

Students Win Big In Islip Art Show

By George Wallace

These days, the Northport High School art program has plenty to cheer about.

According to school art department representatives, High School seniors figured prominently in a recent juried competition at the Islip Art Museum, placing twenty five of seventy-seven pieces selected from among two hundred entries. But as impressive as that number is, consider this: among those chosen for showing, four students won awards for their work.

In terms of prize winning, I don't think we've ever won as many as this year," said Margaret Minardi, one of the art teachers at the high school. "It's definitely the most students we've ever had get into the show."

The juried competition, entitled "Art Challenge 94," was open to senior high school students in Suffolk County. It was sponsored by the Islip Art Museum, and judged by Norma Cohen of the Smithtown Township Art Council.

Among the Northport students winning awards were Ryan Falkowitz (awarded second place for his mixed media artwork), Lauren Wisely (winner of the show's photography award), Leah Anderson and Anna York (both winners of Museum Choice awards).

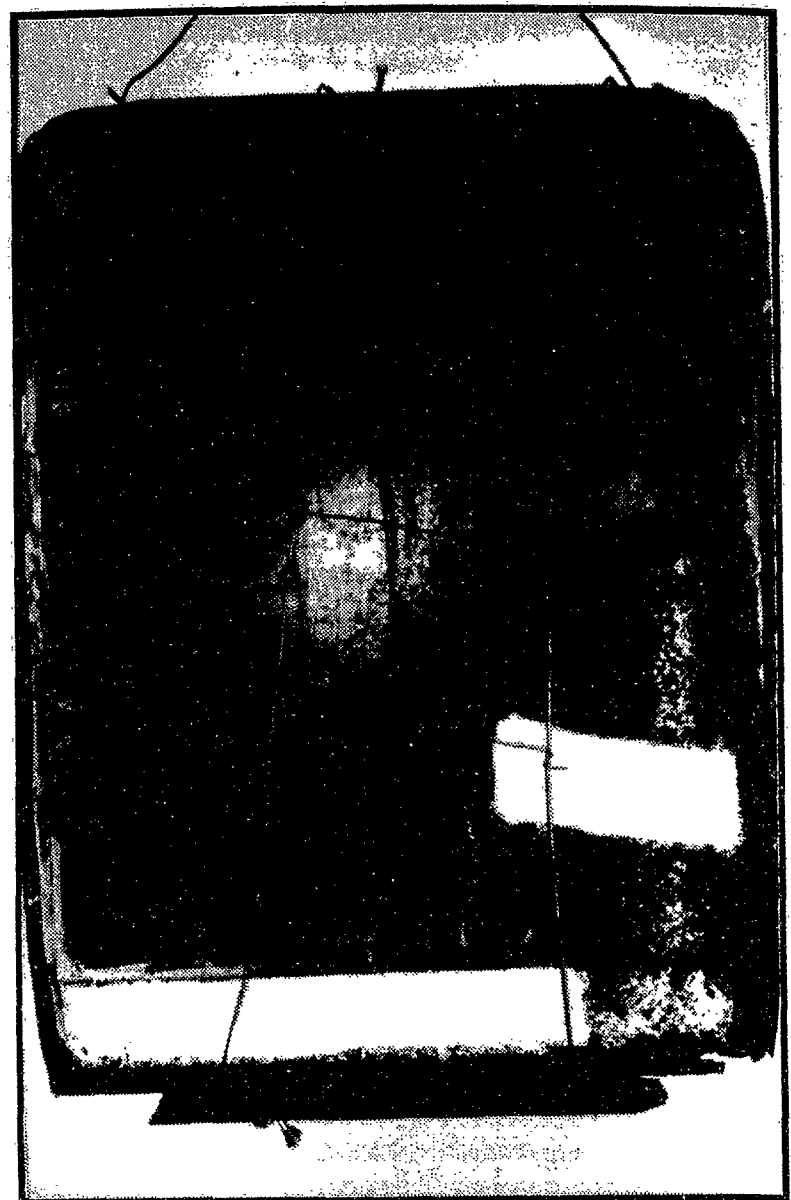
Ms. Minardi, who is the art teacher for three of the winners, noted that the juried competition is a significant one. "I think this is a particularly important show, because they look for diversity," she noted. "There is more emphasis on conceptual art than other shows, which is nice. They're looking for quality, not realism."

