

Art casting has a long and storied tradition

By JOHN SOMMER
Herald Special

Most visitors who come to my gallery are intrigued by the many bronzes by Canadian sculptors on display. They always ask where and how they were made. The first question - where? - is easy to answer, the second - how? - is a bit more difficult.

Canada's best-known art foundry is right here in Georgetown. Its name is Artcast Inc. and it is located on Armstrong Avenue. Eric Knoespel, the owner of Artcast Inc., started an industrial foundry with a partner in 1964.

This foundry was called Mid-Canadian Investment Casting and later became Cercor.

25-years-ago next year, Eric Knoespel started to cast sculpture as a sideline.

The sideline grew, and in the late 70's the original partnership was dissolved.

In 1981 Artcast Inc. moved to the present location, and was guided by the expertise of the owner and his family (a son and daughter work in the business) to its present eminence. Many of the most prestigious Canadian monuments had their origin in this Georgetown foundry.



Ideas and The Arts
by John Sommer

One of Queen Elizabeth II, for the Prince Edward Island capital Charlottetown, for instance, and the large statue of former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker for Parliament Hill, to name just two.

Lately, Artcast Inc. has brought out "The Canadian Contemporary Sculpture Collection" and "Nova Art", two series of bronzes cast in large editions (500), that make it possible for every art lover to collect authentic bronzes by Canadian sculptors, without having to pay the high prices that small edition bronzes demand on the market.

Big star names like Walter Bachinski, Don Bonham, Pauta

Saila, and Michael Snow, to name a few, are represented in the collection, as well as Fernando Regazzo, who is known for his ballet dancers, and Siegfried Puchta, the famous sculptor of animals.

Why are sculptures cast in bronze expensive? To begin with, a cast in bronze is not a reproduction. The artist who wants his work to be cast in bronze eventually, will model in wax. Let's say that he is modelling a small fawn in wax. The finished piece is not more than 7 inches high. There it stands, tottering on thin, vulnerable legs. Left like that the sculpture will not last long. The wax will soften in the heat of summer and the whole charming piece will sink to the ground.

Before this happens, the artist, if he has the money, will take his creation to Artcast in Georgetown, where a skilled artisan will fashion a rubber mold from the piece.

Next, molten wax is poured into the mold. It is this wax duplicate that is later melted out, prior to casting. This is called the "Lost Wax Process."

Now, wax bars are fused to the wax duplicate to make up the sprue system. After dewaxing, the sprue system channels the molten metal into the mold cavity. Next the sprued wax duplicate is coated several times with a ceramic slurry and stucco, to build up the thickness until the piece is encased in a strong shell. This ceramic shell is heated using steam to melt out the wax. The shell is then cured in a furnace and preheated in preparation for casting.

When all this is done, the molten metal is poured into the ceramic shell.

Upon cooling, the ceramic shell is chipped off and the sprue system removed. Now, each location where the sprue system was attached has to be re-textured to restore it to the texture of the wax. For the final finish, the piece is either polished, or given a patina. All these operations are hand operations, and at any time accidents can happen that might destroy the art work. There are no unskilled jobs in a foundry.

Art casting is an art by itself and one with a long tradition. The casting and collecting of bronzes

links us to the ancient world. The "Lost Wax Process" was known in ancient Egypt and Greece, and during the Shang Dynasty in China, from 1700 to 1100 B.C., exquisite artifacts were cast in bronze by the "Lost Wax Process".

Artcast Inc. is conducting tours through their premises. Groups up to 15 people can be accommodated. If you want to have a closer look at one of the most fascinating enterprises in town, phone 877-5455 and ask for Ms. Mona Knoespel. You will be filled with awe everytime you see a bronze thereafter.

GREET MORE FOR LESS.



Save 5¢ on each card you send! When purchasing greeting cards, look for the Greet More symbol on boxed sets. These sets contain specially coded envelopes. Follow the simple instructions, block in the Postal Code and affix a Greet More 35¢ stamp. You'll save 5¢ and speed the processing of your holiday greetings.

