

MARITIMES IS BACK!

SPECTATOR MAGAZINE'S COASTAL SUPPLEMENT

BEGINS AFTER PAGE 22.

Spectator

AT HOME

HANOVER COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
Second Class
Postage Paid
Raleigh, NC

*****3-DIGIT**284
31
NEW HANOVER CO PUBLIC LIBRARY
201 CHESTNUT STREET
WILMINGTON NC 28401-3998

MAY 9 - MAY 16, 1996 VOLUME 18, NUMBER 24 THE FIRST AND BEST IN THE TRIANGLE

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

A Wilmington Artist Makes Her Mark, The WE Festival Takes Over Downtown & St. John's Scores Mark Rothko

By Richard Sceiford

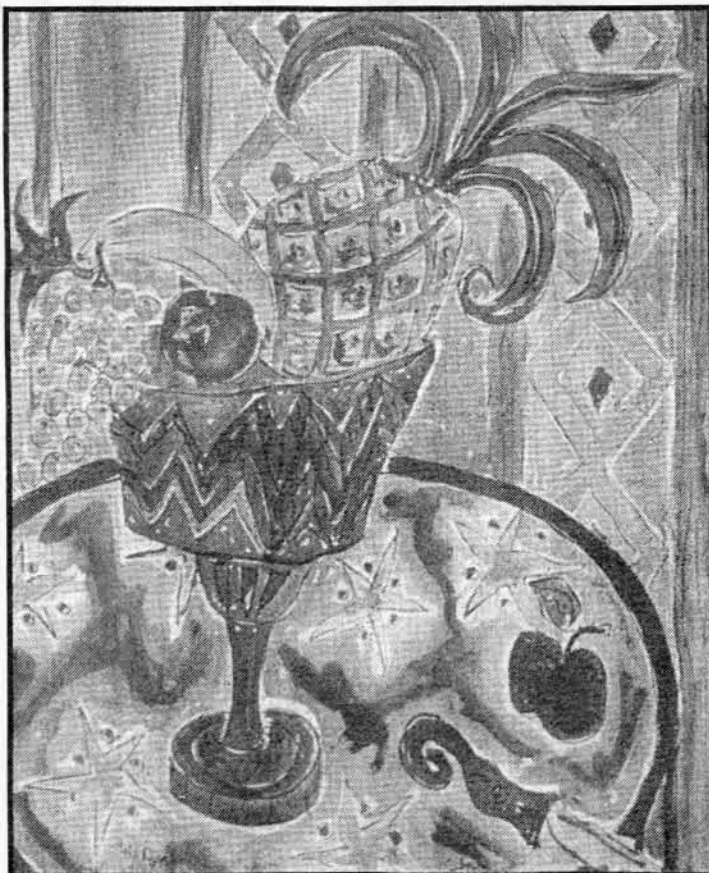
IF IT WEREN'T TRUE, IT WOULD seem too easy. For Mother's Day 1992, Wilmington artist Deborah Cavanaugh asked her two children for a set of paints, some brushes and paper — knowingly anticipating that, at age 40, she was about to embrace a new, all-consuming aspect of life. And then, almost as soon, she was an artist.

With the initial audacity that led to, and then engendered, her unorthodox approach to art, Cavanaugh began the simple act of were just that: a simple act. Without formal art training and only the barest notion as to what her first subjects would be (they were vaguely inspired by certain sections of a novel whose title now escapes her), she set her yearly goals of development.

Apparently, she's struck upon a visual language that, to her, is "saying something for people that they can't say for themselves." After four years, this artist, who moved to Wilmington from Washington, D.C., has gained a strong regional following in the world of "outsider" art, where unschooled technique meets with equally unbridled emotion and spirituality to produce works that are widely popular.

One of Cavanaugh's first completed paintings — which has led to a running

work collectively titled "The Mazurski Madonnas" — portrayed, quite literally, a family living on a beach. The figures in the ongoing theme, usually women, are caught mid-moment performing the mundane tasks of life. As with all of her



The Heart Is The Last To Forget, 1995 (watercolor), by Deborah Cavanaugh.

paintings, the titles are scrawled somewhere on the canvas, and are always about affirmation, such as: "Mindfulness reveals the pleasures responsibility brings."

And it's the small symbols and metaphors — a chair, a flower, an abstracted "home" — that Cavanaugh reveals as "modern archetypes," or the symbolic bridges between the hectic

world women often find themselves in today and a yearning for a prior simplicity. "I am a mother," she said, "and I paint about the meeting of the new and old archetypes — being a traditional woman in a non-traditional world."

