

America House Opens Branch in Birmingham

By EVELINE OEN
Star Editor

There's a stir among local craftsmen—and there will soon be a stir among local crafts lovers.

The cause? "America House—Michigan"—the first branch of New York's "America House"—to be opened in the nation—will be here in Birmingham. It will open May 6.

A franchise for the branch has been granted to Englander's and construction is already under way on

the "crafts gallery" which will be located at 555 E. Maple, adjacent to Englander's.

ALTHOUGH RUN by Englander's, "America House—Michigan" will be operated more or less as an entity, according to Miss Leta Carroll, advertising director for Englander's.

Basically, the new shop will have crafts exhibitions almost continually (with emphasis particularly upon Michigan and North Central

area craftsmen) in addition to displays of the stock on hand. Little stock will be handled on consignment; most will have been purchased from the artist.

STOCK WILL be acquired through two channels: first, works of selection, and second, works from the branch's board of selection, which would already have passed through its board of selection. Five of the eight members on

the Michigan board of selection are from the Birmingham-Bloomfield area, and the fifth, Edith, ceramics and enamel instructor for the University Center for Adult Education and The Community

Others NOT from this area on the board are architect Alden Dow, Midland; Michael Vizzini, Oak Park, president of the Michigan Silversmith's Guild and head

of the metalcraft department at the Society of Arts and Crafts; and Beverly Nixson, president of the interior design co-ordinator associated with Englander's.

Local craftsmen have been invited to submit work for display (and sale) in conjunction with the store's opening. The board of selection will meet April 22 to jury the show. (Entry blanks may be obtained by writing to America

House, 555 E. Maple, Birmingham.)

THE INTERIOR and exterior of the Birmingham "America House" were designed by the late David Campbell, president of the American Craftsmen's Council. He died about two weeks ago.

The establishment will be reminiscent of the New York shop—also designed by Campbell—which is located on 53rd Street, across from the Museum of Modern Art

and the Museum of Contemporary Crafts.

The New York "America House" has cooperated closely with the American Craftsmen's Council; its stated purpose is "to obtain greater recognition for the creative work of outstanding American craftsmen."

President of the board of directors of "America House" is Mrs. Vanderbilt Webb. She is also chairman of the board of the American Craftsmen's Council.

THE BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC, BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN
April 4, 1963 SEC. D

Curtain Rises for Three 'Opening Nights'

Suspense Kept Within 'Design'

Reviewed by
ANNETTA WÖNNBERGER

Between-the-acts speculation on the identity of the villain ran high at the Friday night opening of the Birmingham Village Players' current thriller "Design for Murder," by George Batson.

Performing before a full house, benefit audience sponsored by the Bloomfield Farms Garden Club, the Players held the first-nighters in suspense until the final curtain.

As the action moved from the rather static trivia of an end-of-party drawing room situation to the unanticipated ending, each character suggested possible clues for suspicion. In spite of a slow start, the performance gained momentum as the cast built toward the climatic curtains of the second and third acts.

PAGE GILRAY lent her own interpretation to the role of Celia Granger, the part played by Tallulah Bankhead on Broadway. Neatly avoiding the trap of stylistic imitation, Page portrayed the proud but impoverished Celia as a woman of sincere charm and dignity.

Competent in their supporting roles were Peg Reid as the winningly scatter-brained Louisa Cortlandt and Mary Lou Banes as the sophisticated Martha Brand. Katy Spinning played the housekeeper, Mrs. Hamilton, with a finesse which helped materially in building suspense.

Bill Seeback as the chauffeur Monte, an opportunistic Dun Just displayed his versatility in creating a personality quite different from his last success as a much maligned Mamma's Boy. On the other hand, Ben Benson's suave and slightly sinister characterization of David Granger served to enhance his previously established image of the "Handsome Young Man."

NO WHODUNIT would be complete without a cop, a detective and a maid.

Howard Thomsen was seen briefly but convincingly as the law, while Fran Matousek provided just

the right amount of urbanity and aggressiveness to "Design for Murder's" Private Eye.

Instead of one maid, "Design for Murder" has two. Ann Walker as the flirtatious Kathy and Vivian Ross as the mysterious Nora Taylor proved the truth of the old theatrical saw that there are no small roles. Both actresses made their parts significant with their vitality and skill.

As frequently happens, the production staff outnumbered the cast. The play was ably produced and directed by Warren Hersey, Gertrude Thomsen, and Betty Kegel. The efforts of Jean and Bud Detweiler, Louise Hersey, Audre

(See SUSPENSE, 2-D)



Eccentric Photo by Bill Thom

Capturing the Image

With two Bernard Buffet oil portraits to serve as style guides, members of a Bloomfield Art Association children's class taught by Betty Conn tried doing portraits of Mrs. James J. Yaw, co-director of Pine Arts in Jacobson's, which arranged the sneak preview for the children. Hard at work on his drawing is Craig Spangler, 8, of 1465 Sodon Lake Drive, Bloomfield Hills. After the lesson in French style and technique, the young portrait painters indulged in a little French pastry and pink lemonade.

