BUTTON

From page B1

Photo by Astrid Riecken/The Washington Times

Customers pick through some of the buttons offered by Doris Little.

purely practical purchases for others. A glass jar rests in a large box of loose buttons. It takes $2 to fill up the jar.

As enticing as the decorative multihued accessories are, Mrs. Little says it is "the interaction" — meeting people — that she enjoys most of all. She regards the time as therapy: "It takes you away from things you have to live with. Sometimes not only do I unwind, sometimes I unravel."

She seems not to be in a hurry to sell and won't push or cajole potential customers. "If I could count the times people say, 'It reminds me of my grandmother's attic,' " she says, smiling, the rest of the sentence trailing off into a good-hearted shrug.

"May I help you?" she says gently to browsers after a minute or two. They either respond with a question or drift away.

Steady customers are protective of her and her merchandise.

"She is the only button lady in the United States," comments a habitue from the neighborhood.

If she charged every time someone stopped to ask "How much are your buttons?" and "Do you get a discount if you buy more than 10?" she would be considerably better paid for her time. Rent for the stand is as little as $10 per day, but the figure is on a sliding scale, depending on the season and the weather.

Sales are more brisk in cold weather when consumers need buttons for personal use. Warm weather brings out sightseers and impulse buyers. Customers have been from as far away as Hungary and Australia and from 40 states, she notes.

Business was slow but steady one recent spring afternoon when Scott Schabilon, a Capitol Hill resident, asked for six black braided leather buttons to adorn a new Brooks Bros. coat. His dog had chewed four of the original buttons, Mr. Schabilon said, his small white terrier pulling on a leash at his heels. Mrs. Little dug in and helped him find what he needed — at $1 apiece.

"I admire people who have a full-time job and still manage to do crafts," she tells a Baltimore woman shopping for extra-large decorative buttons to put on handmade throw pillows that she sells to friends and acquaintances.

Mrs. Little's weekly intake depends on so many variables that she doesn't like to quote her average take-home "pay," but it never is enough to be considered serious money. The pillow maker purchased 20 buttons for a total of $30, which Mrs. Little considered a good sale.

"Some days you measure in memories," she says, "not by what you put in the bank." They are valuable memories, she insists. "The knowledge I have gained from the people I have met I would not exchange for money.

"I don't want to ever get so busy that it makes me too tired. I enjoy the things you create and the things I see other people create from buttons," she says.

Her buttons have been used for earrings, necklaces, bracelets, picture frames, pillows, lampshades, button trees, hats and other items, she says.

At age 65, she has had several medical problems and, in addition, cares for a daughter with chronic physical troubles. She is mother of four daughters and grandmother to two children who keep her busy as part-time caretaker.

It was the tradition in her family to save buttons, Mrs. Little recalls. One use was sewing them onto quilts for decoration. Even so, she never thought of becoming a button collector until nine years ago when a longtime neighbor named Ida convinced her that she should begin. The two women had developed a friendship through their mutual interest in flea markets. At the time, Mrs. Little was fond of old glassware and old china; her neighbor liked buttons.

Eventually, the neighbor persuaded Mrs. Little to spend $65 to buy the entire collection that she and her mother had amassed — — and take the buttons in the motley jars and cigar boxes to a flea market for resale.

"When I first heard of a flea market, I didn't know what it was," Mrs. Little says. The original buttons are long gone, but just as she has accumulated more buttons to offer for sale, she has picked up bits of button lore from books on the subject and even written poems about her trade.

"Buttons are my Friends!" is the title of one poem, composed in January 1997.

Buttons, Buttons, are all I can see.
I have enough buttons to cover me.
Some of my buttons have traveled far,
You may find my buttons wherever you are.
Buttons fill many of my jars,
A few of my buttons are shaped like stars.
Buttons were made in many shapes and sizes,
Some of my buttons could win state prizes.
Buttons can be used for toys and games,
"Button Lady" is now my name.