Save 5¢ with Greet More™ greetings in Canada. Greet More™ stamps. Pack of 10 - \$3.50 each.

Look for the Greet More™ symbol wherever you buy boxed cards.



DELREX SMOKE SHOP
GEORGETOWN MARKETPLACE
877-9284 (Fax Service Available)

*Minimum \$8 Purchase.

Christmas celebration in Terra Cotta

This Saturday and Sunday the Shops of Terra Cotta invite the public to come and join them for a cup of hot cider and take a leisurely stroll through the village.

The FORGE STUDIO GALLERY, JO WALTERSON'S STUDIO AND THE BRASS THIMBLE are joining together in one big Christmas Village Celebration.

They will be offering the usual unique glass, pottery, wood and paintings to mention only a few and specially for this season you will find: Handmade Boxed Chocolates-Raku Fired Candle Holders and Wooden Animals at the FORGE GALLERY. Miniature Paintings and Hand Painted Guardian Angels at JO WALTERSON'S STUDIO. Hand-painted Wooden Birds at THE BRASS THIMBLE.

Say: "I saw it in The Herald"

Delacour's

For All Your Fine China, Silver, Crystal & Giftware

227 MAIN ST. MILTON
878-0050



DOMINION GARDENS

HWY. 7 & MAPLE AVE.
(Guelph St.)
GEORGETOWN

873-8422

STORE HOURS:
MON-FRI 9-6 SAT 9-5 SUN 12-4

The Feminine Way

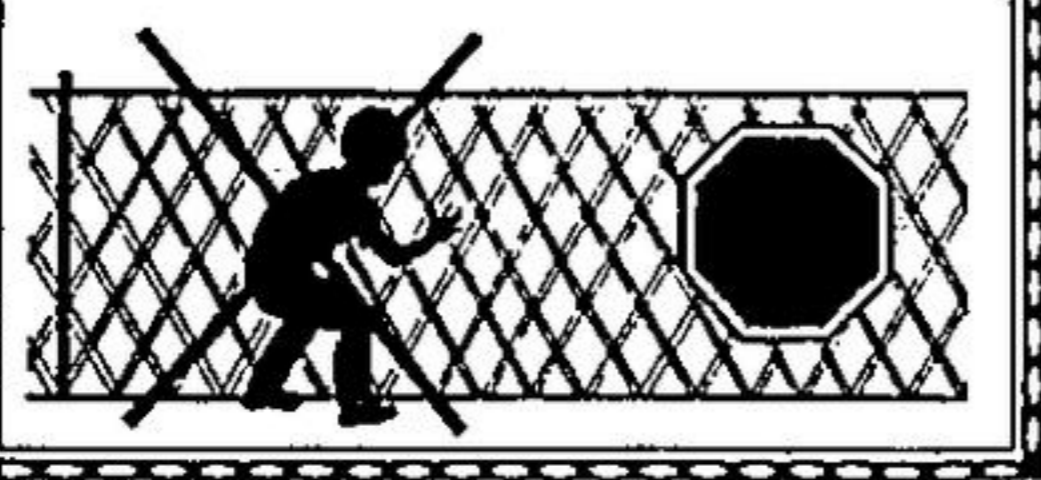
Passive Reducing Salon.

