

'Oops' not necessarily a mistake

By David Messing
Special writer

OPS IS DEFINED AS "a typical expression of dismay." I would imagine that there are certain places that you just wouldn't want to hear it. Probably the worst place to hear "oops" would be if you are on the operating table.

Of course, you would not want to hear it while you are in the dentist's chair or how about the first time you ever had a perm at a beauty shop.

As much as we hate to hear the expression, it most often flows freely from the lips of watercolorists. My first watercolor went straight from school to the outdoor trash bin in the backyard. Unfortunately, Mom found it and "oops" from yesteryear is still around to haunt me.

Well, lately, I am discovering, an "oops" in watercolor is relatively easy to fix. One popular mistake in watercolor is when the color washes over some special highlight or detail.

Let's imagine you are painting an animal and the little sparkle of white in its eye was lost. Simply allow the area to dry, then cut a little circle where the "catchlight" should be. Now lower the angle of the blade and gently lift a thin layer from the inside of the cut circle.

SANDPAPER IS an excellent tool for lightening an overly dark area. Of course, the grit should be relatively fine. I have used a sandpaper as coarse as No. 150. As you lightly sand, you will first begin to see the texture of your paper showing through. If this is pleasing then, stop and remove any colored dust particles. If you wish to remove all the color, then simply and lightly continue sanding.

Remember to erase any embedded dust particles with a kneaded eraser. Then smooth the paper with the back of your fingernail. A synthetic brush dipped in household bleach will effectively lighten or remove most colors. But you must test the paper and the color you wish to remove.

Bleach can yellow paper and the area may continue to affect your colors if you paint over the repaired area.



artifacts
David Messing

What is good about sandpaper and bleach is that it allows your repairs to be transparent. Transparency is the top criteria for invisible watercolor repairs.

If you are careful you can make some excellent repairs with watercolor pencils. Derwent watercolor pencils are the richest and most fluid when the area is moistened. Watercolor pencils do tend to be rather opaque so use caution when repairing a transparent watercolor.

PASTELS ARE somewhat effective when working a large area. To apply pastels in a transparent look, you must rub the color on a wad of paper towel and then rub the towel onto the paper. This technique requires some practice. Now if you feel you are approaching or have arrived at the professional status, the congratulations. That does not, however, remove the possibility of a mistake. It is just that you make a very professional "oops." If there is such a thing.

The best thing you can buy to fix a mistake of novice or professional quality would be an air eraser. Pasche does make this little dream machine and it will absolutely remove your mistakes and let you try it "one more time." The cost of this little machine is about \$95 and it is well worth it, depending on how much your "oops" is worth to you.

David Messing has been an art teacher for 10 years and operates two art stores, Art Store and More, 1838 Middlebelt, Livonia and 285 N. Main, Plymouth. He encourages questions and comments from readers. You may call him at 822-8311 or write in care of this newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

Foundations honors artists and patrons

The 1988 Michigan Arts Awards, given annually by the Arts Foundation of Michigan, will be presented at a 6:15 p.m. dinner on Wednesday, at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

Birmingham author Elmore "Dutch" Leonard is the keynote speaker. The Michigan Arts Awards were established in 1976 to honor five Michigan artists for outstanding achievements in their field.

This year's recipients of the \$2,500 awards are: Ann Arbor composer/pl-

anist William Bolcom; Detroit jazz pianist Bessie Coleman; Kalamazoo author Stuart Dybek; Troy photographer Balducci Korn; and Detroit painter Tom Parish.

The Arts Foundation of Michigan is a statewide organization dedicated to supporting and recognizing excellence in the arts. It is funded by contributions from corporations, foundations and individuals and isn't related to the state-funded Michigan Council for the Arts.

correction

The date for a workshop by cellist Janos Starker at Detroit Community School was incorrect in last week's Creative Living section.

Starker will give a workshop beginning at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, May 17. It is open to the public, free of

charge and will last until noon. It will be held in the Detroit Community Music School auditorium in Detroit's Cultural Center.

Starker is guest soloist with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

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Dearborn Symphony in quality concert

Given the proliferation of musical events last week, an extra event was the last thing I needed. But some musical events, like the mythological Sirens, prove to be irresistible in luring the hypnotized listener to his doom.

Fortunately, unlike the case in the mythological story, succumbing to the lure of music in our own time and age may result merely in exhaustion rather than a threat to life, at least if one drives carefully.

The Dearborn Symphony Orchestra, established in 1961, is one of the better community orchestras in our area. Among those who have been with it since its inception are its conductor, Nathan Gordon, and its concertmaster, Edward Kesner.

Gordon recently retired from his position as principal violin of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Kesner has been with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for many years as second violinist.

WHILE THERE IS no serious prospect that the Dearborn Symphony could make the DSO obsolete, it is an orchestra that commands a great deal of respect, judging from its recent program, which took place on



Avigdor Zoromp

Friday at the Edsel Ford High School auditorium.

This appealing program was dedicated to music by the three Bs. Two of the items on the program were formidable musical landmarks — Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto and the Symphony No. 1 by Brahms.

The opening piece, the "Little G" minor Organ Fugue by Bach, was presented here as an orchestral arrangement by Cailliet.

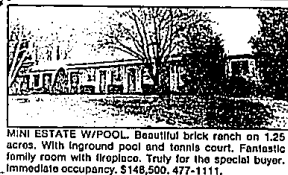
The fact that I dislike Bach arrangements is beside the point and is not the main topic of consideration here. What I did find remarkable was the high degree of clarity and precision in this performance, featuring fine counterpoint at least in the early stages. I would have preferred, though, if this proficiency had been applied to an original or-

chestral work or a movement thereof.

Pianist Ralph Votapek was the soloist in Beethoven's concerto. Votapek is artist-in-residence at Michigan State University in East Lansing.

His performance of the "Emperor" underscored his reputation and high credentials. He demonstrated an unerring technique and a good musical grasp of this demanding work. Even in the opening arpeggios there was little doubt as to his command of the music. His performance was forceful throughout most of the outer movements.

If there is any reservation about this performance, it is that the force and brilliance were occasionally diminished at the expense of the more subtle passages.



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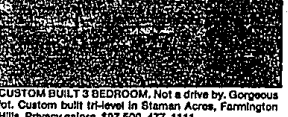
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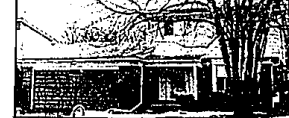
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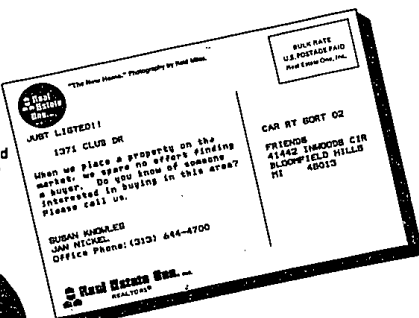
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