

Creative Living

CLASSIFIED REAL ESTATE



Bob Sklar editor/591-2300

Thursday, November 29, 1990 O&E

(F)1E

Engineer-artist enjoys graphite portraits

By Linda Ann Chomin
special writer

THOMAS DYER uses graphite pencils to portray people who are lost in thought, inquisitive or just plain delighted with the wonders of nature.

His lively depictions capture the subject's emotion, and touch the viewer with their sensitivity.

Dyer's one-man exhibition of the graphite portraits opened Nov. 16 at Nelson's Gallery in Livonia. The heart-touching show continues through Dec. 31.

Dyer began drawing the portraits 3 1/2 years ago in Florida, after working full days as a design engineer for Martin Marietta at Orlando Aerospace.

"They're drawn mostly from photographs," Dyer said. "I take three or four photographs then combine a conglomeration of ideas."

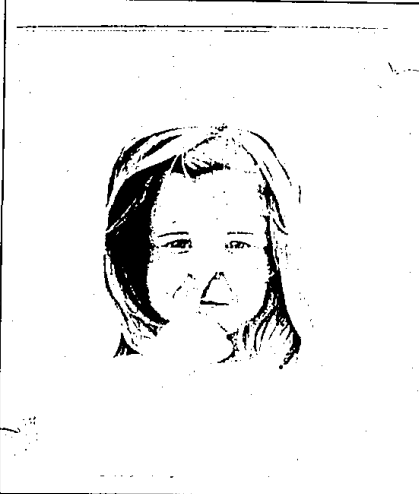
Dyer estimates that he spends 20 to 30 hours on a drawing. Because he can only work at night, he said, "it takes a week or two to finish a drawing."

Dyer, who "never had a drawing class," said with the completion of every drawing, he becomes "more confident."

HIS WORK is free of commercialism. He believes "by not worrying about (selling) them, the more people enjoy them."

"Playground" is originally from an article on child abuse," he said.

Please turn to Page 3



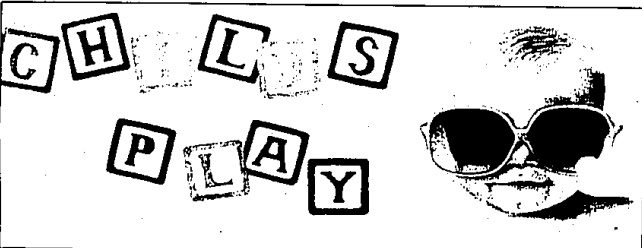
"Butterflies" is the title of this portrait by Thomas Dyer. The butterfly sitting on the little girl's nose is free of all detail. The artist said the reason he created the surreal butterfly was "to try to keep the emphasis on the person." "Butterflies" is priced at \$1,200.



photos by JIM JAGDELD/staff photographer

This portrait of an inner-city girl is titled "Playground." Thomas Dyer placed wire fencing behind the glass to give the viewer the impression of looking through an urban playground

fence. He got the idea for "Playground" from an article he read on child abuse. The pensive piece is priced at \$525.



"Child's Play" is the title of the Thomas Dyer graphite portrait exhibition at Nelson's Gallery in Livonia. The exhibition runs through Dec. 31. This piece of art is priced at \$425.

Competitive edge inspires pianist

By Linda Ann Chomin
special writer

Fired by a competitive spirit, Tomoko Mack-Brzozowski practices a Chopin piano concerto in preparation for a young artists competition sponsored by the Federation of Musicians.

The competition will be in November 1991.

"My goal is competition," Mack-Brzozowski said during an interview from her West Bloomfield home. "I spend four to five hours a day practicing."

Since 1980, she has won a dozen competitions for pianists. In the background, her husband, Kazimierz, who has a doctorate in music from the University of Michigan, practices on a Baldwin grand piano.

Tomoko won the piano in the 1989 Galdwin National Fellowship competition in Ohio.

She was the 1987 first place winner in the Livonia Symphony Concerto competition. The Livonia Symphony was then known as the Oakway Symphony.

In January, Tomoko will judge the Livonia Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Competition, which offers \$3,000 in prizes along with the opportunity to appear with the orchestra.

Mack-Brzozowski stressed her training as the reason for her competitive edge. Born in Tokyo, she said her "serious training began" when she was 7.

"After my family moved to New Jersey," she said, "I studied with Madame Yamaguchi of Julliard."

In 1983, Mack-Brzozowski won a scholarship to Oakland University, where she earned a bachelor of music degree. While at the university, she studied with Flavio Varani.

"I owe a lot of my musical training to Flavio Varani," she said.

Varani was her instructor in piano performance. "Flavio was not just my mentor, but my guiding light."

"Flavio taught me about listening to yourself," she said. "He reinforced, over and over, you must listen to yourself as you play."

In 1989, Tomoko completed her graduate studies at the University of Michigan. During her studies, she met Kazimierz.

