

Try to improve nature's artistry

I ADMIRE ANIMALS. I love their attitude toward life.

Take Tiffany, my standard poodle, for example. Every month or so I take her to the dog groomer. Andre bathes her, trims her and puts a ribbon or two on her head or ankles. Proudly, I announce her arrival at home and she gets loads of attention for about 10 minutes.

But once she's back at her old stomping ground — the backyard — she will scout out either a mild pile of leaves, peat moss or the sand box and proceed to roll in it. Then she'll stand on the deck in all her new-found glory: 60 pounds of poodle with her pom-poms poofed, her ribbons gone and her newly coiffed exterior covered with whatever she chose to roll in. Then trotting into the family room, she looks at me as if to say, "Hey, dummy, I'm a dog. What do you expect?"

As you may know by now, I truly love nature. I am fascinated by its simplicity and, with closer observation, am in awe of its complexity.

A comment in David Messing's column last week should have said he looks forward to being in a class where he is a student and not the teacher.

The general balance and beauty of nature calls to me like the spiritual call to a minister.

THE REPRESENTATION of any living thing, be it plant or animal, is more challenging a subject to me than any other. I particularly am interested in making the subject appear as natural as possible. Thus comes the little touch here and there in a sketch or painting to add life to it. Perhaps the addition of a highlight that wasn't in the photo or apparent on the model or the elimination of a defect in the subject's skin, fur or color.

Let's look first at any forest or group of trees to which there is an overall beauty. A closer look reveals the complexity and beauty of the individual trees. Some are outstanding because of color, texture, size or symmetry.

The symmetrical tree is beautiful in its balance and perfection. The asymmetrical tree is beautiful in its "felt" balance and individuality. One is bristly and short yet another catches our attention because of its smooth, white bark and slender height.

How unlike the forest are the features of a bird? Not that much. There are downy, fuzzy feathers; stubby, drab-colored feathers; and



artifacts
David Messing

beautifully colored flight feathers. The feathers around the head more closely resemble hair than feather.

AND AGAIN, HOW unlike the feathers is the hair on a wild cougar? Downy soft fur and hair on his stomach, short tiny hair on his muzzle and around his eyes, long coarse hair on his back and tail. And so it goes on and on. Bone structure, hair color and texture, size and life cycle — all these divide each animal into their characteristic species.

Flower petals, color size and texture, tree leaves, bark and overall height — all things characteristic, all things likewise beautiful.

The artist's responsibility is to faithfully and accurately represent the features that place their subject within its particular family, group, phylum or species. This is, of course, in accordance with the artist's level of ability to accentuate the feature

or quality that first inspired them about the subject.

The artist should also abstract or select which details to render and which to leave out. Never be limited by the particular model. By that I mean if your particular model has a broken feather, tooth or tail, fix it.

As I have mentioned here before, viewers rarely question a photograph, but if any feature appears inaccurate in art work, most viewers will comment on it — usually negatively. So give Ma Nature a helping hand when it's needed. Even if it's only an occasional ribbon or pom-pom.

David Messing has been an art teacher for 10 years and operates the Art Store and More in Livonia. He welcomes comments and questions from readers. These can be directed to him in care of this newspaper at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

Thursday, August 28, 1986 O&E

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Quilt show to capture 'Now and Then'

The Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association's fall exhibition calendar opens with a show of contemporary and traditional quilts. Entitled "Now and Then," the presentation will begin with a preview party 7:30-9:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 12. Tickets to the preview are \$5 for members and \$7.50 for non-members.

The show will continue through Oct. 11 at the BBAA, 1516 S. Cranbrook, Birmingham. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The event is free to the public.

Curated by Merry Silber, the exhibition pays tribute to Michigan's master quiltmaker and historian, Mary Schaefer. Researching and collecting quilts since 1940, Schaefer has been acclaimed nationwide for her crafted and conceptually rich designs, and nominated to the Quilter's Hall of Fame.

Thirteen of her select quilts will be hung with 13 contemporary quilts by Gwen Marston and Joe Cunningham, disciples of Mary Schaefer and custodians of her collection.

Designed and created especially for the BBAA show, Marston's and Cunningham's quilts were inspired by the Schaefer collection. As such, their body of work reflects many similarities while at the same time producing original themes and motifs.

Professional quiltmakers, authors, lecturers and teachers, Marston and Cunningham have been

working together since 1979. In 1984 they conducted their first Beaver Island Quilt Retreat, providing the surroundings of their island studio for serious study.

A HIGHLIGHT OF the quilt exhibition will be the raffish of the 1985 "Birds of Flight" quilt, valued at \$750, currently on view at the BBAA. Additional raffish throughout the exhibition in-

clude a doll quilt and six posters.

Additionally, lecture tours of the show will be conducted by Marston and Cunningham at 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 13. There is a \$2 per person charge. At 3 p.m., Merry Silber quilt exhibition coordinator, will lead a discussion and verbal appraisal of your own quilt at no charge. Other walk-through tours by Silber will be available during the last two weeks of the show.



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REGINA GILBERT

REALTOR-Associate Regina Gilbert is a 20 year real estate veteran and a member of Chamberlain's Million Dollar Club and Top 10% Club, Metro Board of REALTORS. Born in Romania, Regina received a European Education before coming to the United States. She and husband, Michael, have three children and are residents of the Randlewood Area of Farmington Hills. Regina is active with B'nai B'rith, the Small Guild and is on the Speaker's Board of the Holocaust Memorial Center. Regina truly enjoys real estate and working with people. During her off duty hours, Regina enjoys music, the theater, traveling, cooking, swimming and a good "Canasta" game. Contact Regina for all your real estate needs at Chamberlain's West Bloomfield Office, 851-2303.



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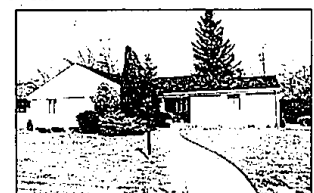
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