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BFGoodrich Advantage Plus tires

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SEARS

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This is a sample of one of Michael Poulton's award-winning pieces made from copper. The Canadian artist's work is on display at the Kathleen McKay Gormley Art Centre from Thursday to Sunday.

Artist uses copper to capture life's images

The internationally award winning copper relief artwork of Canadian artist Michael Poulton will be on exhibition at the Kathleen McKay Gormley Art Centre Thursday through Sunday.

From miniatures to full size pieces, Poulton creates a world of ever-changing images on copper. Drawing whatever comes into his head or working from sketch books, he creates a three-dimensional world, both complex and simple. Not wanting to make to grand a point, Poulton says, "I draw life. It's a big subject."

To deal with such a big subject he has several series of works. One deals with relationships between people. Another with everyday things, such as a man reading a paper or two women talking in a cafe. A third series is purely abstract, looking like the work of some mad town planner or the view from space of an urban landscape, which on closer examination is skewed all wrong. Abstract or figurative, they draw the viewer in, looking for meaning.

The process by which Poulton's work is created is known as repoussé and Poulton is one of the very few contemporary artists working in the medium today. Beginning with simple line drawing done directly into the copper, the metal is then worked and shaped until an image is rendered in relief.

Ancient in origin, the method was used by the earliest civilizations. The famous 4th century B.C. Greek armour is an example, as are Benvenuto Cellini's bronze doors for Milan Cathedral.

Each of Poulton's stunningly contemporary works is original, completely made by hand. When the image is com-

pleted in the metal, a patina is labouriously built up using acid and other material. The resulting look is both modern and ancient at the same time.

Canadian born, Poulton studied art in England, where he lived for a number of years. Since then his work has taken him all over the world, with extended stays in such places as the Northwest Territories, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Mexico.

The jury cited Poulton's work for 'outstanding creative achievement.'

He has won numerous national and international awards for his artwork, and this past February received the American Niche Award in Philadelphia. Selected from 1000 of the finest artists and crafts people from the U.S. and Canada, the jury cited Poulton's work for "outstanding creative achievement... technical excellence... and a distinct quality of unique and original thought".

When not travelling the world looking for inspiration, Michael Poulton has his studio near Kirkfield in the Kawarthas.

Also included in the exhibition are some of Poulton's dry point prints, originally drawn into a copper plate with a steel stylus and printed one at a time in an antique press.

The current exhibition, runs Aug. 3 to 6 at the Kathleen Gormley McKay Art Centre, 190 Main Street, Unionville.