Also of note, she added, is the fact that award ceremonies are as much instructive as they are anything else. "They had a guest speaker who talked about the struggles of an artist in society. That was

(Continued on page 11)



A Mixed Media by Joanna York, utilizing print, clippings from newspapers, and other media. "Joanna uses a print-making foundation for foundation for collage," said Margaret Minardi.



A construction by Ryan Falkowitz from found objects. "You could call this a sculpture but it's really a painting," said art teacher Constance Wolf. Added Mrs. Minardi: "Ryan is an assembler. He creates compositions from found objects, using a lot of personal symbolism in his work related to his childhood and toys from his childhood. He's a very aware young artist in terms of what's going on in the contemporary scene."

Bamboo Flutes At Japanese Stroll Garden

Visitors to the Humes Stroll Garden, an unusual item on the scenic agenda for Long Island and located in Mill Neck, are in for a treat this year. In addition to the serenely sloping and forested land, manicured in keeping with the Japanese reverence for nature, the Stroll Garden this year marks the return of the soothing sounds of the Japanese bamboo flute to its garden teahouse.

Bob Seigetsu Avstreich, it has been announced, will offer music of "wind and water" from the ancient sui-zen tradition on Saturday mornings all summer.

The musician has been performing at the stroll garden since 1986.

Sui-Zen, Japanese for "blowing meditation," is the ancient tradition of music played on the shakuhachi, or bamboo flute, by wandering Japanese Buddhist priests. The ebb and flow of the sound of this instrument recalls the rhythms of the forest breeze and the waves of the sea. Long ago in Japanese culture, it was offered as 'music of peace' in all its meanings: as an end to conflict, a way of healing, and a path of transition.

Mr. Avstreich performs sui-zen regularly at major Asian cultural festivals in the US. He has given concert performances and lectures on music and healing at major universities, teaching hospitals, and

cultural institutions here and in Asia.

Sui-zen is offered in the teahouse from 11-12 noon on the first and third Saturdays in May and June, and the second and fourth Saturdays in July and August.

The announcement by garden officials comes as welcome news in the return of the Humes Japanese Stroll Garden, which had been undergoing cut-backs not too long ago. Nowadays, the garden is open every Saturday through October, 11-4 p.m. There are tours as well, which include a tea ceremony.

The garden, which is a sponsored project of the Garden Conservancy — a national preservation society — has long been known as a location which surprises, delights and brings visitors to a point of meditative reflection. The design principle of a Japanese garden is this: that Nature is the ideal, and tranquility the Goal. More specifically, the harmonious blending of the contrived with the naturally existing North Shore woodland is meant to demonstrate the wonderful possibilities of human intervention with the natural topography.

And it works here — even if the four full, rolling acres of this Mill Neck property are a little big for the concept of working with a tiny space to give it the il-

lusion of size.

Design elements of the garden include such classic Japanese Zen concepts as *Hide and Reveal* and *Movement Along the Diagonal*. Thus, instead of heading straight from the entrance, following the main path at the John Humes garden means a slow mending movement through the grounds. This presents diverse views, and reveals vistas sequentially as one proceeds through the garden. The effect? An exaggerated sense of space.

Then there's the concept of Yin-Yang, or the balance of opposites. Stones (Yang) are the bones, Plants (Yin) are the flesh of a Japanese Garden. Together, they create balance. And water? The blood, of course. Symbolism also is important. This particular garden symbolizes a mountain setting by the sea. The gravel paths represent mountain streams that form pools at various levels, and cascade downward over symbolic waterfalls, eventually flowing into the ocean (represented by a pond). In the pond itself is a tortoise island, located by the pond in the Tea Garden. A moss mound forms the shell. Stone are the head, feet and tail. There's even a symbolic seashore by the pond.

An interesting phenomenon to be found in the

(Continued on page 7)



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