BAA Artist-Craftsmen Exhibition Honors Mrs. Eliel Saarinen

An invitational exhibit of crafts by 42 artist-craftsmen will open Sunday at the Birmingham Art Center; the show will run through April 28.

"Outstanding Michigan Craftsmen in Weaving, Ceramics and Metal, Honoring Loja Saarinen" is an exhibition featuring jewelry, pottery, rugs, wall hangings and fabrics.

Co-chairmen of the exhibition are Glen Kaufman, head of the weaving department at Cranbrook Academy of Art, and Arlen Linn, weaver.

A RECEPTION, which is open to the public, for the artists will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday at the art center.

Work by Loja Saarinen of Vaughn Road, Bloomfield Hills, will be featured in a special exhibit to honor her, held in conjunction with the craftsmen show. Mrs. Saarinen, widow of architect Eliel Saarinen and mother of the late Eero Saar-

inen, established the weaving department at Cranbrook in 1925, three years after she came there with her husband who headed the academy's school of architecture. She was head of the department for 14 years.

MRS. SAARINEN was also one of the first artist-craftsmen to create and coordinate interior fabric in collaboration with an architect so that in the completed building, every detail was part of an integrated unit. Kingswood School Cranbrook is an example of such an effort and is a Saarinen "family project."

One-man exhibitions of her work have been held at the Architectural League of New York, the Detroit Institute of Art, the Norfolk Museum of Art and Science, Cranbrook Academy of Art, the Toledo Museum of Art, the Cincinnati Museum of Art, at Northwestern University and at Berea College.

as a birthday present unaware of the future complications.

WHEN OLIVER begins to wear his dog suit to visit neighbors, to take walks and to work, a family crisis develops. "The family" is his in-laws who are the prominent Stoddard's in town, who, among things, control the local bank where Ollie is employed.

For a brief time he is persuaded to hang up the suit and he is promoted in the bank, but this merely gives him a case of discontent. Finally, he breaks the leash that has held him to nine years of pleasing the in-laws and resolves to go to the woods of Oregon and be the forester he had originally studied and planned to be.

Happily ending the play, Martha decides to get a poodle hair cut and go with him.

RAY MARX, the man in the dog suit, acted with a fine sense of control and timing and therefore turned in a believable and highly amusing character. Marion Caskey as the attractive wife, was at her best in the scenes of argument. In fact, these scenes offered the biggest laughs of the evening.

Playing Martha's sister was Margaret Thomas whose facial reactions carried her character well. Likewise, Barbara Haynes, a tall statuesque blonde, delivered her few comic lines with smiling ease and was especially scintillating when intoxicated.

MR. BEAL, in the play the man who had escaped the chains of social conformity by wearing three hats and on two occasions rose to the ceiling and the ceiling was handled with comfortable poise by Chet Hard. He would simply walk into the Walling home and find comfort in talking with the dog.

Less convincing but no less poised was Doug Van Dyke who portrayed the young man who almost got pushed into the doghouse of a family demands, but he was saved by the example of Oliver.

OTHER MEMBERS in the cast included the demanding, strong-minded brother-in-law played by George Spindler, the ever ranting brother handled by Paul Berggren, the stately mother enacted by Marie Bates, and the pampered playboy son, carried humorously by Paul Settle.

The small stage was handsomely decorated and neatly designed by Harold Geiger as were the lights and sound well executed by Don Odle.

HAVING TO place and move as many as nine characters at once was no small task but it was handled with deft skill by the director (See PLAYERS, 2-D)

ARTIST - CRAFTSMEN whose work will be on display in the main part of the exhibit are J. T. Abernathy, Adela Akers, Eileen Auvil, Russell and Susan Bort, Ruce Blyth, Anna K. Burgess, Mary Elizabeth Crawford, Gwynne David, Richard DeVore.

Robert H. Diebholz, Murray and I found the answer in hiring a medical and telling our driver to take us through the markets. The

Earl Krentzlin, Richard B. Leach, Ethel K. Lewis, Arlen Linn, Hiroko Oh Gordon Grear, Dorothy Pfeiffer, Nancy Manes Plum, James H. Powell, Charlotte C. Quinn, Margaret Schlarf, Rosemarie Simonon, Anna Smith, John and Susan Stephenson, Katherine Ux, Norma M. Wiener, Tom Wolf and Marie Woo.

The exhibit will be open from 2 to 5 p.m. daily except Mondays.

Reviewed by
E. M. BRONER

It was drizzling outside Friday night when the St. Dunstan's Guild opened their presentation of "Blood, Sweat and Stanley Poole," but inside the playhouse all was clear weather. The performances

Professor Lectures On Comic Tradition In American Letters

A public lecture on "The Comic Tradition in American Literature" will be given by Myron Simon, faculty member of the University of Michigan Dearborn Center, at the Southfield Public Library at 8 p.m. Friday.

The lecture will be open to the public without charge and has been arranged as a community service by the Friends of the Southfield Public Library.