Doris Beeks Little

Photos by Bert V. Goulait/The Washington Times

Handcrafted and soon to be sold at Eastern Market

Namory Kieta, 35, works on a walking stick he'll soon offer for sale at his vendor's table at Eastern Market on Capitol Hill. The artist, who hails from Mali in West Africa, began carving when he was 12. He has been offering his wares at the Eastern Market location for five months.

BY TIM SLOAN—THE WASHINGTON POST

"I love working with my hands," says Carolyn Uhl, who makes soap in her kitchen to sell at Eastern Market.

Cleaning Up By Concocting Soap at Home

Hobby Could Become a Day Job

By Linda Wheeler
Washington Post Staff Writer

Carolyn Uhl is a graphic designer on weekdays and has been a musician, songwriter, vocalist and potter in her own time. Yet, even having a CD out didn't satisfy her need to make beautiful things, so the Alexandria resident took up old-fashioned soapmaking.

On weeknights, she mixes up small aromatic batches in her kitchen. On Saturdays, she sells her herbal, rough-cut bars at Eastern Market on Capitol Hill under the label August Soap House. She piles the cream- and brown-colored soaps in little pyramids atop a white tablecloth, creating a serene spot amid the chaos of the popular market where portrait painters, rug merchants and jewelry-makers vie for customers' attention.

"I love working with my hands," she said. "I had been trying to find something I could make myself, something cost-effective. I considered crocheting rugs, but that would take too much time. I thought about aprons, but that was too much work. Then I read about soap, and I was intrigued."

So are her customers.

Alison August Treppel, of Capitol Hill, closely examined a bar packaged with a nail brush.

"Are these made with natural ingredients?"

"Yes."

See SOAP, Page 3, Col. 1

Concocting A Business From Soap

SOAP, From Page 1

"And you make them yourself?"

"Yes."

"They smell good. I go by the smell."

"Try the oatmeal and vanilla. It has a soft smell."

Treppel, who said she had never bought handmade soap before, bought the $5 farmer's bar that has corn meal and grits in it.

The Tillman family from Cheverly was walking past when 4-year-old Chase saw something interesting at his eye level. He grabbed a bar of lavender. By the time he returned it to the pile, his father, William had stopped to sniff the soap. Then his mother, Venus, checked the scent, as did his older brother, William.

"This is something close to my heart."

— Carolyn Uhl

"Is this good for dry skin?" Venus Tillman asked.

"Super good for the skin, and even for kids' skin," Uhl answered.

The Tillmans bought a bar of the lavender for $3, the price for most of the soaps.

Uhl discovered soapmaking a year ago and is part of a growing number of people who have taken up the hobby, said Sandy Maine, president of SunFeather Natural Soap Co. in Potsdam, N.Y. She said her first book, "The Herbal Soap Book," has sold 60,000 copies, and she has just released a second book, "Soothing Soaps for Healthy Skin."

"Making soap is a very creative, almost meditative hobby," she said. "It is a way for people to get in touch with the earth by using natural oils from herbs, spices and trees. People seem to have a need for that in their lives."

She said her company, founded in 1979, has grown from one to 19 employees and produces 3,500 pounds of handmade soap a week.

In Uhl's Alexandria home,the 1940s-era kitchen is soap headquarters. A large stainless steel soup pot serves as the main mixing bowl. She doesn't cook the soap; the chemical interaction heats the concoction. The kitchen is the one place she has enough room to lay out the ingredients.

She uses olive, coconut, super-fatted and essential oils as well as sodium hydroxide, carefully mixing them together and watching the change in texture. About an hour after starting the process, she is ready to pour the mixture that resembles a thick cake batter into a special mold. She keeps the form, which has detachable sides, in a corner of her living room where the floor is the most level.

Twenty-four hours later, having kept her dogs Mocha and Ruby away from the mix, the 12 pounds of soap is ready to cut. The bars are put out to cure for the next three weeks on metal shelves in her dining room. On a nearby table, she has a supply of August Soap House labels she has made using her computer and printer.

