

Art open to everyone, enjoy its simplicity

This is another in a series of lessons on art and drawing by special columnist David Messing. He has taught for eight years and operates an art store, Art Store and More, 18774 Midfield Rd., Livonia. Messing encourages questions and comments from readers. You may write him at his store or c/o Observer Newspapers, 23352 Farmington Road, Farmington MI 48024.



By David Messing
special writer

If you haven't got the flu, raise your hand. Now if you have your hand up, you better stop reading my article. Why? Because everyone I come in contact with seems to have, or just had or is coming down with the flu. Your only chance is that a newspaper is realistically sanitary.

artifacts

Well, Adam was no exception. For two days last week he laid so still, too still as a matter of fact. His little face was flushed with fever; taking turns holding his limp little hands we all whispered words of encouragement. Sandy oftentimes remarked to Adam, "Honey, I wish I could be sick instead of you." At that his eyes would break their stare to momentarily grant a brave little smile.

But early in the third day, Adam's fever broke and he had the typical 5-year-old recovery. "Instantaneous." By the day's end he was so active, too active as a matter of fact. The next day Sandy went into the Art Store to replace one of our workers, Sally, who also had the flu. Then Sandy left work early as she, too, came home with a temperature.

THAT NIGHT I coaxed Sandy to the

table to try to eat something. I sent out for pizza (remember how I cook?). So there we all sat, eating pizza as Sandy sat wrapped in an afghan staring at a piece of buttered toast. As a joke to tease Adam, Sandy said, "Hey, little guy, how come you gave your Mommy the flu?" Adam, now the picture of perfect health, looked a little puzzled that she would even ask such a question. "Well, Mommy, you said you wished you could be sick instead of me, so you got it."

I guess to Adam it was just that simple. No wonder he kind of smiled every time she said that. Don't you wish everything was just that simple and clear in our adult world? Perhaps things are relatively simple and we adults make them complicated in our efforts to understand their simplicity. Or better yet, perhaps everything is both simple and complex. For example the blossom on

a weed can be a simple object and yet a very close look may reveal its complexity.

PERHAPS THE blossom petals are deep magenta at their base tinting to pink at the further most tips. The blossom over all may be nestled in a green tuft of hairlike structure and all of this is perhaps held aloft by a sturdy green shaft, rich in nutrients from the soil and protected by a mantle of dagger-like barbedules. It is all in the way you look at it. I believe that those who glory in the complexity of whatever it is that they have mastered do so as it places them above another or at least high within their peer group.

Maybe there is a better way to describe this person — a snob! It is odd that those who think they know it all are the last to learn what is new because they are no longer open to learning. Certainly art has both a simple and a complex side. Those who enjoy it's simplicity shouldn't be apologetic and neither should those who enjoy it's complexity become snobs.

There is plenty of room in art and you are welcome to come in and if the Army will pardon me stealing their ex-

pression, "be all that you can be." So what if you have studied art and taken lessons and your art work is only basic or simple. You do what you do for you. And good for you, if you advance with every lesson and mastery of all media is within your ability. So whether your art draws a crowd or just a comment from a loved one, your art is yours. At whatever level you are at, your expression through your art may ring true. So approach every media simply and advance at your own rate.

To better illustrate my point I would like to tell you about one of my students, Jane Hassely. I remember clearly two years ago when after the second lesson period Jane came to me and said, "I don't think I'm in the right class here. You see I have never drawn before, so this might be my last week."

I DON'T remember what I said to her, but I encouraged her to give it a few more weeks.

Thank goodness she did because Jane turned out to be a very good artist who in only two years can handle most every media. She began with a few simple crosshatch strokes with pen and ink, then moved from medium to medium,

step by step ever increasing in confidence and ability. I don't recommend everyone start by learning the theory of color or some other complex aspect of art. Just start at the beginning and let art lead you through a lifetime of expressing it's simplicity or investigating it's complexity. But remember to start at the beginning.

Gee, that's funny. . . I feel kind of hot. . . I better close now and go lay down. I don't think I feel so good.

Artfolks: Pat Zine from Bedford is a calligrapher or is that calligrapher? Well, anyway she is a terrific lady who does beautiful calligraphy. Pat was showing me some of her work when one piece in particular caught my eye. It seems each letter of every word was a slightly different shade of white. When I asked her what kind of ink she used she smiled and said "that's bleach." Instead of dipping my pen in white ink I dipped it in bleach. It takes a little while for the letters to show up but it sure is interesting isn't it. The bleach was lettered into colored mat board and what fascinated me was the many tints produced of what ever mat color was used. Thank you, Pat, for the tip.

Violinist displays commanding ability

By Ruth Zaromp
special writer

From within the beauty of music, there are times when one can realize that little extra magic of additional beauty and extra depth.

Such was the case when the new member of Renaissance City Chamber Players played with the group for the first time. Anatoli Chelnouk was introduced to the audience as a performer in a Soviet chamber ensemble, the Moscow Virtuosi, who had defected while on tour in France. He will be leading the second violin section.

To introduce Chelnouk, the concert opened with the third movement from Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Violins and Two Cellos, in which the soloists were Misha Rachlevsky and Chelnouk, violins, and Pamela Higghough and Martha Reikow, cellos. The soloists formed a small semi-circle within the larger semi-circle of the other players, and the audience watched and listened while the melodies moved through these two groups. Rachlevsky, series founder and artistic director, and Chelnouk had performed together in Russia. This was a musical reunion.

THE EVENING continued with Scarlatti's Sonata in the form of a

suite. This was an arranged rendition and is notable for its romantic style. The group left out one part of the suite, reportedly because it was extremely romantic in character and didn't fit in with the Baroque era at all.

Some of Scarlatti's works have been arranged by other people on various occasions. From the viewpoint of authenticity, I didn't find this version satisfying or reflective of the composer's direct but glittering style.

Among the most rewarding aspects of the program was the part of guest soloist Donald Baker, principal oboe in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. He played two baroque concertos — one by Handel in G minor and the other by Vivaldi in C major.

Baker, whom I have heard on numerous occasions, gave an impressive demonstration of musicianship. The Handel concerto, which is a relatively familiar work, was played elegantly with smoothly flowing passages.

The slow movements were contemplative without getting bogged down and the faster movements were lively without being unduly rushed. There was a sense of good cooperation between the soloist and the group.

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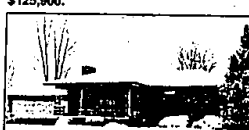
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