

Art lesson No. 5

Pen and ink drawing requires thoroughness, detail

This is the fifth in a series of lessons on art and drawing by special columnist David Messing. This column deals with pen and ink drawing.

Messing has taught art for eight years and operates an art and art supply store, Art Store and More, 18774 Middlebelt in Livonia. Messing encourages questions from readers. You may write him at his store, or at Observer Newspapers, 23352 Farmington Road, Farmington, MI 48024.



By David Messing
special writer

Decisions... decisions. All artists must make decisions when drawing. What do you draw and what do you leave out? If you are drawing in the right progression, that is, main shapes first and details last, you usually find yourself ending with a good balance of structure and detail.

It is never advisable to overdraw just a part of a drawing when you have yet to block in the main shapes of the rest of your picture. When you add details to small sections at a time, your total drawing doesn't grow together. Often certain features which are completed at

one time are out of proportion to parts of the drawing which have details completed at another time.

Finishing a section also puts pressure on the artist. You end up thinking, "I hope I don't blow this after a great start."

Those who are able to see, or have been taught to see, details have a problem of deciding what to draw and what to leave out. Those who haven't the ability, or haven't learned to see details, are bothered by their inability to render their way to realism.

BOTH KINDS of artists are in trouble. Although those who are able to see details are better suited, their drawings are most often rendered to death and they look like they should be titled "studies in pallidness."

Now those who cannot see details usually don't spend the time needed to draw a good picture because they simply do not "see" the need. Their drawings float somewhere between gesture drawings and cartoons.

The reason for this lengthy introduction is because I would like to take two articles to cover pen and ink. Pen and ink will quickly and graphically show you if you are an "overlooker" or an "underlooker."

Overlookers sit and watch as their hand systematically adds more and more ink and their drawing slowly approaches a black blob on the paper. While underlookers sit and stare at their almost blank sheet of paper wondering what they left out.

In some media you blend with your fingers or brushes but in pen and ink you have a pen

Artifacts

tip that makes a clean black line. So how do you get shades of grey?

CROSSHATCHING is the most common way of shading. This is merely a drawing lot of lines in one direction which appears to form a gray area. If you need this area darker turn the paper slightly and cross over the same lines. This will shade the area twice as much.

You can repeat this over and over until this area appears to be black with little white dots. When drawing animals it is important to watch the direction of the hair and feathers and to make sure you follow close to your model or photos. When drawing buildings, barns and sheds, draw in the main shapes then begin

shading in the direction of whatever wood grain there may be.

Crosshatching can become a little disturbing when it is obviously seen as lines running across the grain of wood. So simply add more lines in the direction of the wood grain.

Crosshatching is a shading technique and should not be distracting from the main shape and impact of your drawing. So keep your lines, crisp and clean. You also can vary the line width for a clearer looking drawing, heavier lines defining the main shapes and many fine lines for the shading.

CONSIDER short, fine and thin strokes for an area like the fine hairs on the nose of a cat. Often there are times that a line, no matter how fine, seems too bold. Here stippling or pointillism is extremely useful. This is merely lots and lots of dots. The lighter areas need just a few dots. The darker areas need hundreds of dots.

One of my best tips in pointillism is that the

light areas should be white with black dots and the black areas should be black with white dots. Stay away from solid black areas they pull the eye away from all the subtle shading in the light areas.

Before next week try a pen and ink. The best way to start is to do a light pencil sketch on white smooth paper. If the paper becomes too messy, transfer your finished drawing to a clean white piece of paper.

Remember you transfer a drawing by rubbing the back of your original drawing with a graphite stick, then centering it on the new paper. Tape both sides then trace over your lines in a ball point pen. This will produce a beautiful pencil drawing on clean white paper.

The best pen that I have found for beginning pen and ink is a pilot razor point. It only cost 58 cents and the fine nylon tip holds a point forever. This is a water base ink so it dries at least an hour before you erase your pencil lines.

Orchestra seeks wider audience

With the opening of its ninth season, the West Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra, which has been renamed the Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra, will try to appeal to a broader audience.

The orchestra will hold its concerts at both West Bloomfield High School Auditorium in West Bloomfield Township and at

Seaholm High School Auditorium in Birmingham.

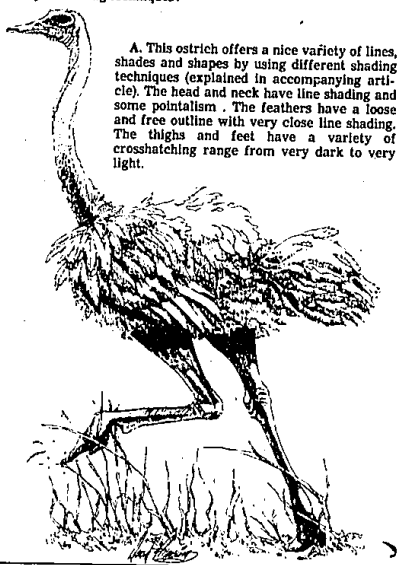
Felix Resnick, a member of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the conductor since the inception of the West Bloomfield Symphony, said, "I'm especially excited about our programming for the new season. It offers at each concert an exciting combination of standard symphonic favorites and pops music."

Seaholm High School Auditorium in Birmingham.

"We guarantee to have something for everyone, both the serious and the casual concert-goer."

The symphony will have concerts divided into a Series A and a Series B.

Q. Pen and ink is my favorite media but I have some difficulty in shading. Can you show a drawing with a variety of shading techniques?



A. This ostrich offers a nice variety of lines, shades and shapes by using different shading techniques (explained in accompanying article). The head and neck have line shading and some pointillism. The feathers have a loose and free outline with very close line shading. The thighs and feet have a variety of crosshatching range from very dark to very light.

Herbig passes music's acid test

By Avigdor Zaremp
special writer

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra recently presented a special concert that wasn't part of the regular Meadow Brook Festival.

It was a tribute to subscribers and supporters of the orchestra.

Guest conductor was the German-born Gunther Herbig. His wife, Julia Caspki, was the soloist in Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major, K. 488. Other works on the program were Beethoven's "Egmont" Overture and the Symphony No. 1 by Brahms.

For Maestro Herbig, this was his debut with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. He had been scheduled to conduct last December, but his appearance was cancelled by the orchestra strike.

THIS performance made one realize the extent of the loss in the past. Herbig, who had among his teachers such noted figures as Herbert von Karajan and Hermann Scherchen, showed himself to be a top-rate conductor.

review

The opening "Egmont" Overture, with its vibrant crescendo, sounded moving and inspiring. Its impact was refreshing in spite of its popularity.

The Mozart concerto turned out to be the weak link in the program. While Caspki certainly doesn't lack artistic talent, her rendition of the Mozart concerto didn't match the high level of the other parts of the program.

The Brahms symphony is a test of any seasoned conductor — a test which Herbig passed with flying colors.

As it is known, Brahms approached his symphonies with utmost caution and anxiety, unlike Mozart and Haydn. His first symphony was written when he was in his 40s. Had Brahms been alive and listening to this performance, undoubtedly, he would have been very proud.



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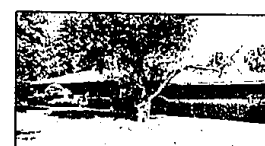
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