Not every batch has turned out well. Uhl recalls experimenting with new ingredients and ruining seven batches before she tracked down the problem: the temperature.

Uhl, 39, looks a lot like a woman she admires: Martha Stewart. And like Stewart, she seems to have endless energy and imagination. She is considering giving up her day job and going into full-time soap production. In the last year, she has made and sold more than 2,000 bars. Most Saturdays, she sells what she brings to the market.

Uhl has devoted about half of her living space to the soap operation. If she is to expand her business, she said, she will have to move her work to a rented room.

"I like the pace at which this is growing," she said. "There will come a period when I won't have the money to buy the essential oils to fill an order. Then it will be time to go see the bank about a small business loan."

Meanwhile, Uhl is working on a recipe for two special Christmas soaps. A bar of spruce soap and one scented with spices will be sold together as a pair. After that, she plans to make "Best Friend Soap" for washing dogs.

"I'd love to be self-employed," she said. "I'd like the challenge. This is something close to my heart."

BY TIM SLOAN—THE WASHINGTON POST

William Tillman, 8, and his brother, Chase, 4, of Cheverly, stop to smell the bars of homemade soap on Carolyn Uhl's table at Eastern Market.

Arts Beat

Face Value

At ARTScene Gallery, Self-Portraits of the Artists, Here and Now

By Michael O'Sullivan
Washington Post Staff Writer

Behold the self-portrait—the most narcissistic form of expression there is.

A kind of officially sanctioned navel-gazing, it is at its worst gratuitous and self-indulgent, but at its best holds up not just a window to the soul of the artist, but a mirror to the eye of the beholder.

Two fascinating local shows examine this bifurcated nature of portraiture. "An Exploration Into Self Portraiture," a juried show of works by 67 local artists, opened Saturday night at the ARTScene Gallery. And "idENTIFICATION," featuring 23 large-scale color photographs of the members of the Studio Gallery cooperative, debuted yesterday.

In a sense, the two very different shows lie at opposite ends of the portraiture spectrum. The Studio Gallery pictures, while uncredited, were all taken by artist Bob Monahan, and are as anonymous and uniform as passport photos, although they are striking by sheer virtue of size alone (20 by 30 inches).

Monahan, who is about to leave the co-op after three years of membership, says he came up with the idea for the show (which he calls "a group work") as a way of accomplishing two things. "On the one hand," he says, "I wanted it to be an identification of who these people are that make the work you see here. People often have the attitude that there's nobody behind it. That it's just some crap on the wall." His other purpose is to "awaken" the audience to the fact that we are all alike, all artists inside. The show's title, therefore, involves a double meaning: identification *of* and identification *with* the co-op members.

Works in the ARTScene exhibit, on the other hand, are as disparate as the artists who created them. They include painting, photography, sculpture, video and computer imagery. The show was the brainchild of painter Jonathan Blum (known for his own portraits of people's foreheads) and was juried by ARTScene proprietors Cameron Sweeting and Craig Ekedahl, WPA\Corcoran program manager Nadine Gabai-Botero and Blum.

The show includes work by Hayes Friedman, Kristy Simmons, Spikey Blue (an alias for Sean Harris of the Betapunks filmmaking collective) and Erik Sandberg.

Some pieces are quite traditional, such as the meat-and-potatoes familiarity of Natasha Mokina's unflinchingly realistic canvas depicting her own face. Others, like Cristina McMahon's stylized, gridlike drawing on roof paper, stretch the definition of "self-portrait." The possessive adjective of its simple title, "My Ladder," gives the only clue that it represents the artist's vision of herself.

Everyone here makes a personal statement, literally and figuratively. Todd Burris superimposes the word "suicide" over his own photograph. Marc Millene fills four bowls with roach bait beneath the bust of a human head. Some messages are more cryptic than others, but next to every work hangs a clue—each artist's handwritten manifesto of what self-portraiture means.

