE** A second class st and probably do represent the majority of us on life's journey to the grave—the best with distinct flaws and the worst with little imagination in their wickedness.

This is not a story of action. The play of events is purely to let us examine the participants. It is not exciting, nor is it optimistic. What it is, is a skillfully executed picture of human relationships, human self-concern and unimpaired.

The opening scene is Vera Cruz. It is perfectly described with such a burden of discomforts that a reader becomes as anxious as the

embarking passengers to get aboard the Vera and into the story.

**LEAVING PORT**, the pure is a stroll, individuals gradually assume names and begin to clutch their identifications with wary jealousy. Soon, however, everyone is herded enough to take up gossip, and we are led from here into investigating each personality in short episodes.

As we poke into their thoughts with the detached attention of an eavesdropper, we realize anew how complex each person is, and what a basic commodity we have in our vanity.

Miss Porter has given her unprepossessing characters enough extra foliage to keep the reader's interest, and admits to becoming attached to them herself.

**SHE HAS** captured with brilliant accuracy a clout of human relationships, but emphasizes throughout the basic love of each person for himself and his reluctance to become involved with others.

This distaste produces an inertia that contributes more to history than do all the small disorganized actions labelled "events." While the ship completes the crossing, the passengers complete nothing, cross nothing; the same quarrels go on, the same prejudices prevail, the same hopes meet the same disappointment.

The sneers are given and taken; and if we can't be optimistic, at least we are (Miss Porter implies) all in the same boat.

## Area Artist Named to SI

**VIRGIL EXNER**

Mr. Virgil M. Exner of Birmingham, was recently elected Artist-Member of the Society of Illustrators.

Society President, Stephan Dehams, made the membership presentation at a dinner in New York City attended by Mr. and Mrs. Exner.

The Society is made up of such prominent men as Norman Rockwell, Saturday Evening Post cover artist; Jon Whitcomb, Robert Fawcett, and many other story and book illustrators. Noted members of the past have included Charles Dana Gibson and James Montgomery Flagg.

Mr. Exner is Styling Consultant for Chrysler International and has recently established a creative design organization with his son, Virgil Jr. The new firm is located in Birmingham.

## Pierrot Plans WSU Lecture

For those travel-thirsty Birmingham residents an information special is now at hand.

George Pierrot, founder of the World Adventure Series, will give a "how to do it" lecture for travel-minded citizens, editors, and photographers at Wayne State University's Community Arts Auditorium May 18, at 8 p.m.

The Arthur C. Stenius Committee, sponsoring the event, will present Pierrot with an award for his services in the field of audiovisual education.

In his lecture Pierrot will recount anecdotes he has collected through the years from explorers and photographers who have filmed the world for Detroit audiences. He will also offer useful hints to persons interested in keeping documentary films of their travels.

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