

How Madonna Filled An Art Gap For Youngsters

By CARRIE URBIEL
Madonna College Student

There may be a "mini-Rembrandt" in Ob-serversland.

Possible proof was found last week in the art wing of Madonna College. On display were the art works of 108 elementary and junior high school students involved in the junior art opportunities program offered by the college art department.

Saturday was also the last class session for the junior artists. The program began last October and ran for eight weeks in the fall and another eight weeks late in winter. A summer series is planned.

Madonna, at 36600 Schoolcraft, Livonia, is a Catholic girls college operated by the Felician Sisters.

Boys and girls attending junior art opportunities classes ranged from nine to 14 years of age. They came from public and parochial schools in Livonia, Farmington, Westland, Redford Township, Birmingham, Allen Park, Orchard Lake, Dearborn Heights and Detroit.

Eighty students were enrolled the first semester for classes in creative drawing, which were held Saturdays from 9:30-11:30 a.m.

ENROLLMENT CLIMBED to 108 the second semester. Advanced students took Saturday morning courses in oil painting, creative color and design, and lettering and poster work. In the afternoons, two classes in creative drawing were held for newcomers.

The junior art opportunities program developed as a consequence of numerous telephone calls from Livonia School District parents whose children attended half-day sessions, with art classes eliminated from their program. With interest high, the Madonna College art department chairman, Sister M. Angeline, gave it a try and found that many more applied than had been anticipated.

"We thought," said Sr. M. Angeline, "that at most we would have 10 to 20 children, but the enrollment showed 80 in the first term and 108 in the second."

Purpose was to stir up creativity and provide outlets for students who were interested or artistically inclined.

"I learned a lot!" said 10-year-old Christopher Lilly from St. Edith Catholic School, Livonia. "I can make banners for our church and help my dad in making posters for the garage sales now." Christopher took the creative drawing course the first semester and the creative lettering and poster design the second.

LaDonna Reddington, 13, gave her best ink work to her dad for Valentine's Day. "He was so pleased," said her mother, "that he hung it up in his office at work. Many of his friends could not believe that his daughter could do such good work." LaDonna attends Our Lady of Good Counsel in Plymouth.

THE COURSES WERE taught by Madonna

College art majors, under the direction of Sister Angeline.

Mrs. Carol Boivin, of Redford, a part-time student at Madonna, was one of the instructors. Her class participated in a "wordless" contest, sponsored by the St. Anthony's Messenger magazine. (A "wordless" is a word that looks like what it says.) Her daughter, Christine, 7, and another student, Kim Kopecky, 13, of Livonia, were winners.

Aleta Skomski, Madonna junior, taught the creative design and watercoloring course. The media used were tempera paints, water colors and India ink.

Saturday the pupils in her class were involved in a special type of project. They were painting brightly-colored pictures for an 11-year-old girl whose vision was impaired as a result of an automobile accident. The girl's mother had appealed for some art work of this type.

Two other Madonna student instructors were Cheri Karbon and Ann Bacnik. They taught lettering and poster design and creative drawing respectively.

ALONG WITH THE COURSES, the children were given the opportunity to evaluate their own work and also receive criticism from their teachers.

Linda Schubert, 13, said, "I liked the oil painting course, because if I had any problems with what I was doing, I could figure them out here." She said the instructor was always willing to help her out. Linda attends Frost Junior High in Livonia.

But teachers were not the only critics. "She's my critic!" explained Cathy Conger, pointing to her five-year-old niece Colleen Conger.

Cathy, 12, of Dearborn Heights, may choose a career in art when she gets older. "I may become a draftsman like my sister," she said. Her niece, Colleen, is from Wixom and sometimes came along with Cathy to her oil painting class at Madonna.

The smell of oil paints, charcoal, pencil and other artistic media in the Madonna College art wing Saturday pointed to an important aspect of community service. Throughout the years, Madonna has been offering adult art classes. Now, in addition to adult service, it hopes to continue to bring out the artistic creativity in youngsters.

Madonna College will continue the junior art program in the summer months. Courses will be offered for three weeks from June 22 to July 10 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, for two hours each day. The subjects offered will be oil painting, color and design, and creative drawing.

The fee is \$12 for the creative drawing course and \$10 each for the other two. Registration will take place May 1 from 2-4 p.m. and 7-8 p.m.



PEACE THEMES are popular with students like Maureen Feiten of Farmington.

OIL PAINTING, an art medium not usually available to youngsters, was done by Robert Kramek of Redford Township in Madonna Colleges programs this year for elementary and junior high students. (Photos by Fran Evert)



A MEDITATION BLOCK is used for painting by Frank White of Westland. Student-instructor is Cheri Karbon of Farmington, who taught lettering and poster design.



SISTER M. ANGELINE, chairman of Madonna's art department, directed the program for juniors with the aid of Mrs. Carol Boivin, a part-time Madonna student from Redford. Painter is Peggy Lenn of Redford.

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