The work at ARTScene is strong, but as you wander through the ephemeral gallery space—it used to be a Sharper Image store and will begin transformation into a Filene's Basement early next year—there is something else that catches your eye and stops you. Throughout the room are several full-length mirrors that, although left over from the building's retail days, reinforce the notion that art, and most particularly portraiture, should never be merely about them but also about us.

"An Exploration Into Self Portraiture" runs through early January at ARTScene Gallery, National Press Building, 14th and F streets NW. 202-662-7604. "idENTIFICATION" runs through Dec. 23 at Studio Gallery, 2108 R St. NW, with a reception from 6 to 9 p.m. on Dec. 5. 202-232-8734.

Key Theatre's Final Fling

After 24 years of showing foreign, independent and artistic cinema in Georgetown, owner David Levy is shutting the Key Theatre forever. The art house at 1222 Wisconsin Ave. NW will go out of business Dec. 7, but not before offering a swan song of some of its most popular films.

The mini-festival begins tomorrow with screenings of the long-playing "Howards End," which ran from April '92 to April '93 (minus a pause for breath of a few months), and "Jean de Florette," which opened in July 1987 and lasted 44 weeks. Other scheduled films include "Tampopo," "Red Sorghum," "The Manchurian Candidate," "The Earrings of Madame de . . . " and two late-night offerings of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show," tomorrow and Saturday night.

For the special program, regular ticket prices have been lowered to $5, with additional discounted $3 tickets being made available for the first screening of the day. For a complete schedule, call 202-333-5100.

LOC Concerts

Even free events in the arts world now carry a price tag. The Library of Congress, home to absolutely free chamber music concerts since 1925, has hired TicketMaster to distribute its tickets. As a result, the tickets are technically no longer free because of handling charges.

As the Coolidge Auditorium was being renovated, the library's music series was a cultural nomad. And the tickets were first come, first served. "We had some concerts at the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater and others at the auditorium of the National Academy of Sciences and people would line up. And a lot of people got turned away and were very unhappy," said Helen Dalrymple, the library's senior public affairs specialist.

The fee for the distribution is $2 per ticket if the ticket is picked up at a TicketMaster outlet. Phone orders cost $2.75 per ticket, along with a $1.25 handling fee for the entire order. Tickets for the second phase of the current series, which resumes in February, will be available Jan. 5. And some lucky music souls will still get the benefit of a freebie. "If people come to the concert and they come without a ticket, they frequently can get in. There are a lot of turn-backs," said Dalrymple.

Staff writer Jacqueline Trescott contributed to this report.

Arts Beat

A rare jewel

Jewelry designer Sonda Tamarr Allen sees herself as an artist first and foremost.

"I don't identify as a Lesbian artist, I don't make Lesbian jewelry. I am a Lesbian who makes jewelry," she says.

by Clint Steib

Jewelry designer Sonda Allen

Allen formed her business in 1992, naming it Turtle's Webb. "Turtle," she says, because "they're slow-moving, diligent, persistent, and always win the race." Webb is the name of one of Allen's grandfathers, a farmer who "built the Webbs, ever-expanding and strong."

Allen's designs are influenced by ancient African and Asian themes. Her work, mostly earrings with some hairpins, rings, and bracelets, changes with the seasons. In the spring, she works with copper, brass, and bronze; in the winter, with silver. In all seasons she does custom work in gold, as well as coral, shells, small ceramic tiles, pearls, and stones.

Allen's work has been sold in gift shops at various museums and has been displayed widely. She regularly displays her wares at Eastern Market and at Beadazzled.

Recognizing the paradox inherent in making a business of art, Allen says the best thing about having her own business is "doing what I want to do, when I want to do it." The worst thing is worrying about money.

It is difficult to reconcile artistic freedom with financial need. Allen explains: "There are things I want to make, and I want to make [them] for *me*. So do you make it for yourself and wear it? Then people will ask 'How much is it?'"