Simon is a lecturer in English at the Dearborn Center. He is the author of articles on American literature and literary criticism; is a consultant with the textbook division of the Harcourt, Brace Publishing Co., and is a member of the advisory committee of the Metropolitan Detroit Bureau of School Studies.

SEE SINGAPORE FROM PEDICAB

Couple Has Wild Tour of Marketplace

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the seventh in a series of dispatches "The Eccentric" from Donald Dennis and his wife, Margaret, as they make a seven-month trip around the world. Dennis teaches art at Bloomfield Hills High School; his wife is a visiting teacher in the same school system.

The following is a summary of the couple had spent a few days there.

If it were only possible to record all of the smells and sounds of the market place and spice this to our films, then maybe we could capture the excitement and activity of the Chinese markets.

... Here in Singapore, Marmie and I found the answer in hiring a medical and telling our driver to take us through the markets. The

conveyance is a tricycle with a sideseat almost large enough for two adults and a small seat for a child.

Safely and firmly seated, our movie camera pointed straight over the cyclist's shoulder, we were off for one of the wildest, most colorful rides imaginable.

THE DRIVER wanted to be sure that we were exposed to enough to make good pictures, and he delighted in "belling" his way into areas so tight that we were brushing stalls on both sides at one time.

Often we would "dead end" into a mass of confusion consisting of Chinese, Indians, fruits, vegetables, fish, fowl and mutilated meats—all together like a tossed salad.

All the while our guide was shouting, Marmie laughing and my camera grinding.

UP ONE ALLEY and down the

next—and the sights, sounds and smells were overwhelming.

On our left, three pajama-clad women were arguing about the price of bean sprouts; on our right, several men were squatting over a tub of hot water full of chickens and feathers; in front of us, a peddler was pushing a cart laden with bananas, oranges, pineapple and melons, and always behind us were the children shouting and waving at the crazy foreigners.

ROUNDING a corner, we would first notice the buildings on both sides laden with clothes poles full of the family wash.

Then, with a closer perspective, we were witness to the slaughter of ducks, chickens and pigeons on request—or a heavy set Chinese gentleman, shirt tail flying, complete with guster, shorts and sandals, admiring a large, squirming

sea turtle being held aloft by an equally rotund salesman.

Smells of all descriptions—many completely new to us—were in every breeze, and when the breezes stopped, these smells were even greater.

Such was our tour of Chinese markets, one we wouldn't have missed for the world.

ONE DAY of walking through the bazzars and along the waterfront makes you aware of the fact that Singapore is the melting pot between India and China.

The fishermen and produce peddlers all seem to be Chinese while the "street merchants" are the tall, dark-skinned and heavily bearded Indians. By contrast, the Chinese wear pajama-styled dungarees and wide-brimmed straw hats with straw "bells" or "chimes" which the Indians are turbaned and, unwrapped.

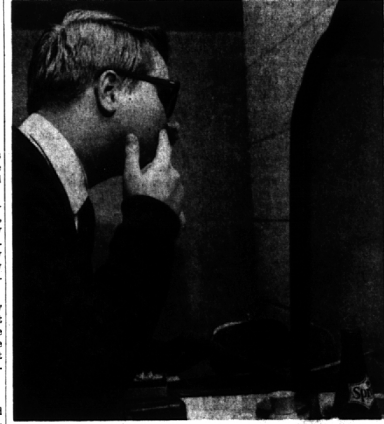
Somewhere in between is the short, dark Malaysian with a colorful shirt and "lava lava" or sarong.

IT'S DIFFICULT for the tourist to walk by the shops without being bodily pulled in to examine the merchandise or to be followed several yards up the street by a high-pitched salesman who lowers the price on anything from small gems to bolts of cloth as you walk.

... The waterfront is a busy place with ships of all descriptions moving in and out at all times. Observations cause us to believe that the port of Singapore has as much traffic as Hong Kong but lacks the color, excitement and mingling junk and island backdrop.

WE HIRED a small diesel-powered sampan for a cruise around the harbor and for a closer look at the activity aboard the vessels and yachts lying at anchor. Most of the traffic seems to be the loading and unloading of freight and passengers from ships further out at anchor.

... We leave for Saigon and the French atmosphere Tuesday morning. This means another change in traffic direction, and we find this our biggest problem of adjustment: which way do you look first before crossing the street?



ECCENTRIC PHOTO

Backstage

"Just a little more grease paint right here and . . ." mumbles Dick Orton of 1811 Riverside Drive, Beverly Hills. Dick, a sophomore at Groves High School, played the supporting role of Mr. Edwards in the high school's Dramatic Club production of "Kind Lady," staged last weekend in the high school. The play, a psychological mystery, was adapted by Edward Chodorov from a book by Hugh Walpole. Miss Katherine Bigge directed the production.



THE WATERFRONT of Singapore is a busy place with ships from almost every nation and peddlers of many different backgrounds and attire mingle and trade.

chored in the bays to shore and vice-versa. Also along the waterfront, merchants, fishermen and peddlers of many different backgrounds and attire mingle and trade.