

Good pencil renderings defy detection

In the world of video games, I am getting progressively worse.

I used to be the best. To be better than Dad was an unattainable goal — almost irrelevant even to think about.

But when I look back, I have to say that my boys were just little tots and the video games that I mastered were merely two-dimensional dots and lights with simple cat-or-be-cat plots, like Pac-Man.

Now the video figures are wonderfully detailed and almost holographic in their realism. It's no longer a yellow dot eating a bunch of white dots. It's about warfare, hostages, cyborgs, ninjas and a little pipelitter named Mario.

It's about hand/eye coordination. It's about other worlds and time warps. It's about labyrinths and powers of trolls and dragons. It's about... time I hand over the joystick.

That's just what I did, too. I am still pretty good at Pac-Man but that's because no one else even wants to play it. I know my boys



artifacts
David Messing

smile to themselves as they lie in bed and listen to the muffled beeps and sirens of Dad's video game. Perhaps they even chuckle aloud as they picture my mouth jerked to the side and a wild-eyed countenance as I try to avenge a video catastrophe.

WELL, PUTTING things aside, there is an old favorite in the world of art. It's relatively easy to master. It's graphite.

Graphite pencils range from 9B, which is very black, to 9H, which makes a very light gray line. Many artists use just one or two soft pencils (6B and 2B) and obtain the required shades of gray by alternating the pressure on the pencil. Even

though this can produce a beautiful pencil rendering, try the use of a full gamut of grays.

When only using one or two pencils, you must lightly stroke the paper to achieve a light gray. This, however, shows the grain of the paper and tells the world that it is a pencil drawing.

Use soft pencils (6B, 5B, 4B, 3B, 2B, B and HB) for black or dark areas and hard pencils (1H, 2H, 3H, 4H, 5H, 6H, 7H, 8H, 9H) for light or white areas. With these, you can achieve photographic realism that requires viewers to ask how it was done.

HERE ARE two tips that will help you master the graphite pencil medium.

First, do your basic drawing on cheap layout paper. Here is where you do all the work and make all the mistakes.

Remember to look at your drawing in the mirror. The reversed image will show your mistakes faster than an art teacher. Then transfer

your corrected and perfected drawing to a clean sheet of good, heavy drawing paper or two or three ply Bristol board.

Second, don't rely on an outline to establish a shape or form. In reality, there are no black outlines to define shapes and forms. You see objects because they are of a color, shape or texture different from your surroundings.

In graphite, you are working only in shades of gray, so use shades of gray contrasting against each other rather than defining every shape with lines.

If you do this, you will be pleased at how realistic your work will become. More than any other medium, people will put their nose right up to the artwork, look and ask what medium it is. Duller or mat spray gives the artwork such a finished look that often people will mistake it for a print.

Dave Messing is an area art teacher who also owns the Art Store & More in Livonia.

briefly speaking

● **Olson exhibit**
Livonia artist Gary R. Olson will have his work on display in the Livonia City Hall lobby during the month of April. Viewing during normal City Hall business hours.

● **Perennial sale**
Perennials, rock garden plants, herbs, flowering baskets, ferns, wildflowers, ornamental grasses and old-fashioned roses will be some of the offerings at the perennial sale 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, April 28-29 sponsored by the Friends of Matthaei Botanical Gardens at the gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor. For more information, call 998-7061.

● **Madonna Chorale**
The Madonna Chorale will give its

spring concert at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, April 22 in the Fellowship Motherhouse Presentation Chapel, 36500 Schoolcraft Road. Highlight of the program will be the premiere performance of Madonna grad Steven Newby, currently a doctoral student in composition at the University of Michigan. The performance is open to the public and free of charge. For more information, call 591-5077. Madonna is located at 1-96 and Levan Road.

● **Basic gardening**
A seminar, "Gardening in the '90s" focusing on new techniques for basic gardening, will be offered by the Master Gardener Association of Wayne County 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 21, in the Wayne County Extension and Education Center, 5454 Veno, Wayne.



photography
Monte Nagler

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At the beginning of the trip one of our guides told us that to facilitate a journey through China, one must be "patient and persistent." These words certainly helped in my travels and photography through this great country.

And I believe these words are also sound advice for our country's dealings with the Chinese government and people.

Throughout past decades, Chinese governmental policies have fluctuated between periods of relaxation in structure followed by sudden and severe crackdowns. Last summer's "incident" is evidence of a current

crackdown. Hopefully, things will soon ease and with patience and persistence a new period of calm will be restored. Ambassador James Lilly told us that the United States will continue to negotiate with the Chinese government for peaceful solutions to China's difficulties. After all, Tiananmen, meaning "gate of heavenly peace," symbolically declares China's openness to the world and to the future.