Allen apprenticed with Jamal Mims, a metalsmith with Sun Gallery Goldsmiths in Adams Morgan. She earned an M.A. in African History at Howard, and now she has her own apprentice, Heather Henry, who works with Allen in her Baltimore studio. Allen says that to do an apprenticeship and be professional in business dealings is the advice she gives aspiring artists.

Despite her struggles, her compelling work makes it clear that this is Allen's calling. After examining Allen's display at Eastern Market and discussing copper work with her, one woman noted, "Your stuff looks like you enjoy doing it."

—Erica Winter


The Washington Post

HOME

The Big Daddy of recliners, built for major napping 4

Flowering shrubs that flourish in dappled shade 21

An attic renovation that uses every corner 26

Mission Accomplished


STYLES

Mission Accomplished


STYLES

The oak tables and art glass lamps Graham used to find for a song at Washington estate sales and flea markets now are pursued at auction houses by movie stars or museum curators.


STYLES

On the Mission Trail Close to Home

AT HOM WITH JIM GRAHAM

Mission Accomplished

By Jura Koncius

A few steps from the bustling urban mix at 18th Street and Columbia Road, the evocative ring of recorders from another era beckons a visitor down a hallway of a stately 1903 building. It is only a hint of things to come.

When the door to the Adams-Morgan apartment cracks open, Jim Graham's strong mission comes into focus. The tune is from "Music for William Morris," an album recorded for last year's centenary exhibition on Morris, one of the founders of the English Arts and Crafts movement, held at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. The lyrical hymns that Morris, who lived from 1834 to 1896, might have enjoyed suit Graham, a longtime collector of American Arts and Crafts furnishings and mission oak, the sturdy furniture style that flourished in the United States from 1900 to 1915.

Morris and others sought to blur the distinctions between decorative arts and fine arts. "Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful," Morris once wrote. His tune struck a chord with Gustav Stickley and other originators of the Arts and Crafts movement in America. It also sings to Graham, who finds the handcrafted furnishings of that genre suit his sense of style.

Now, there are CDs and web sites and reproductions

See MISSION, Page 17

PHOTOS BY GORDON BEALL FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

MISSION, From Page 14

celebrating the simple and handsome designs of the movement that sought to promote the basic harmony of the home. Says Graham, "I think William Morris would have liked having a CD."

What began as a hobby for Graham 17 years ago is his major relaxation in the few free hours he has away from his life's work as executive director of the Whitman-Walker Clinic, Washington's major community-based AIDS care organization. He may have even less time for collecting in the near future, as he is exploring a run for the D.C. Council from Ward One, where he has lived for more than 16 years.

But it will be hard to stop him from popping into antique shoes and flea markets. Graham's delight in refining his collection of sturdy quarter-sawn oak furniture, earthy glazed pottery and rustic ceramics is stronger than ever. He now lectures on the subject and has written for scholarly publications, including the Journal of the American Art Pottery Association.

He's never too far from the Arts and Crafts spirit. His office at 14th and S streets NW is furnished in Stickley reproductions, a gift from a thoughtful donor. Their Elizabeth Taylor Medical Center, which opened four years ago in a 1909 Arts and Crafts stucco building nearby, has period architectural elements such as oak wainscoting and tiled floors. Whitman-Walker's Max Robinson Center in Anacostia also is housed in an Arts and Crafts structure built originally as a police precinct in 1910. "I guess I never really leave the environment," says Graham.

As of a move last fall, he and his friend George Lejano share a three-bedroom co-op with a hallway lined with American art pottery, photographs and books. It leads into spacious living and dining rooms, comfortably appointed with Arts and Crafts wood, tile and glass. A glass-front oak cabinet holds distinctive green Grueby pottery, including a rare scenic Grueby vase from 1907 recently purchased at a New England country auction.

There are two fireplaces and imposing oak sideboards, desks and tables, many by Gustav Stickley (1857-1942), whose finely constructed craftsman furniture is considered the most prized of the period. The den is devoted to a display of Arts and Crafts tiles made in Ohio during the first part of the century.

