

DISCOVER THE FINE ART OF AMERICAN CRAFT

Fine works in jewelry, clay, art glass, wood, and fiber by America's best.



Colorful etched vases by Zellige.

The Real Mother Goose

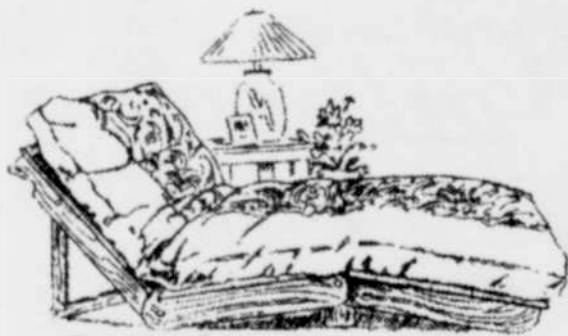
A Shop and Gallery in Portland, Oregon

Portland Airport
(503) 284-9929

901 S.W. Yamhill
(503) 223-9510

Washington Square
(503) 620-2243

So what if your holiday guests aren't flexible... Your futon is!



Santiam

Frame, Double Foam
Core Futon:
\$198



The Texan

Frame, Double Size
Foam Core
Futon, Cover:
\$299

Baja

Platform Bed Frame:
Double: **\$180**
Queen: **\$195**

Available in Mahogany, Golden Oak, and Black Finishes



COTTON CLOUD FUTONS

MAINSTORE WAREHOUSE

1916 NE BROADWAY

335-0758

BEAVERTON
11345 SW Canyon
626-0400

PORTLAND
3125 E. Burnside
234-6567

QUEEN OF THE KEYBOARDS

Seattle's own Marge Starks raises money for AIDS programs from her CD and tape sales

by Christopher Kamera

When Marge Starks was growing up in Portland in the 1930s, she had no idea that she would turn out to be one of the Northwest's most celebrated AIDS activists of the 1990s. With the help of "a few dozen friends," Starks has raised nearly \$45,000 for AIDS programs through the sales of her tapes and CDs—albums based on her performance repertoire as Seattle's "Queen of the Keyboards," as one columnist tagged her.

Music

Marge had a legendary run at the now departed Ritz Cafe in Seattle. After a stint at the gay-owned Jack's Bistro, Thumper's restaurant lured her into its dining room, where Marge has been an audience-pleasing fixture for the last several years. Thumper's, Seattle's classiest gay and lesbian restaurant, even underwrote Marge's most recent CD and tape release, *24 Karats*.

All proceeds of that album and Marge's three earlier recordings are earmarked to benefit people with AIDS. Seattle's Rosehedge care facility has received more than \$24,000 in recent years from the sale of Marge's music.

Symphony, the Los Angeles Symphony and other major orchestras. She studied at Juilliard and has performed under such world-famous conductors as Klemperer, Stravinsky, Mitropoulis and Arthur Fiedler.

After her career as an accountant ended in 1984 ("I was out of work," she bluntly says. "Rejected a hundred times."), her gay son suggested she "go up to the Ritz and play for Ray," the owner. She did, and the rest, as they say, is history. Marge has six children—"two girls, three boys and Jim," she says. With humorous glee Starks notes that she was "married for more than 30 years—I just divided the time between three husbands."

Marge developed an intensely loyal following at the Ritz. Friends and fans encouraged her first recording in 1987: a tape called *Dear Friends, Love Marge*. She earmarked proceeds for AIDS support. A second tape, *More Love Notes*, followed. *Best of Friends*, released last year, combines both earlier tapes onto a CD. Marge's first CD, *That '40s Feeling*, a salute to the biggest hits of that nostalgic decade, proved to be another success. Sales showed that Marge's fans supported the dual CD and tape format.

Light piano classics, Broadway show tunes, Hollywood hits, and a few classical themes highlight Marge's recordings. They are immensely

listenable and gimmick free. As one friend said, "It's like having Marge play in your living room."

The new *24 Karats* continues the tradition. From the opening *Showboat* medley to the final notes of "People," the album is a delight. At the gala release party at Thumper's, fans were buying multiple copies. One Boeing executive bought 10 copies—"That takes care of my Christmas shopping," he smiled, as Marge inscribed each tape. By the end of the evening, Marge had autographed up more than \$2,000 worth of tapes and CDs. One fan keeps "a couple of tapes and CDs on hand for host gifts or last-minute birthday occasions."

One of Marge's most interesting sales is a continuing order from a convent of nuns in the Midwest. "Imagine that some-

one sent one of the sisters a CD," Marge noted, "but every few months I get another order from the same convent. Maybe they're using them for gifts for family members." Or maybe the halls are alive with the sound of Marge.

Marge's recordings are on sale at Thumper's and numerous Capitol Hill locations in Seattle. They can be ordered, toll free, at 1-800-213-4334. "I can't promise overnight delivery for Christmas," Marge said, "but we sure can try. If we need to mail CD or tape orders on Christmas Eve, then we need to do it," she declared. "Every dollar counts."

"And, don't forget," she added with a smile, "Valentine's Day is coming soon."



The Thumper's rabbit watches as Marge's sales near the goal

© Rick Mace '94

Marge began raising funds for AIDS in 1987 when her first tape was released. Her gala 70th birthday party at Thumper's raised nearly \$6,000 for Rosehedge. Now 72, Marge has no plans of stopping in her fight against AIDS. "We hope to make \$45,000 this holiday season, and I'm not stopping until we hit the \$50,000 mark," she said recently.

Marge Starks is an amazing woman. The youngest musician to play with the Portland Symphony Orchestra, Marge grew up in Portland and studied music there. She graduated from Jefferson High School in 1939—known then as Margery Williams. She played the bassoon for 35 years, with the Portland Symphony (as Marge Smith), the Seattle

DRAWING BY RICK MACE