

The Warrior Queen and The New Age Queen holds court on Allen Parkway near the Cajun/Zydeco Stage.

Howard Castleberry / Chronicle

On a roll

Artemobiles to merge with stationary exhibits at international fest



Howard Castleberry / Chronicle

Phantom Neighborhood consists of approximately 25 concrete steps at regular intervals along Buffalo Bayou's edge.

By PATRICIA C. JOHNSON
Houston Chronicle

THE second and final weekend of the Houston International Festival gets off to a colorful, raucous start on Saturday when artmobiles from across the country roll through downtown.

The third annual *Roadside Attractions* parade begins at noon Saturday on the corner of Rusk and Smith streets and winds itself down Lamar to where Allen Parkway begins. Organized by the Orange Show and co-sponsored by the festival, *Roadside Attractions* has grown since 1987 from a regional to a national event that attracts car fanciers and mobile folk artists in growing numbers.

This year, the festival highlight includes a fleet of 17 Rolls Royces preceded by the Band of Her Majesty's Welsh Guard. They will be followed by more than 100 rolling, wheeled "units," ranging from low riders, bicycles, push-carts and motorcycles to embellished Caddys, Buicks and Chevys, and to skaters, marching bands and skateboarders. A jury of five will award \$3,500 in cash prizes. The jurors are art collectors Marilyn Lubetkin (Orange Show Foundation founder) and Ann Harithas; Menil Collection curator Walter Hopps; Harry Hurt II of *Newsweek* magazine, and Larry Fuente from California, who is a "father" of the artmobile movement and creator of the rhinestone-encrusted, flamingo-flared MAD CAD that led the parade last spring.

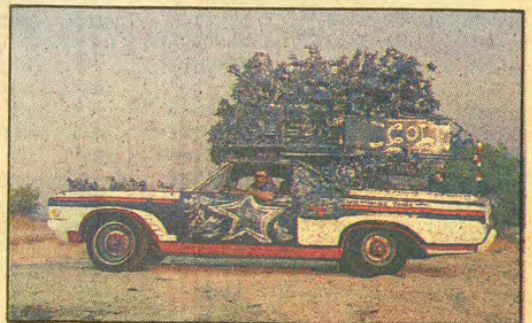
And as *Roadside Attractions* rolls into the afternoon sun, other visual components of the festival will remain in locations around the city for several weeks more.

The festival has reinstated the outdoor sculpture exhibit previously known as the Bayou Show. Titled *Landscapes*, the 1990 presentation consists of seven landscape/sculptural installations by six Houston artists selected by jury and one invited artist from Britain. The works run along the length of the bayou.

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You'll see *The Supercoupe*, above, and Ronald Colt Snow's *Coltmobile* in the third annual *Roadside Attractions* parade, which begins at noon Saturday on the corner of Rusk and Smith streets and winds itself down Lamar to where Allen Parkway begins.



Fest

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from the Henry Moore *Spindle Piece* (across Allen Parkway from Jeff Davis Hospital) to the Sabine Street Bridge on the edge of downtown. On Tuesday, four of the works were in place; the remaining three — by John Atlas, Dean Ruck and Wendy Smith — should be ready by Friday.

Mark Monroe's *Standing Alone* is a tower made of 12 metal garbage cans set on a rise and nearly disappearing into surrounding trees.

Sharon Kopriva buried a family group of her signature mummylike sculptures under Plexiglas (to be replaced by wire mesh) simulating an archaeological dig on the bayou banks and titled the piece *Excavation Site, Houston*.

Rose Finn-Kelcey, the invited artist, offers an untitled work consisting of a row of seven swinging bar doors, installed just so to frame views of downtown from one side and pastoral scenes of the bayou from the other.

The Aart Guize Ink (Michael Galbreth and Jack Massing) created *Phantom Neighborhood* after the

Parks Department rejected an earlier proposal. Their installation consists of approximately 25 concrete steps at regular intervals on a diagonal that parallels, crosses over and parallels the bayou's edge again. Three, four and five-stepped, these humble remnants of homes long gone inspire a long view of the bayou as the eye follows the dotted path they create. The steps conjure the presence of the row of houses to which they once led, and, by implication, to the people who once inhabited them.

Atlas' piece, titled *Possible Monuments*, will consist of silhouettes of cars, a coffin-shaped box, a tower topped by a pyramid, and fruit trees. Ruck will build *Bayou Fence House* with chain-link and a rotating mechanism that will propel balls into the air in random fashion.

Smith says that her piece, *TACHU (Three Nests on the Bayou)*, will "embody the idea of nests or containers for nourishment."

Landscapes remain on the bayou through May 15.

British sculptor Keith Khan was commissioned by the festival to create decorative works for the downtown streets. The artist, born in Trinidad in 1963, made seven

brightly colored wood sculptures based on historical and contemporary queens of England and in honor of the festival's salute to the United Kingdom.

The whimsical and glittery queens are *The Warrior Queen* and *The New Age Queen*, which hold court on Allen Parkway near the Cajun/Zydeco Stage. *The Style Queen*, based on Vivian Westwood, known as "The Mother of Punk," struts on Wortham Plaza. *The Nottinghill Carnival Queen* is at the Latin Stage (Jones Plaza), *Elizabeth I* at the Houston Lighting & Power Building; *The Bhangra Daytime Disco Queen*, at One Shell Plaza. *Queen Victoria* reigns over First Interstate Bank Plaza across from City Hall's reflection pool.

But the royal fantasies are not alone. Several fine art exhibits also are being presented in celebration of the UK.

■ *Artists in National Parks* features paintings, works on paper and photographs by 24 British artists who depict, interpret and otherwise honor the national parks of England and Wales, through Friday, NCNB Center, 700 Louisiana; 6 a.m.-6 p.m. weekdays.

■ *On the Balcony of the Nation* spotlights the work of six artists

from Ireland, on view at the Lawndale Art Center, 5600 Hilman, 921-4155; through April 12.

■ The Museum of Natural Science has two special exhibits: *Banks Florilegium*, 18th-century botanical prints from the British Museum, through June 3; and *Encyclopedia Galactica*, a hands-on exhibit from Northern Ireland that incorporates laser-disc technology; through June 17. One Hermann Circle Drive in Hermann Park, 639-4600.

■ *Intellectually Correct Photographs of Vehicles* has been installed in celebration of and in conjunction with the Orange Show's *Third Annual Roadside Attraction Parade*, at Treebeards' Restaurant downtown, 214 Travis.

■ *Scottish Tapestries from the Covecot Studios, Edinburgh*, contributes another visual dimension to the festival through April, at Transco Tower, 2800 Post Oak Blvd., 8 a.m.-6 p.m. weekdays.

A final note for the record only: Winifred Potenza of San Francisco is the author of the 7-foot high, 360-foot long acrylic on canvas titled *Peaceable Realm* that will hang from the upper edge of the Albert Thomas Convention Center over the weekend.