About the only thing recognizable from his collection of a decade ago is a 1912 Gustav Stickley sideboard in the dining room. "A lot has changed in the past 10 years," he says. As Graham upgraded and traded, Arts and Crafts decorative arts went Hollywood. The oak tables and art glass lamps Graham used to find for a song at Washington estate sales and flea markets now are pursued at auction houses by movie stars or museum curators.

"This stuff used to be within the reach of people with modest means, like myself," sighs Graham. "But gone are the days when a Morris chair was $500," he says, mentioning a design named after William Morris. The days of finding cheap Morris chairs at Eastern Market are gone; today, they sell for $5,000 to $15,000 and up, which saddens Graham.

When we first visited Graham (Washington Home, April 12, 1987), his small apartment had the seeds of a solid collection. He still has the same cats, Razzle and Dazzle, and the same handsome 1912 Gustav Stickley sideboard in his dining room. But most of his early collection is long gone. Priced out of the market in many cases, he now upgrades his collection frequently by trading, which is how he acquired his fine Gustav Stickley bow-arm Morris chair and just last month, a Gustav Stickley double-door bookcase. "I keep my best stuff. But I've parted with some magnificent things."

These days, if he can even find desirable pieces,

See MISSION, Page 18

MISSION, From Page 17

Graham says, he cannot afford them. "It's hard to describe the intensity associated with this field. Of 1,200 dealers at a recent show I went to in Atlantic City, I didn't see one piece of good Mission furniture. When it's found, it ends up going into private hands immediately."

Both of Graham's missions have kept him focused. The fact is, Graham's day job keeps him very rooted in the present. As part of Whitman-Walker for 13 years, he has seen the annual budget rise to $18 million from $280,000. "So many people were dying and suffering. My ability to move away from that into a different environment has helped me to survive," says Graham, 51, who has devoted his life to this cause. "Fortunately, I've been able to compartmentalize my life."

Graham's eyes light up when you ask him about what caused the interest in mission furnishings to heat up. So, between sips of black currant tea, Graham will tell you how Barbra Streisand changed everything when it comes to collecting these pieces.

In 1988, Streisand paid a record $363,000 at Christie's New York auction house for a massive 1902 oak and wrought-iron sideboard that Gustav Stickley designed for his own dining room. "It created enormous press," says Graham. "It was a combination of big money and big celebrity." The shock waves haven't stopped.

"It was a bench mark," says Nancy McClelland, Christie's senior vice president and the head of 20th-century decorative arts. "It spawned a very fertile period in American Arts and Crafts furniture sales."

What the interest also did was to move the owners of the still surviving Stickley furniture company in Manlius, N.Y., to reissue many of the original Stickley designs, a move that McClelland says "validates the movement and proves that this area of collecting has come of age." She compares it to the popularity of 18th-century American furniture reproductions.

In Washington, Mission furniture is often featured at auction. At a recent Twentieth Century Decorative Works of Art auction, Weschler's sold a 1910 table and footstool by Charles P. Limbert originally valued at $200 to $400 for $2,760.

Graham's own hunting ritual, however, has remained about the same. On Sundays, from March to December, he arrives at the Georgetown Flea Market about 7:30 a.m., before the crowds, to peruse the tables. On Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m., he stops to scan the wares on display at the weekly Weschler's auction. Sometimes, he attends an estate sale advertised in the newspaper.

"The days of finding a great piece in somebody's attic are rare," says Mark Anderson of Mission Possible, a Chevy Chase store that sells Arts and Crafts pieces. "But Jim has a very good time looking."

Graham says one of the wonderful results of all the interest is the abundance of books available on the subject. He suggests the quarterly periodical Style 1900, edited by noted Lambertville, N.J., dealer David Rago, as a source for what's currently in print and available.

