



Mrs. Joel Jaffe of West Orange and Mrs. Richard Kohn of South Orange discuss family artwork.



Jane Bearman displays one of her collage mediums entitled '5'.

Livingston artist excels in varied choice of media

By EILEEN WATKINS

Work by Livingston artist Jane Bearman seems to show up everywhere — perhaps because she is adept at so many styles.

Introducing her at a meeting of the Friends of the Children Institute in East Orange, Marlene Kohn, the program co-chairman, made this distinction: "Most artists choose to work in one medium. Jane works in many."

Bearman's appearance before the group was appropriate for several reasons. The Children's Institute tries to help emotionally disturbed children become outgoing and creative. Bearman has not only written and illustrated ten books for children, but they are the subject of many of her compositions — playing instruments, romping with animals and cooperating happily with one another.

She was asked to discuss the question, "What Makes an Artist Create Art?" From the start she admitted, "No one really knows. Someone once asked Freud, 'What is creativity?' Even he had to say, 'It's a mystery.'"

"Other people have tried to explain it through a few basic principles."

Bearman, a graduate of the University of Minnesota, cited some of these. "First, creativity is a fresh way of seeing things. The way Alexander Calder looked at leaves on a tree fluttering in the breeze, and thought of constructing a mobile."

"Next, it is heightened perception — the ability to make connections between situations and objects, and to react. But the most important factor is the courage and drive to put these ideas into action."

"Most people stop at this point. They say, 'I'd like to do that' but never really try."

She quoted Einstein's explanation of creativity — "A childlike need for play, combined with a childlike desire for recognition" — and added that studies have shown there is no link between creativity and intelligence.

Using slides of her own work, Bearman explained to the approximately 60 women present some of the forms of artistic expression she uses — drawing and collage, ink and watercolor, oils and acrylics.

She displayed some work she had brought along to illustrate her other methods — relief painting, woodcutting and other graphics. Most of the works concerned the themes of children, birds and the Old Testament.

A tapestry done in applique from drapery remnants drew murmurs of admiration from her audience. One woman, referring to the bright flower patterns and the central figure of a dancing child, remarked, "It looks so alive!"

"Any of you can do this, if you can sew," Bearman assured them. She admitted she herself can't use a sewing machine. "I cut the pieces and my husband did all the actual stitching. I'm very unmechanical."

To further illustrate this point, she told a story behind one of her woven tapestries. "My weaving teacher told me I was a better painter, and suggested I stick to a simple loom."

Her favorite medium is collage, and most of her larger works are composed of tinted pieces of rice paper applied to a canvas with plastic liquid adhesive.

She submitted one scene, children of various nationalities playing musical instruments, to a UNICEF campaign. They rejected it reluctantly, she said, because they already had too many American entries. Since then she has been using the scene on a smaller scale for her own holiday greeting cards.

The YM-YWHA of West Orange, where she teaches multi-media, paintings and life drawing, uses another of her groupings on the cover of its official pamphlet.

Her collage style adapts equally well to her stylized renditions of numbers and to realistic landscapes, where

they lend a dramatic sense of depth.

One of her more recent forays took her into decoupage. A friend asked her to decorate a Shaker table that opened into a bench. Bearman did a self-portrait of herself, dressed as Queen of Hearts, to look as if she is sitting on the bench. The piece is shown in the book "Contemporary Decoupage" by Thelma R. Newman, Crown Publishers Inc., New York, 1972.

Bearman went on to decoupage an old school desk. "I cut illustrations from children's books and hand-colored them, in the medieval tradition," she said. "I applied them to the desk top with 10 coats of polyurethane."

A member of the Painters and Sculptors Society of New Jersey, she is represented in their current show at the Lever house in New York. She displays a wood "assemblage" or construction, as well as two of her large rice-paper collages.

The Livingston artist and mother is always eager to explore new modes of expression, and seldom spends an idle moment. She showed the group two pillows and a wall hanging, results of her new interest in needlework.

She said, "I learned from a library book, while I was sitting in front of the television set watching Watergate."



Artist Jane Bearman of Livingston with her 'Jerusalem' artwork.