The piano duo married three years ago. "In the next two or three years," she said, "we plan on organizing an international music camp in Poland."

Teaching piano is yet another of her priorities. Over the last two years, she has attracted 35 private students ranging in age from 4 to 55. One of her piano students travels from Indiana once a week for a one-hour lesson.

ALONG WITH the private studies

in her West Bloomfield home, Mack-Brzozowski gives private instruction part-time at Schoolcraft College in Livonia.

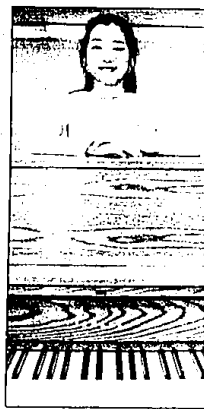
In 1990, Tomoko and Kazimierz spent the summer in Warsaw, Poland. They performed solo recitals at the Mozart Festival there. "I want to be seen as a mature artist," Tomoko said.

In 1991, Tomoko plans to perform a series of solo concerto recitals.

In judging the Livonia Symphony competition, Tomoko said, "I'm definitely looking for artistic ability, but with the pressure of 15 minutes, I'll have to look at other concerns, such as show stage manner."

She believes "music is definitely analytical."

"In their general studies, students achieve so much more when they study music," Tomoko said. "If they are absorbed in the music, they are playing. For me that's a winner."



JIM JAGDELD/staff photographer

Says accomplished pianist Tomoko Mack-Brzozowski (left), who teaches piano at Schoolcraft College in Livonia: "My goal is competition. I spend four to five hours a day practicing." Since 1980, she has won more than a dozen piano competitions.

Nankin Mills holds storied past; help out Greenmead

PEERING INTO the creative perspective:

• "The small plant in a village or in the country makes for better working conditions because it permits a more natural life," said Henry Ford I about his village mill industries in western Wayne County in the 1820s and '30s.

One such mill complex was Nankin Mills, on Ann Arbor Trail in then Nankin Township, now Westland.

In 1918, Ford, ever the innovator, bought the 19th-century grist mills as part of a grand plan to build village mill industries along the Rouge and other small rivers.

Equipped with a turbine generator, Nankin Mills produced engravings, carburetor parts, rivets and bearings.

Ford believed farmers working in an atmosphere of cleanliness and tranquility would restore a proper balance between the industrialized city and rural communities.

During the slack season, the Plymouth Historical Museum quotes Ford as saying, the farmer "could work in the small plants in the farming communities, thus resulting in year-round work, providing the security of farm life with the increased income afforded by industry."

Ford's experiment intrigued American and European planners. But it proved unprofitable.

After World War II, Nankin Mills closed, a Michigan historic marker on the site tells us.

Nankin Mills gained a new lease on life in 1985, when the site became a Wayne County parks nature center.



Bob Sklar

• It's a chance to tour seven charming homes in a variety of architectural styles cheerfully decorated for the holidays — and benefit Livonia's Greenmead Historical Village.

All proceeds from the Friends for Development of Greenmead's annual Christmas walk Saturday, Dec. 8, will go toward restoring the 19th-century Alexander Blue House at Greenmead. Plans call for the 13-room house to be used as a conference center and as a reception hall for Greenmead's chapel.

The walk will start at Greenmead. The Livonia Historical Society will decorate the Hill House, the 149-year-old, Greek Revival-style farmhouse of Greenmead founder Joshua Simmons, in a patriotic theme. The house will be open for tours.

The private homes range from a new, 6,700-square-foot home with an indoor swimming pool and whirlpool, to a 4-year-old English Tudor with a sunken great room and circular staircase, to a five-bedroom, three-story house with nine-foot ceilings built in 1917.

The homeowner will decorate the English Tudor. Livonia florists will donate their time to decorate the rest.

Walk tickets are \$5 in advance at

the Greenmead office, Livonia City Hall and all Livonia libraries, or \$6 the day of the walk at the Hill House.

• Perched on a rise at 14 Mile and Farmington Road, it tells the story of a once bustling village in then Farmington Township.

The Farmington Hills historic marker explains that in 1850, the village boasted a post office, a blacksmith shop, general stores, 10 homes and a cheese factory. It was a collecting point for milk from nearby farms.

A 153-year-old cemetery a half mile south of the intersection is still owned and controlled by a private association. It's still an active burial ground.

It's the only cemetery in the city in which a veteran from each U.S. war is buried. Revolutionary War

soldier Levi Green plus soldiers from the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

The village didn't fare as well as the cemetery. Rural free delivery doomed the post office. Better transportation killed local commerce. And by 1930, the marker tells us, "North Farmington was a ghost town."

But like the Phoenix, the mythical bird that miraculously rose from its own ashes, that "ghost town" became rejuvenated. The crossroads now lies amid one of western Oakland County's prime residential areas.

Bob Sklar is the O&E's assistant managing editor for special projects.