In his next column Monte Nagler will write more about his photography experiences on his recent trip to China.

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Doll auction geared for enthusiasts

Thirty modern dolls valued at more than \$7,000 will be auctioned off at 1 p.m. Sunday, April 22, in the Plymouth Cultural Center — but that's only half of the story.

The other half will center on a doll look-alike competition open to area residents with the judging by celebrated doll artist Yolanda Bello.

The live auction is being sponsored by International Doll Exhibitions and Auctions Ltd., an organization that specializes in the sale of contemporary dolls, and Georgia's Gift Gallery, a Plymouth collectibles shop.

THE DOLL EXPECTED to realize the highest price is "Jason," a

porcelain infant boy dressed in a powder blue clown outfit. Designed by Bello, the doll was the first issue in "Yolanda's Picture-Perfect Babies" collection, an award-winning series marketed by the Ashton-Drake Galleries.

Dolls will be on display at the Cultural Center for inspection by bidders from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Bidding numbers for 250 will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited spectator seating will also be available.

The live auction is just one facet of an all-day special event expected to draw hundreds of doll enthusiasts

and collectors. Registration for the baby doll look-alike contest of costumed children resembling dolls Jason, Heather and Jennifer will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. with the winners being chosen by Bello at 3 p.m.

Winners will receive Jessica dolls, the number seven doll in the "Picture Perfect Babies" collection. Anyone interested in entering the doll look-alike contest can stop in at Georgia's Gift Gallery, 575 Forest Ave., Plymouth for photo reproductions of the three dolls.

For more information, call 452-7733.



Jason
auction 'favorite'

The Prudential Great Lakes Realty

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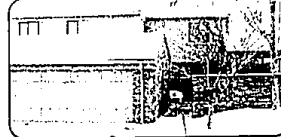
ENJOY PANORAMIC VIEWS OF THE FARMINGTON FROM ALL WINDOWS. New construction 2 story home showcases stone and mirror fireplace in great room, country size kitchen with breakfast nook, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths and many unique items! \$149,900 626-9100 02-B-3592



START OUT RIGHT! Immaculate and adorable describes this upper Farmington Hills Condo. Features 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, beautiful parquet floors, living room with down to private balcony, formal dining room and delightful kitchen. Quiet adult setting with lovely grounds. \$87,500 626-9100 02-B-3064



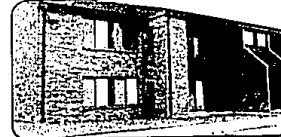
EXQUISITE LIVING! Impressive Ramblerwood gatehouse community home highlights beamed cathedral ceiling and foldstone fireplace in family room, 4 bedrooms, elegant living room, island kitchen with 2 pantries, formal dining room and handsome library. Lots of improvements! Set on treed lot. \$239,900 626-9100 02-B-3581



LOTS OF PRIVACY! Condo in small private complex affords comfort with elaborate finished lower level with built-in large screen TV and bookcases, living room with fireplace, 3 bedrooms, formal dining room and 2.5 baths. Contemporary decor with mirrors and built-ins! \$159,900 626-9100



UPDATED IN NEUTRAL! Fantastic family Colonial backs to commons and park. Features wood floors in living and dining rooms, fireplace in family room, sun porch, 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths and finished basement with built-ins. \$149,500 626-9100 02-B-4000



DRASTICALLY UNDERPRICED! Located in cosmopolitan complex this Condo comes with extras. Features spacious living room, 2 bedrooms, formal dining room, well equipped kitchen and patio terrace. Includes washer and dryer! Motivated seller! \$54,900 626-9100 02-A-117



A SHOWPLACE! Exquisite Contemporary enhanced by recessed lights, deluxe white formal kitchen, 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, dining room, inviting family room, living room, finished basement and multi-level deck. Set on large corner cul-de-sac treed lot. \$189,900 626-9100 02-B-3572



THE STUFF REAL DREAMS ARE MADE OF! Exceptional Farmington Hills Colonial set on richly manicured lawn offers all the decorator touches. Flowing floor plan boasts bay windows, family room with fireplace, living room, dining room, 4 bedrooms and 2.5 baths. \$159,900 626-9100



BEST PRICE IN AREA! Large family Colonial located in Farmington Hills offers open floorplan. Highlights family room with fireplace and down to patio, 4 bedrooms, breakfast nook, 2.5 baths and living room. Close to schools! \$140,500 626-9100 02-B-4022



WHY RENT WHEN YOU CAN OWN! Close to shopping, schools and expressways this Condo is sure to go fast. Features include 2 bedrooms, master bedroom with private bath, expansive living room, 2 baths and wonderful kitchen with breakfast nook. \$45,000 626-9100 02-B-3538

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