

ART FOR THE HOLIDAYS

LOCAL GALLERIES ARE STOCKED
FOR THE SEASON WITH
INEXPENSIVE, UNIQUE GIFTS

It's always risky to give art. It's iffy to presume that a wooden bowl painted with nude, dancing women or a scarf decorated with fall leaves would make your MTV-generation daughter happy.

But it's also worth a try. You won't see bowls or scarves like these at department stores.

Through the holidays, area galleries, especially the nonprofit ones, load up on stuff in the \$5-\$500 range. These items not only are certain to be unique gifts, but also help support galleries and artists.

Buy something and it's yours, right off the wall. No waiting until the show is over.

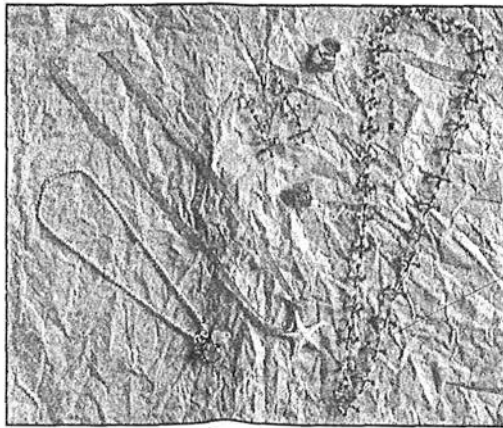
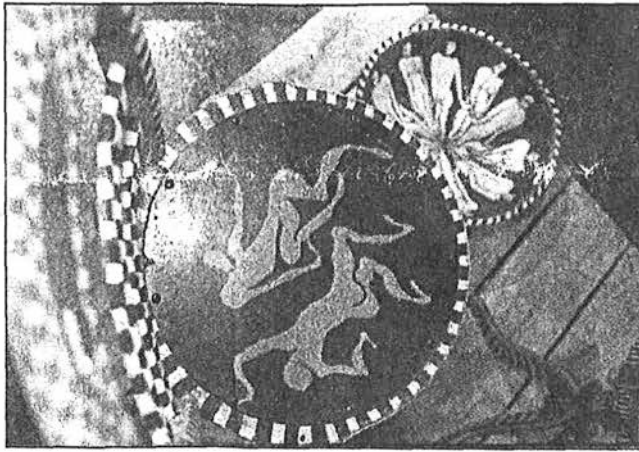
Most nonprofits like the Detroit Artists Market and Pewabic Pottery make choosing less difficult. Their staffs select the works, reducing the chances that you'll make a mistake.

What's more, both focus on functional art, which lessens even further the chance of giving something destined for the holiday gift dungeon. Most anyone can use a new guidepost for the garden hose. How about one that's wrought iron, with a cut-out slithery snake as the handle? At \$26, by Thomas J. at the Market, it's a bargain.

Here's just a taste of what else is available.

AT THE DETROIT ARTISTS MARKET

Giovanna Condino paints garden umbrellas in bright geometric patterns. Buy one for \$550 or commission her to transform an umbrella you already own. Bonnie Wood paints old chairs, tables, boxes, bowls and picture frames with patterns and figures. She mixes a folk art



Eric Hansen's saw-based clock, Bonnie Wood's painted chair, above, and Nicole Landau's jewelry, left, are available at the Detroit Artists Market.

things (\$50-\$200). They'd be a contrast in a modern room and fit right into a traditional one.

Nicole Landau makes jewelry (\$20-\$85) with a handmade simplicity out of old jacks, old paper and old type. Jeanne Paterak does something similarly appealing with pins (\$50).

The market has a whole wall of new

most finely crafted (\$75-125). And there's a whole corner of paintings by Shelley Malec Vitale and works on paper by Catherine Peet. Vitale does lush, thickly painted flowers (\$100-\$250). She also does cards — a pack of

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Salon shows

In recent years, other nonprofit spaces have organized salon shows during December. In 19th-Century Europe, the annual salon gave the accepted artists a chance to show their newest work. Paintings would be skied — hung from floor to ceiling, wherever there was a space.

The Detroit salon shows aren't juried. Artists who are gallery members simply bring things in to ACT and to Detroit Focus, which is using space that is part of Galerie Biegas downtown.

At the Wayne State University Community Arts Gallery, the artists have to be alumni, teachers or students. The spaces are loaded.

The work at WSU is usually \$50-\$1,500, with the majority in the under-\$500 range. At ACT, most work is under \$300. Focus is keeping prices to \$250 and under.

AT WAYNE STATE

Betty Brownlee's painting of an eggplant on highly patterned cloth packs a lot of power in a small space. Mary Fortuna's collages are subtle, elegant treasures. Alicia Gbur's silverprint of a pregnant woman takes a pushy, unforgettable perspective — from above.

Danielle Turpen makes wonderful little fetish objects. Sandra Cardew prints the image of a nude woman, partially covered by a big leaf on an old blue print, merging worlds with great subtlety. And Jeanne Bieri draws beautiful bird nests.

AT DETROIT FOCUS

The work here is by both longtime area regulars and newcomers. Some things to look for: A caged football in a drawing by Nelson Smith, a Mediterranean escape in a print by Judy Enright, an expressive little figure painting by Deborah Sukenic, two strong ink portraits by Meighen Powell, mystery packages by Gary Eleinko, the calm geometry in a watercolor by Janet Hamrick, and some advice from the word man, Vince Carducci. His black-and-white untitled work says "NOT ART."

AT ACT

Work by the some 40 younger artist-members is varied in quality and media. Stand-outs are Mary Ellen Powell's mysterious black-and-white paintings of saw blades, Jeffrey Warmouth's color photographs that shift scales and mix worlds, Julie Serigny's quiet little still lifes, Lara Frankena's fresh photographic portraits, Carrie Kelly's strong city photographs, Maureen Vachon's finely drawn explorations of feminist subjects and Mark Guatto's log and saw blade bench.