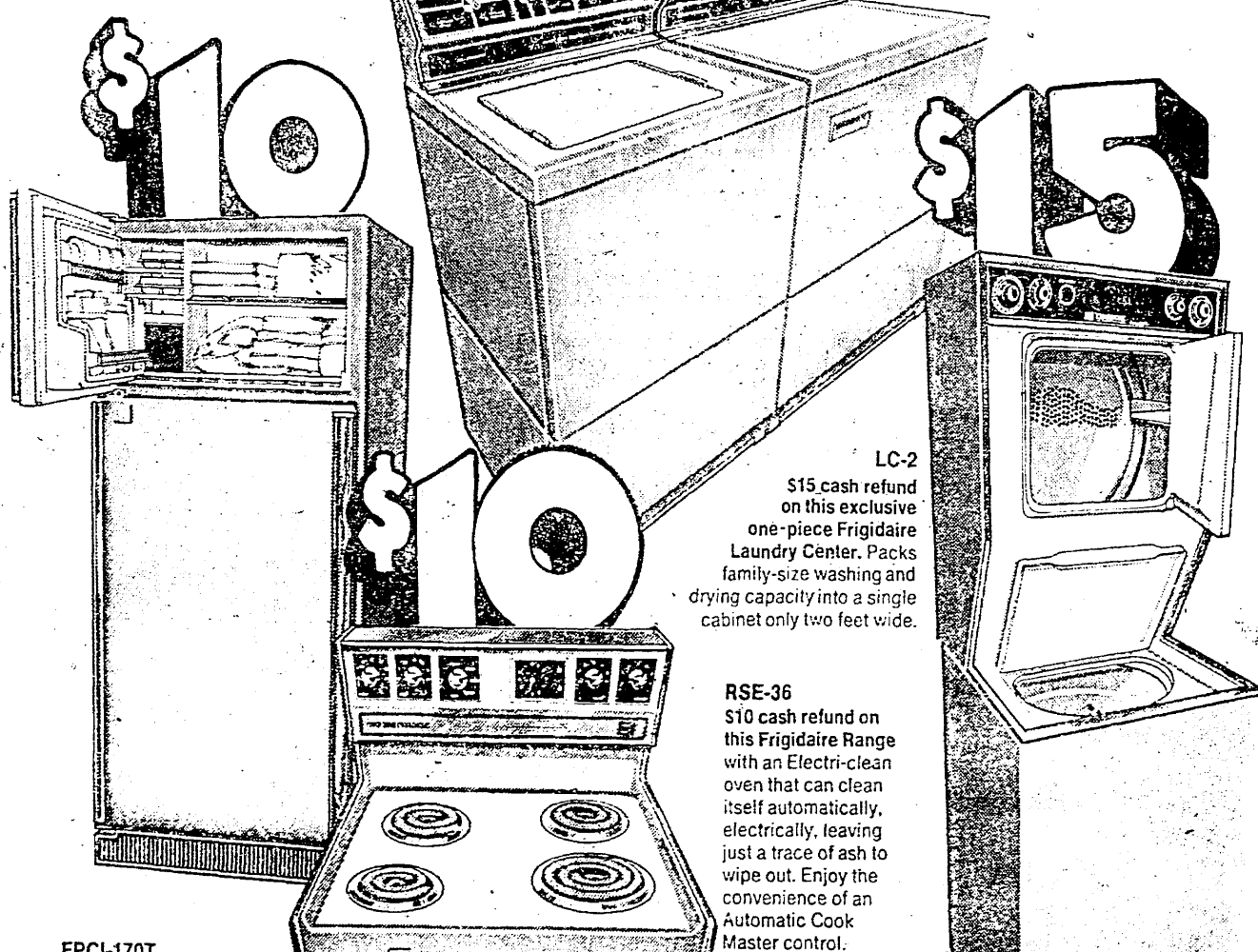
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Q The threshold of the door at the main entrance to our house is badly worn as it's probably twenty years old, or older. How can I replace it?
 L.H.G. Fairless Hills, Pa.

A The part of a doorway that receives the most wear is the saddle, or threshold. To remove a worn saddle, swing the door wide open. If more clearance is needed, take the door off. If necessary, remove the door stops from the jamb. Lift the old saddle with a pry bar or the claws of a hammer. If the saddle is badly worn, it may be easier to split the wood with a chisel and remove it in pieces. If the saddle extends under the jambs, try to remove it intact. If you can't, cut the saddle in three sections, with a back saw, remove the middle section, then work out the end pieces. Where possible, use the old saddle as a pattern for the new one. If this cannot be done, take measurements carefully and cut the new piece accordingly. Be sure to cut so that protruding ends fit snugly against the door casing. Drill holes and

Q Is there any cure for Dutch elm disease? What are good replacement trees for elms? Mrs. G.B.S., Bloomingdale, N.J.

A The Elm Research Institute, universities, chemical companies and government agencies are all working diligently on the problem, but no sure cure has been determined. Recommendations still suggest the dormant application of rothoxchlor, prevention of rootgraft transmission of the fungus and removal of all dead or dying elms prior to beetle emergence in the Spring. Some favorable preventive results have been found by injecting benomyl into the elm. Many fine shade trees including oak, maple, linden and ash are excellent as a replacement for a lost elm. A particularly desirable tree is the hackberry, as it has the strength, structural shape and leaves similar to the elm.

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