

Barber's underground era may be a thing of the past. Her Boston debut made it clear that both she and her band are for real."

Modern Cool, Barber's fourth album and follow up to her well-received release, *cafe blue*, received a 5 star review from *Down Beat* magazine which said the record "hits with a rush" and is "sonically, one of the best recording ever

Patricia Barber

made a jazz singer with small acoustic ensemble." On it she relies on her chillingly gorgeous voice and continually evolving depth of vision. To Barber, the title is significant, "Modern is wonderful here is that the term 'modern' now has a

word in that it has two connotations," she said. "It recalls those heady days at the beginning of the 20th century when idealism was palpably in the air but the twist

Barber's last release, *cafe blue*, earned her the *DownBeat* #1 Female Jazz Vocal "Talent Deserving Wider Recognition" and "Best of 1994" in: The Village Voice, *Billboard*, Chicago Sun-Times, and *Jazziz*. Prior to *cafe blue*, she recorded *Split* (Floyd) and *A Distortion of Love* (Antilles/Polygram).

Courtesy Premonition Records

Come handle the art a way with words: Artists books and sculptures by Susan Hensel

Come handle the art in March. East Lansing artist Susan Hensel will be bringing her increasingly well known books and sculptures to Todd Mack's Custom Framing Gallery for the month of March. Her work is represented in collections and exhibitions worldwide. In the last year alone, her artists books and book related sculpture have traveled to California, Nebraska, Ohio, Indiana, Alabama, Georgia, New York, New Mexico, Illinois, Connecticut, West Virginia, Mexico. Her work has been published in "Biblio Magazine", "The Studio" and as examples in several books available on the craft of handmade books. Show reviews have been strong.

So, what are artists books and why here, at Todd Mack's? According to Susan, an artists book is a multimedia, interactive, time-based, three dimensional piece of art in which form (the shape of the book and it's movement) and content (what's on the paper) are full inter-related. An artists book is not just an illustrated story. In an artists book neither the story nor the illustration stands alone. Each aspect of the book is essential for the meaning to happen. An artists book may or may not have words, usually will have some sort of imagery and really needs to be handled, manipulated and "read" in order to come alive. As a distinct art form, artists books have been produced for over a century. They are shown in museums, libraries and galleries all over the world, even our own MSU Library and the Smithsonian Museum.

So, why here?

"I walked into Todd's, one day, and declared I had found my framer! The esthetic of the store appealed to

me. The look was compatible with my work. It seemed like a grand place to have people come and experience the intimacy of the artists book," declared Susan. She went on to say that all artists tend to work in relative obscurity and book artists perhaps even more than others. She takes nearly all opportunities available to "evangelize for books!" She goes on to say, "Museums are wonderful. They do help preserve art for the future, but, they also turn us all into spectators and audience. They deaden the participatory experience that has always been an intended aim of art. Art seemed to lose it's power to move people when people became audience rather than participant. It's very important to me that more and more people have the experience of breaking through the "hands-off" wall that has gone up around art. I challenge them to touch, feel, smell, read, move, to take a risk and think about the content of art."

In addition to the artists books for which she is well known, Susan will be premiering three new sculptures: "The Gift," "From the Soul;" and "The Parable of Flight." Two are rather large altar pieces that challenge the viewer to re-think some common traditions, and Parable is a four foot, lighted wing. Once again, people are encouraged to interact with the pieces, manipulating the pages, opening the doors, stripping down expectations to get to the core of meaning.

So, come handle the art in March. Meet the artist, Sunday, March 7, 1-4 pm. A Way With Words will be on display March 7-27.

Josh White Jr. to perform for Abbott Nursery School

Abbott Nursery School is pleased to present musical artist and popular national and local entertainer Josh White Jr. in a family music concert. The Concert will be held on Saturday, March 6, 1999 at 11 a.m. at All Saints Episcopal Church Sanctuary, 800 Abbott Road in East Lansing.

Josh White Jr. is known for his vast repertoire of children's songs, classic folk compositions and songs that warm the and enrich the soul. His accomplished guitar skills, charming wit and masterful lyrics make this is a performance to be enjoyed by all.

Tickets are \$15 per family or \$5 per person. All proceeds of the concert will benefit Abbott Nursery School.

Abbott Nursery School is a nonprofit, licensed pre-school promoting learning through play for children from two and one-half through five years of age. The school was established in East Lansing in 1967.

For further concert and ticket information call 351-7410.

Courtesy of Abbott Nursery School