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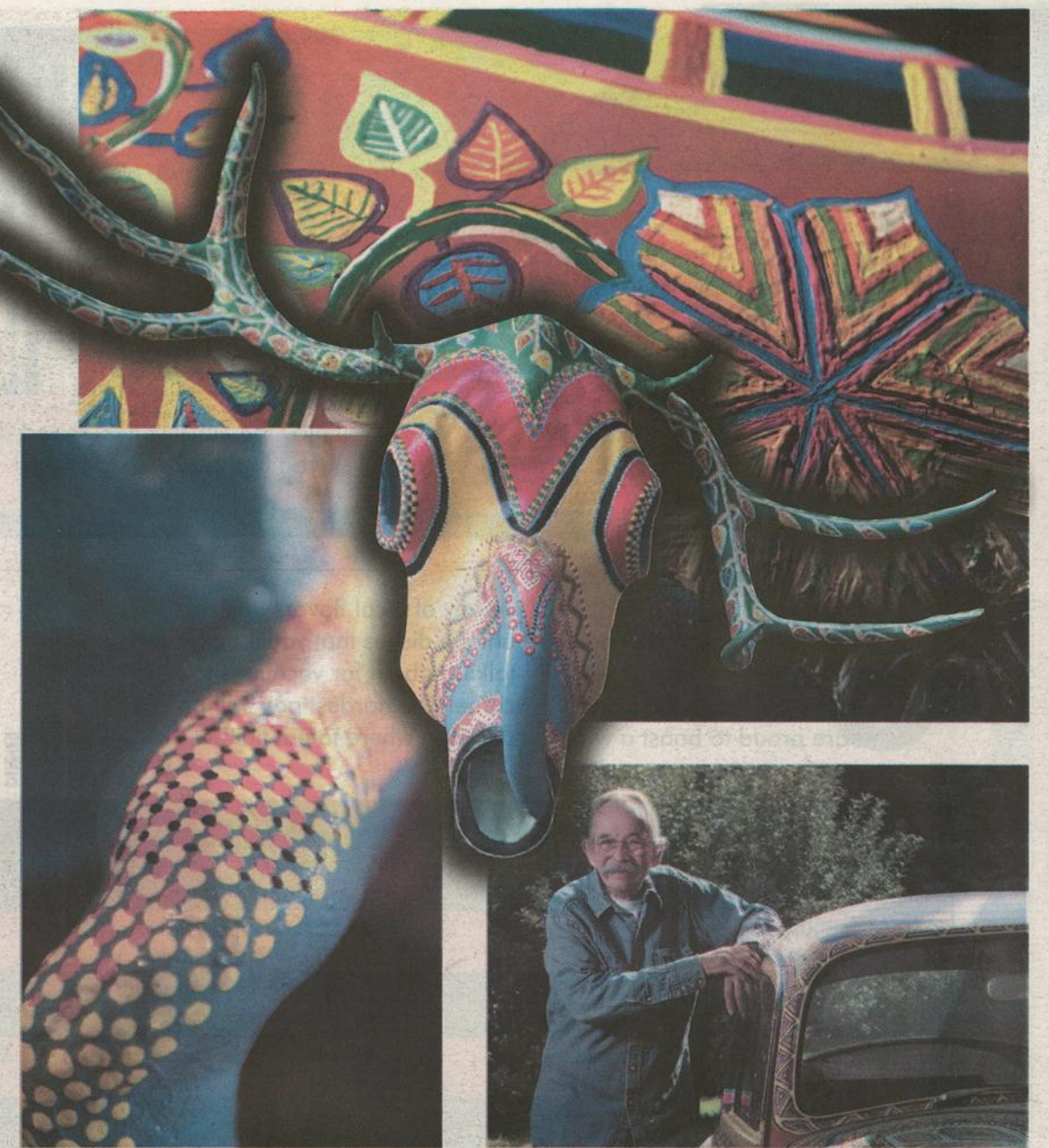
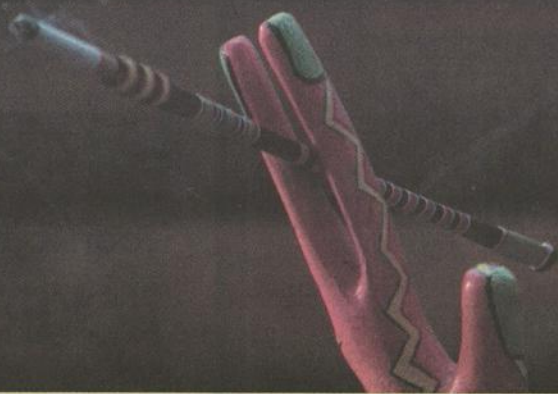
CLYMER'S CREATURES

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Paul Clymer will display several creatures built from scrap materials at the Wyoming State Library in Cheyenne. He also is bringing several painted skulls and other objects.

CLYMER'S CREATURES



By **AMBER PEABODY**
Special sections editor

For the last 10 years, Paul Clymer has been creating his "creatures" with one goal in mind. "The idea is for them to be smile generators," he said. "And I'm having fun with it in my old age. I retired 10 years ago and have been painting most of that time." A group of Clymer's creatures will be featured in a display at the Wyoming State Library in Cheyenne beginning Sept. 26. It will be Clymer's first show, and he's

feeling the nerves. "My wife (Frances Clymer) is a librarian and once the state librarian stayed at our house as a guest," he said. "Every time my wife turned her back the state librarian was out here in my shop. She told me I needed to show these down at the state library. "I'm glad my first time out I get to do it out of town though," he added. "I'm nervous because I don't consider myself a real artist." Clymer began creating the pieces following a woodworking accident. "After a number of trips to the emergency room and losing the



tips of some of my fingers on my right hand, I tried painting to teach myself patience," he said. "Painting was a lot more fun than woodworking, with fewer sharp edges." He builds his creatures using tree trimmings, pine burls, scrap wood, trash bin-sourced clothing, antlers, skulls, plaster of Paris, epoxy and anything else that he thinks might work. "It's about as good as this junk will get," he said. "I scrounge whatever I can and try to keep the cost of materials down." The humorous pieces give a nod to Native American kachinas and other indigenous pre-Christian idols and sentinel figures.

"I created the first ones because I wanted to look at something colorful and cheerful outside when everything was gray," he said. "I like bright colors and contrast stuff, but I've never had an art class in my life and it shows." Clymer spends hundreds of hours painting the details on his pieces using a high-gloss acrylic paint. "I use a lot of day glow paint, too," he said. "If I could figure out how to display them with black light that would be great." It usually takes Clymer 4-6 months to finish each creature. He plans to take at least four completed creatures to the show, along with several painted

skulls, a painted walking stick and a shot gun. "It's taken about 10 years to build all the pieces," he said. "Each one evolves as I go along depending on what I want to do." Clymer hasn't limited his painting skills to just his creatures. He also painted a 1967 VW Beetle, taking 3,500 hours to do all the detailed decoration. "I go to town to make a grouch smile, and it usually works," he said. In the spring he plans to take the car to an art car parade in Kansas. There will be an opening reception for his exhibit Tuesday, Sept. 27, at the Wyoming State Library.