"There are still wonderful finds to be had. It's part of the excitement," he says. His Gustav Stickley 1902 desk in the dining room with its original leather top came from someone in Connecticut who wanted to sell her grandfather's office desk. He found a sturdy office chair, circa 1920, small enough to fit under it at the estate sale at the Virginia home of Chief Justice Warren Burger—the chair is stamped "FDA" on the back. The English Arts and Crafts rug in the dining room belonged to a friend who died of AIDS. It is especially dear to Graham.

"To state the obvious, you want to collect something you can find. Acquisition is a must. It would be hard to collect Fabergé eggs. When you stop finding pieces in one area, there is no fun in collecting."

Purist that he is, Graham's kitchen, with boomerang-printed 1950s counters, is not a period statement. Tiles will soon replace the Formica. But on the floor, a bowl belonging to his West Highland terriers, Roger and Dodger, sits elegantly on a metal tray. To the untrained eye, the low bowl has a familiar earthy matte-green glaze. You inquire whether it could possibly be . . .

"No, that is not a valuable piece of pottery," says Graham. "I'm obsessed. But I'm not crazy."

On the Mission Trail Close to Home

Jim Graham haunts favorite places on a regular basis to add to his collection of American Arts and Crafts furniture, pottery, metal work and other pieces. Here is his annotated guide to Washington area sources. He also shops estate sales, yard sales, swap meets, classified ads and auctions.

"Buy the best you can afford," Graham advises.

■ **Amaryllis Vintage Co.,** 4922 Wisconsin Ave. NW. Open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. 202-244-2211. Home furnishings, rugs and decorative arts primarily from 1840 to 1940. "New shipments Saturday mornings."

■ **Chenonceau Antiques,** 2314 18th St. NW. Open Saturday and Sunday, noon to 6:30 p.m. 202-667-1651. A general mix of antiques that often includes mission. "Saturday is the best day to go."

■ **Geoffrey Diner Gallery,** 1730 21st St. NW, Washington. Open Saturdays, 1 to 6 p.m. or by appointment. 202-483-5005. British and American Arts & Crafts original period furnishings by major designers (1880-1915) and other decorative objects from Britain and America as well as Tiffany Studios Lighting. "Specialized dealer, high end."

■ **Georgetown Flea Market,** Wisconsin Avenue between S and T streets NW. Open Sundays, March through December. 202-223-0289. Official hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. This 25-year-old institution attracts 125 dealers that sell furniture, ceramics, silver, collectibles and anything else you can think of. "Best before 7:30 a.m."

■ **Mission Possible,** 5516 Connecticut Ave. NW. Closed Tuesday and Wednesday. Open other days noon to 6 p.m. 202-363-6897. For seven years, this shop has sold period, affordable American Arts & Crafts furniture and a wide selection of reproduction lighting. "Good middle-level stuff and sometimes very good finds."

■ **Ruff & Ready Furnishings,** 1908 14th St. NW. 202-667-7833. Open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Great assortment of used furniture and accessories from all over. "The best day to go is Friday."

■ **Weschler's,** 905 E St. NW. 202-628-1281. Sales held every Tuesday to sell estate items not included in catalogue sales. From used lawnmowers to porcelains to furniture from all periods. Preview: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every Monday; auctions officially begin at 9:30 a.m. Tuesdays. A hotline (202-882- 4800) plays a recorded message outlining highlights of each week's auction. "Arrive Tuesday morning to hit the parking meters when they open up at 9:30." **J.K.**

THE WASHINGTON POST

Style/Arts

Arts Beat

A Project Close to Their Arts

Empty Store to Be Temporary Gallery

By Michael O'Sullivan
Washington Post Staff Writer

Rule No. 1: The success of a new art gallery has nothing to do with the quality of wine served at its opening.

With that caveat in mind, freshly minted art dealers Craig Ekedahl and Cameron Sweeting seem to be

BY SUSAN BIDDLE—THE WASHINGTON POST

The Shops at National Place is the temporary home of ARTScene Gallery, run by Cameron Sweeting and Craig Ekedahl.