

'Art' or 'Tree,' Decision Confronts City Inspector

A bearded Torrance art dealer who wanted a tree in front of his newly constructed gallery is preparing to do battle with the entire city government.

The "tree" consists of a telephone pole surrounded by a jungle of steel rods.

"It is a true work of art," says Robert Hare as he admires the 45-foot structure which has drawn the wrath of the Torrance Building Department.

The "tree" is being constructed by famed artist and sculptor Ortho Pettyjohn, who works on it daily in front of Hare's International Artist Cooperative Galleries in the Rolling Hills Plaza shopping center at Crenshaw Blvd. and Pacific Coast Hwy.

An unappreciative city building inspector recently eyed the work from all sides—and then ordered Hare to take it down.

"That's just a sign," said the inspector. "It'll have to go."

"It's a tree," answered Hare. "Some day it will be world famous."

"I say it's a sign," said the inspector, "and I say it goes."

Torrance officials say the tree must be classified as a sign and that it must come down because it is being sup-

ported by poles.

"NEVER, NEVER, NEVER!" declares Hare. "Since when does the city have the right to tell a citizen that he can't construct a work of art on private property?"

Hare vows he'll run the city up a tree if they so much as lay a hand on Pettyjohn's creation.

"I am conferring with an attorney and I intend to get an injunction against the city to make sure they leave my tree alone."

Torrance City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier says he has heard plenty about the weird statue, but has not yet seen it.

He also admits that the city may have to go to court and let a judge decide if the work is art, or just a poorly constructed sign.

"Mr. Hare could very well seek an injunction against us," said Remelmeier, "and then we'd just have to wait until the matter is settled legally."

A building department spokesman today admitted that they are none too anxious to tangle with the bay-area art defender.

"We haven't had a single complaint," he said, "so maybe we'll just wait and see if

Torrance Firemen Donate Blood For Ailing Son of Co-Worker

A group of Torrance firemen have notified the Red Cross they want to give blood to replace that used by the son of one of their co-workers who recently underwent delicate open-heart surgery at UCLA Medical Center.

Described as "always being a little fireball," Stephen Orr, 3, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Orr, 18410 Haas Ave., was operated upon on April 6.

"Just to show you how active Stephen has always been—even though he was born with a hole in the heart—he turned a summersault for the doctors in his bed the fifth day after his operation," explained his mother.

Fifteen pints of blood obtained through the Red Cross Blood Program were required for surgery which corrected Stephen's heart defect.

NOTE MURDER

Dr. Charles Johnson noted a loud heart murmur in Stephen when he was an infant. The decision to operate now will make it possible for the youngster to look forward "to a perfectly normal, active life."

Twenty-eight Torrance firemen will donate blood at the community bloodmobile to be held at the American Legion Hall, 1109 Border Ave., on Thursday, August 17.

Persons who wish to donate blood are requested to telephone FA 8-647 for an appointment between 2:30 and 7 p.m.

Runge makes his home at 4110 175th Street, Torrance.

it creates a hazard to the health and safety of the public."

"It's a good thing they did not have building inspectors in ancient Greece," snorted Hare. "They probably would have called the statue of Venus a dangerous rock."



CATALINA-BOUND—Getting ready to go on a Torrance Recreation Department teenage trip to Catalina Island next Thursday are Tom Roach and Jane Butterfield. The day-long trip will include supervised fun and recreation for \$6.50, including transportation to and from Catalina. Further information can be obtained from the Recreation Department. Reservations should be made immediately.

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