

FROM THE BOOKCASE

# It's So Funny, 'Reuben, Reuben'

REUBEN, REUBEN by Peter DeVore; Little Brown & Co., Boston, 1964; 416 pp.; \$5.95.

Reviewed by MARIAN TRAINOR  
"Reuben, Reuben" is an outrageously funny book!

It is also an outrageously seductive one. Just as the reader finds himself rolling merrily down the rollicking road of laughter, he is brought up short by the realization that there is something more here than just humor. Behind the farce, the parody, the language play, the absurd characters and the nutty situations lies the "raison d'être" of the book—the uncovering of a world in which "nobody knows how to love," an intimate close-up of the human batch of mating, a world in which "the individual prospers at the expense of the pair."

THE SETTING for this verbal equivalent of silent movie slapstick is one which the author has exposed in previous novels—a swatch of country along the Connecticut shore east of New York.

Among the absurdities of this particular exurbia dwells a Connecticut chicken farmer, an alien in the country of his birth. "I stayed on at the old homestead and saw the town where I was born grow from 1,800 neighbors to 20,000 strangers—strangers who regard me as the outsider."

Yet while he views the invasion with quiet ferocity, he also is helplessly attracted by the glittering facade of life as it is led with the proper status props.

He even adopts their language to the bewilderment of his down-to-earth daughter-in-law and her

mother who admit that the phrases make a nice jingle but are puzzled because the words are meaningless.

SPOTWORTH HAS a pretty good time of it until he involves his granddaughter with his new-found amusement of surveying life as it is lived around the swimming pools. It is then that we find that the story is not all frolic.

McGland who has been enjoying the hospitality of a local matron, whose husband, a communications expert has not been able to communicate at home, takes over Spofford and the story.

McGland's horizon is bounded by his talent, his thirst, his disdain for convention and his appetite for women. Spofford's lovely grand- (See BOOK, 8-D)



NEW WAVE IN SCULPTURE GETS FINISHING TOUCHES FROM DON SNYDER  
Work to adorn advanced design home in California.

# Stainless Steel Inspires Sculptor

Until just recently a huge piece of sculpture in gleaming stainless steel sheet occupied the whole of Birmingham artist Don Snyder's tiny workshop-studio.

This sculpture, called "The Ninth," curves upward and outward like an ocean wave, which is just what inspired it.

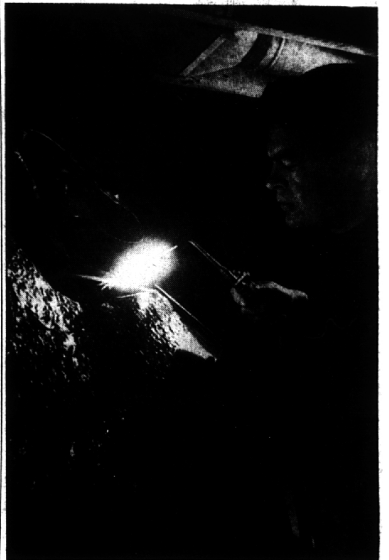
Snyder of 1064 Abbey did the work on a commission from the Stainless and Strip Division of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp., Detroit. It is destined to become the focal point of exterior decoration for an advanced design concrete and stainless steel home now being erected on the California coast at Laguna Niguel.

FACES OF Snyder's welded people sometimes seem to change expression while you look at them, as in the case of his foot-high Don Quixote.

In others, a blending of various metals results in contrasts of color and texture, delicately mingled. Snyder looks everywhere for his materials; any piece of scrap metal may suddenly appeal to him as having great potential. As he notes:

"I'm always on the lookout for old mufflers dropped from passing cars. They have some of the greatest possibilities you can imagine. The texture and partly rusted surfaces are perfect for my kind of work."

Snyder, 38, sells the work of other artists, as the representative of a commercial studio, in order to eventually gain his goal of becoming a fine artist himself.



IN EARLIER STAGE, WITH WELDING TORCH B'ham artist and 'The Ninth' ocean wave.

# Student Display to Be on the House

An open house featuring displays of work by students in arts and crafts classes at The Community House, Birmingham, will be held April 30-May 2.

Hours for the free show are 12 noon to 9 p.m. April 30, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. May 1 and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 2.

According to Karl F. Emmanuel, Jr., director of educational activities at The Community House, 380 S. Bates, the following classes will participate:

CERAMICS or CREATIVE POTTERY taught by Mrs. Edith Foster. Mrs. Foster, with 18 years of teaching in this field, encourages a realistic approach to the craft. She teaches her students to "throw on

a wheel" as well as hand methods. Basic construction, slip decoration, stenciling, textural methods, glazing, over and underglazing, and loading and firing a kiln are all part of the course.

Included in the show will be wheel-thrown pots, bowls, sculptural pieces and some colorful wall tiles.

CREWEL EMBROIDERY Mrs. Joanne Jacobson is the instructor for this course. Using the Erica Wilson method (which was a feature in Life Magazine recently), Mrs. Jacobson teaches her beginning class no less than 50 basic stitches.

Crewel embroidery is traditionally done using lightweight wool

on a heavy linen twill; however, other fabrics are often substituted today. The advanced students utilize additional techniques in their projects, many of which will be on display.