4 • MANICURE
• PEDICURE
• "SPA" FACIAL \$50.00

Call For More November Specials
873-4907

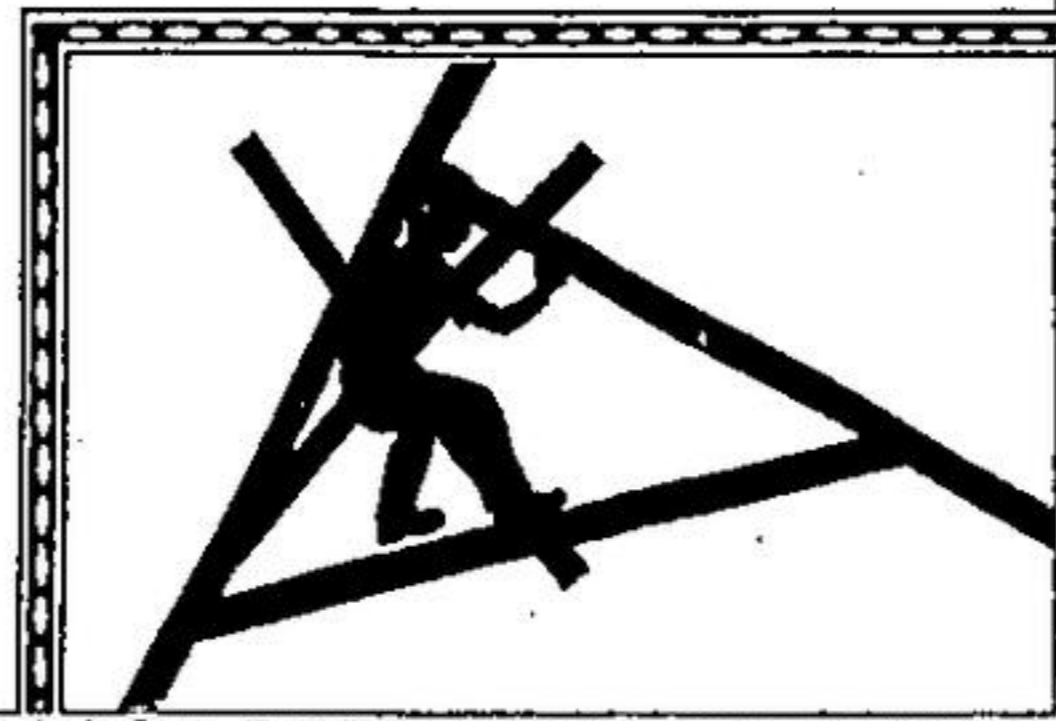
116 Guelph St. Georgetown

PLUG IN



WE WOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN TO PLAY SAFELY. WILL YOU HELP?

Pictured above is two of a series of new safety signs. They have been designed especially for children to warn them of the dangers of playing with equipment and climbing hydro towers or poles. Some of the signs feature ZAP the Electrical Safety Bird and all feature a very clear warning. Why not take a minute to talk to your children about electrical safety outdoors? Show them the signs in this ad. Thank you for helping.



ALTON HILLS HYDRO

ENERGY HINTS

How To Reduce Your Heating Bills

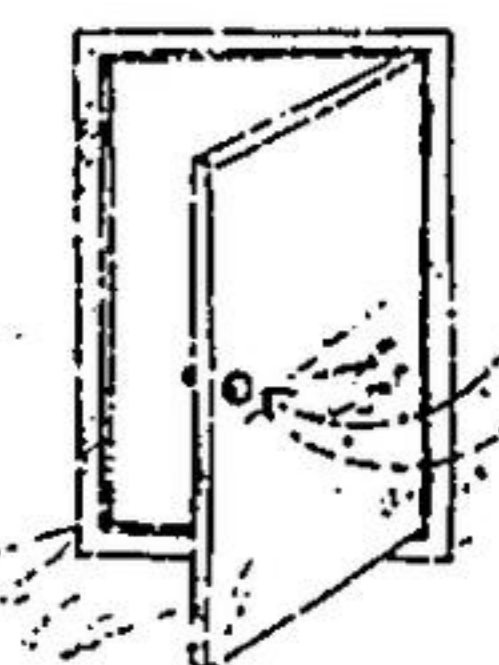


Lower Your Thermostat

Set your thermostat at about 20°C (68°F). For every degree above this recommended setting your heating fuel use could rise by about 5%. Setting a thermostat higher than normal won't heat your home any faster.

Don't Overheat Unused Space
Close doors leading to unheated parts of the

house. If you have a spare room that's not being used, close the hot air register or turn down the baseboard heater and close the door to that room.



a member of
EnerMark
The Electricity People