From her expansive studio overlooking the Cape Fear River, Cavanaugh has been toiling to refine or further define her technique. Meanwhile, she's been told that people who buy her work have been giving them to others as tokens of love. Does that mean her work is "naive?"

"Making a negative statement with painting will not help me at all, and I don't think people need any help being sadder," she responded. "I'm intimately aware of the pitfalls of life, and I don't feel bad that this is the art I was given."

Cavanaugh is preparing for three upcoming one-woman exhibits in Wilmington that will run through the summer. Her work is currently on display at the University Center at UNC/Wilmington. In the Triangle, her work is now on view at Gallery C in Raleigh and Pringles Gallery in Pittsboro.

WE Hope You Can Make It

In what is essentially a week-long finger-in-the-face to typical head-nodding, slide-showing, panel-discussing, bands-

included. It's "un-planned" to be a rather remarkable display of the natural diversity of "unsigned-ness," brought out from every trench in the land. Artists include Benna Cohen (New York), Todd Young (Philadelphia), Cottonmouth, TX (from, well, Texas), the Knobs (Delaware), Corpse vomit (Illinois), and five-string electric violist Martha Mooke (New York), among many, many others.

Overall, some 55 bands from around the country (and one from the Netherlands) will be spread around five clubs, including The Ice House, Skylight Cinema & Draft, The River Club, Far Side and Bessie's, with the requisite rave held at Axis. The actual Exchange Room will be open every day from 11-5 at Skylight (23 North Front, top floor), and there you'll buy your passes (you can design your own), exchange information and tapes with other bands, chat with people who are giving away their zines, throw your band's tapes into a large bin and take another one's out.

On Sunday, May 26, your ears will get a break at the film festival held all day at the Skylight and featuring indie and underground videos and movies.

And make no mistake about it: If you're a band, you probably won't get signed. WE Festival organizers are charging record labels \$1500 to send their A&R scouts.

"It's not about schmoozing here, it's not about getting signed," Sullivan stressed. "It's about people helping each other do the work they love without compromising what they love."

Tickets are \$15 for the whole week. For scheduling, camping and general accommodations information, send e-mail to: wefestival@aol.com, or surf the 'Net: <http://www.popes.com/demov/wefest.html>.



Vitapup of New York will perform at Bessie's during the WE Festival (May 24).

Unknown Rothkos At An Unlikely Place

St. John's Museum of Art, under the direction of curator Ren Brown, has done an outstanding job of bringing regional artists to the attention of the world and also bringing unique collections and exhibits from afar to the Wilmington crowd. You might not expect, however, to walk through the doors and suddenly find the work of Mark Rothko hanging on the walls.

In this case, it's the early Rothkos, and St. John's is the only place in the Carolinas where you'll find Mark Rothko: The Spirit Of Myth, Early Paintings From The 1930s & 1940s. A loan exhibition from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, the works presented will be from the artist's earliest years, before he produced those abstract fields of color. What can you expect to see: Landscapes, still-lives, figure studies and portraits — painted in an expressionist style.

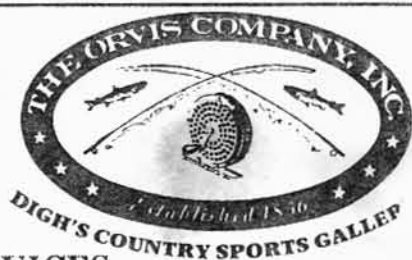
The Rothko exhibit at St. John's (114 Orange Street in downtown Wilmington) will run June 21 to August 18. For more information, call (910) 763-0281. ■

GUIDED FLY FISHING SERVICES

CLOTHING • ART • TACKLE • CATALOG DEALERSHIP
SALTWATER FLY FISHING SCHOOL

910-256-2060

Plaza East Shopping Center
Near Drawbridge to Wrightsville Beach



& AUTHORIZED
ORVIS DEALERSHIP

and-circus music industry schmooze bazaars, the WE (which stands for Wilmington Exchange) Festival is being billed as a seven-day "smorgasbord of bands, zines, films, microbrews and (remember this?) community." But what it's really about, according to Kenyatta Sullivan, one of the organizers, is "not learning how to be dependent on someone else."

Scheduled for May 23-29 at clubs throughout downtown Wilmington (and absolutely open to the public), WE is an extended gab-and-listen session for anyone interested in furthering his or her own music or hearing the music of others. It's a very general opportunity to meet fellow musicians, each of whom have a particular clue about a particular aspect of making music and getting it heard, and then to put the clues together.

It's also about bands and plenty of them (janglers and screamers alike) — none of which are with a label. Soloists and several performance artists also will be