Some of the items included are an intricately detailed owl done in shades from pink to magenta, a large wall hanging of the Partridge in a Pear Tree, a man's vest adorned with game birds and a variety of wall hangings, samplers and seat cushions.

DECOUPAGE taught by Mrs. Marie Mitchell. Dating back to the 17th century, this ancient art was originated by Marie Antoinette, who was intrigued with the Japanese lacquer techniques. Decoupage, simply, is the art of cutting, pasting and lacquering papers. Building up designs, textures and effects are part of this art and sometimes 30-40 coats of varnish are applied to obtain the resultant mellowing of color tones.

With unlimited possibilities, this art is applied to containers, furniture, trays, table tops and basket-type handbags, of which a sampling of each will be included in the show.

FLOWER ARRANGING Mrs. Frances Calhoun takes her students through the seasonal paces of flower arrangement.

Her winter classes emphasize designs using a minimum of materials while the other classes can utilize the more abundant fresh flower supply. Mrs. Calhoun's course even includes the assembling of terrariums and dish gardens as well as dried arrangements. Mrs. Calhoun is the current pres-

ident of the Michigan Division Woman's National Farm & Garden Graduate Judges & Teachers.

FURCRAFT directed by Mrs. Reggie Wyatt. Being a designer and model has given Mrs. Wyatt the eye for color, form and style so necessary in carrying out this talent effectively.

Her students learn to cut, sew, stretch, restyle and line their furs, most of which have come from diligent searching at rummage sales.

Mrs. Wyatt's display in the open house will include fur hats for men and women, jackets, sweaters, handbags, coats and belts. Also included will be red fur collars, made by two Community House students whose husbands brought back the furs from a hunting trip.

GOLD - SILVERSMITHING & ENAMELING Mrs. Thelma Anderson is the instructor of this craft. The variety of materials and applications will be well-represented in Mrs. Anderson's display at the open house.

Included will be gold and silver (See DISPLAY, 7-D)

## Etcetera

By ETHEL SIMMONS  
Arts Editor

Viva la France! Well, on the whole, yes. Thayer Soule showed his color films "Footloose in France" at The Community House Friday and Saturday, and these displayed the country most attractively.

And while Soule said he enjoyed the profiles French men dinner, with its entree of chicken in wine, he related quite casually that he didn't care too much for French cooking.

This remark was only slightly on the heels of a comment about the French and dancing made Thursday afternoon by Tom over a cup of coffee in The Raven Gallery.

PASLE OPENED April 14 with his blues and ballads program. He has lived in Paris and says that it is a myth about the French and their great dancing.

When you sing the blues, he said, they get up and dance. Pasle said the French think anything with four beats is danceable. Other comments from Soule and Pasle covered locales closer to home. Soule, who tours the world making films to show them to national lecture circuit, said his home wasn't far from here—in Rochester.

BUT THE ROCHESTER down the road a piece from Birmingham wasn't what he had in mind. To Soule, who explained he meant Rochester, N. Y., evidently the East is just a hop, skip and jump.

At The Raven, Pasle was outspoken in his comments about Detroit which he called a troubled transient kind of city. He reported that Birmingham is very nice and reminds him of the area around Thayer Heights.

But he said there's more elbow room here. It's clean, with room for air to blow down the street.



AUTHOR LAURA Barr Lougee sprays a spider web which she will add to her collection. Mrs. Lougee, who lives in Maine, formerly designed exhibits at the Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills. Much

of the writing of her book and preparation of illustrations was done at her studio, "The Bug House," near Parsonsfeld. Husband Arthur designed and supervised the book's production.

FROM THE BOOKCASE

# Former Resident Details Web Collecting as Hobby

THE WEB OF THE SPIDER by Laura Barr Lougee; Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, 1964; 44 pp., about 48 illustrations; \$5.50.

Reviewed by CAROLYN HALL

"Spiders are the only animals except man to make traps to catch their food . . . they are the only ones to make the traps of silk."

So begins the Cranbrook Institute of Science's newest publication, "The Web of the Spider" by Laura Barr Lougee. It is a non-technical but original treatise revealing the marvels of a spider web.

The spider's body, equipped with bundles of tiny silk nozzles, can mix a blend of silk suitable for his needs, i.e., a strong strand for the all-important drag-line or a viscous glue to entrap a fly.

One spider spins a web and announces it with a glossy silk. He plucks the strands with his foot like a bass player to distribute the sticky droplets along the strand.

SPIDERS MUST BE clever builders to cope with ever-shifting site conditions. Their webs are beautiful patterns of tension and flexibility.

mere mechanics of gathering and supporting the fragile constructions absorbed my attention. Soon, however, the artistry and decorative qualities of the webs became a deep fascination, and I collected webs as other collect paintings."

"Finally without formulating a plan, I began what became an extended study and observation of living spiders, especially their habits and talents with silk."

THE TEXT OF the book is comprehensive, yet simple, appealing to both young and older readers. It tells of the spider's silk-making anatomy, the different kinds of silk and the different kinds of webs.



THIS DESIGN backdrops introduction case to the exhibit on spiders and their webs, from Mrs. Lougee's collection, through June at the institute.

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