

Make your art a gift

By David Messing
special writer

I really admire people who plan ahead. I just can't, or maybe I should say I just don't. I am not going to blame my short coming on my business schedule, my childhood, my home (I've been remodeling for the last three years) or my boys whose schedules have put Sandy and I "on the road again." There is just so much today that tomorrow seems a long way off.

Thema Pugh is one of my very talented art students. A couple of months ago she asked me to speak at her Art Club. When we figured out which was the best night of the week, I asked, "Is it this month?" and she said, "Oh no it's April of 1985."

WELL, TO a non-planner like myself that sounds like it's about three light years from November. Yes, Thema, I'll be there but let's talk about it around March. Wait a minute, I did plan ahead when we named our youngest son. I thought "when" Adam grows up and "if" he decides to be an artist, it would be neat if his initials spelled his name. So we named him: Adam Drew Aaron Messing (A.D.A.M.). I can just see it in the lower right hand corner of a painting.

SINCE FOR once in my life I planned ahead, when Adam grows up he will probably end up a welder or something. You know I don't even plan ahead for the holidays until they are here. Like I think of Thanksgiving, the morning I get up and the parade is on.

I also do all my Christmas shopping bright and early on the Dec. 24. For you folks that think ahead, I thought it would be interesting to talk about some of the media that would make for nice Christmas gifts. Also I would like to mention some of the very interesting gifts non artist have created by framing memorabilia.

FIRST, LET me mention how nice it is to give a gift of your artwork. Your work of art is as characteristic of you as your finger-prints. Your work of art is a personal expression, an objectification of your feelings. Your art is a creation, characteristic of your talent and most people will appreciate it.

Andree for example, is one of my students and she recently went home to France for a visit. Well Andree picked up a stone from the River Franche and saved it. Then everywhere she went in Europe, she bought a stamp characteristic of the country. Then when she came home she decoupage'd the many stamps to the stone. Best of all she gave it to me. It is a beautiful and thoughtful gift and I really appreciate the time that she put into it.

I think artists often discount their own art work, but as a gift it is really quite a piece of themselves they are giving. So do something especially for Uncle Bill or Great Grandma or that new in-law.

ONE NICE medium is pen and ink on glass. This finished artwork must of course be fitted into a frame and the total appearance is not often impressive. To ink on glass I only recommend technical pen ink or Higgins Black magic. All you need to do is lay glass over a sketch and start inking in all the lines and details. A technical pen is fine for this, as it maintains a very fine line. Quill pens also work well but they can produce a heavier line or you may prefer to just paint little sections solid black than cross hatch with a scratch point as in scratch-board.

THE SCRATCHBOARD technique on glass actually produces a much finer line than on scratch-board, and any mistakes can of course be reinked and reworked.

But remember, only use tech pen ink or Black Magic, as other India inks tend to blister and pop off when you use the scratchpoint.

Keep this and all gift artwork small. Often, frustrated recipients of 18 by 24 pictures come in and ask us to help them figure out what they can do with their overseas gift.

PEN-AND-INK on smooth colored paper or mat board. Colored pencil on dark colors or black paper or mat board.

Speaking of colored pencil on mat board, you have got to try colored pencil on linen mat board. Just use one or two color pencils, Burnt Umber and Burnt Ocher are my favorites on gray linen.

The weave of the board surface actually can produce a stitched effect to your drawing. Also with gift art, remember to play down your colors.

NOTHING COULD put your loved one on the spot any more than to give them a multicolored work of art and find that most of the colors don't go anywhere in their home. I have an aunt who knitted us a pillow last Christmas.

"Oh," we said, "wow" we said. "Oh you shouldn't have," we said. And of the three exclamations, we really meant the third one.

Of the 25 colors in the pillow, I think six of them

artifacts

are fluorescent. But I guess a glow-in-the-dark pillow isn't all that bad. If you are good at calligraphy or even kind of good then find a nice "one line" phrase and letter it in color on colored paper or board. Or, instead of ink, try liquid bleach in your pen and letter on colored mat board.

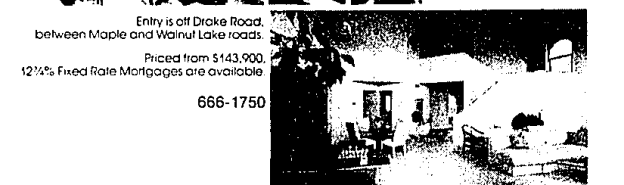
IT TAKES a minute or two but watch as the letters turn white against the colored background. When matted and/or framed calligraphy is a beautiful gift.

If you can't letter at all, use dry transfer letters on colored paper or mat board.

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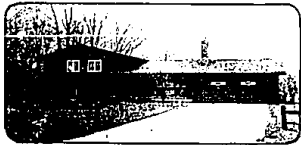
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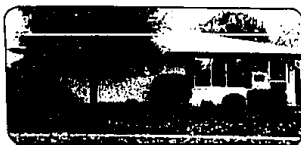
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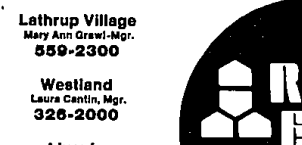
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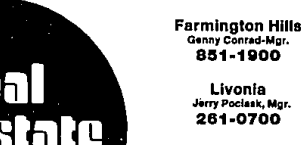


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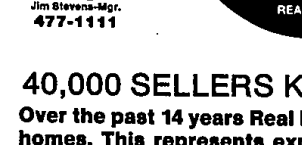
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