

GRAPHIC ARCHIVES

THE MAGAZINE

SEPT 2021





Ozymandias

A photograph taken during one of our Student Design Association trips to New York City. I found the spiritual gesture of ancient culture amidst the backdrop of modern skyscrapers as some apocalyptic revelation. I often look for irony in how far society has advanced, yet the foundation of faith and belief is within our soul. Mankind can build an empire to the heavens, but it is the inner soul that reaches beyond what man can build for itself. I was also reading the Alan Moore/Dave Gibbons *"The Watchmen"* graphic comic series at the time in which one of the characters' name was *Ozymandias*, which is also a reference to Rameses II who was Pharaoh during the pinnacle of Egyptian culture. The photograph won Second Place in our college annual literary/art publication, *"The Mockingbird"* at East Tennessee State University in 1989.

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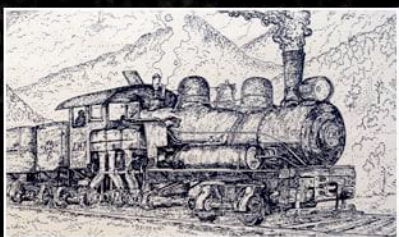


Black and White



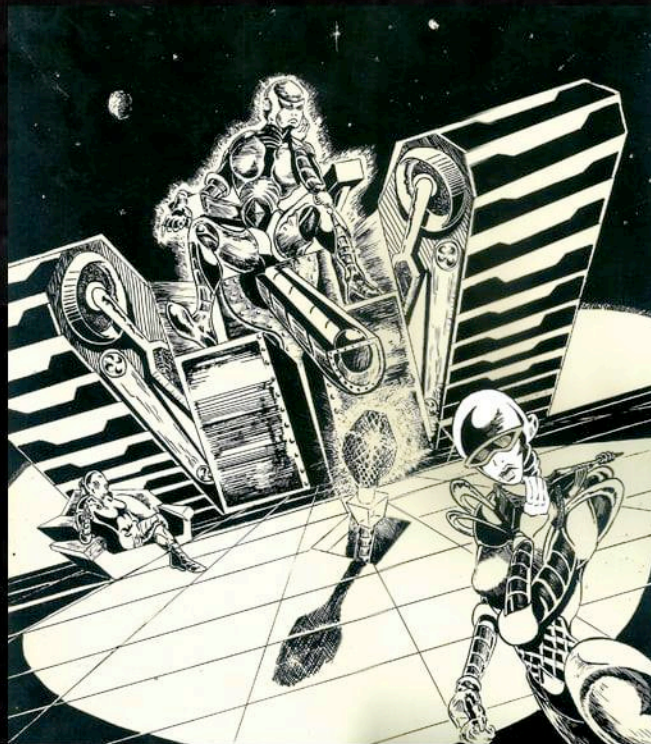
Photography

How Photography changed everything I knew about Art!



Little River Railroad Museum

My uncle's dream realized.



A Pen and Ink illustration from College (1987)
Probably an attempt to understand perspective in drawing through Science Fiction images.

The Rundown

Cover: An airbrush illustration created for WCYB as a poster image for *Operation Prom Graduation*.

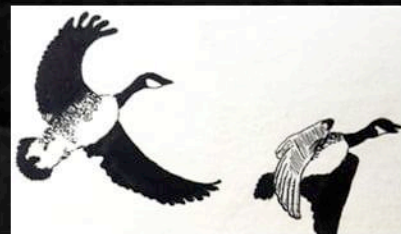
4: "Victims of A Tough Society"

A black and white print created in college that received Honorable Mention in "The Mockingbird," ETSU Literary and Arts annual publication.

20: Some Pen and Ink Illustrations of various animals, insects and plants in nature.

22: Perspective: Back To The Drawing Board
Insight into turning new corners and taking new directions by getting back to the basics.

Back Cover: A photograph taken in Central Park, New York City (1988.) Our Student Design Group would spend a few days touring art museums and become exposed to life in the big city. I find the photograph a contrast to the hustle and bustle of the city that never sleeps.



Nature

Pen and Ink Nature Art



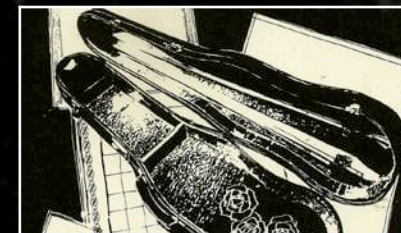
Gourmet Gallery

The origins of a Cookbook!



Collective Memories

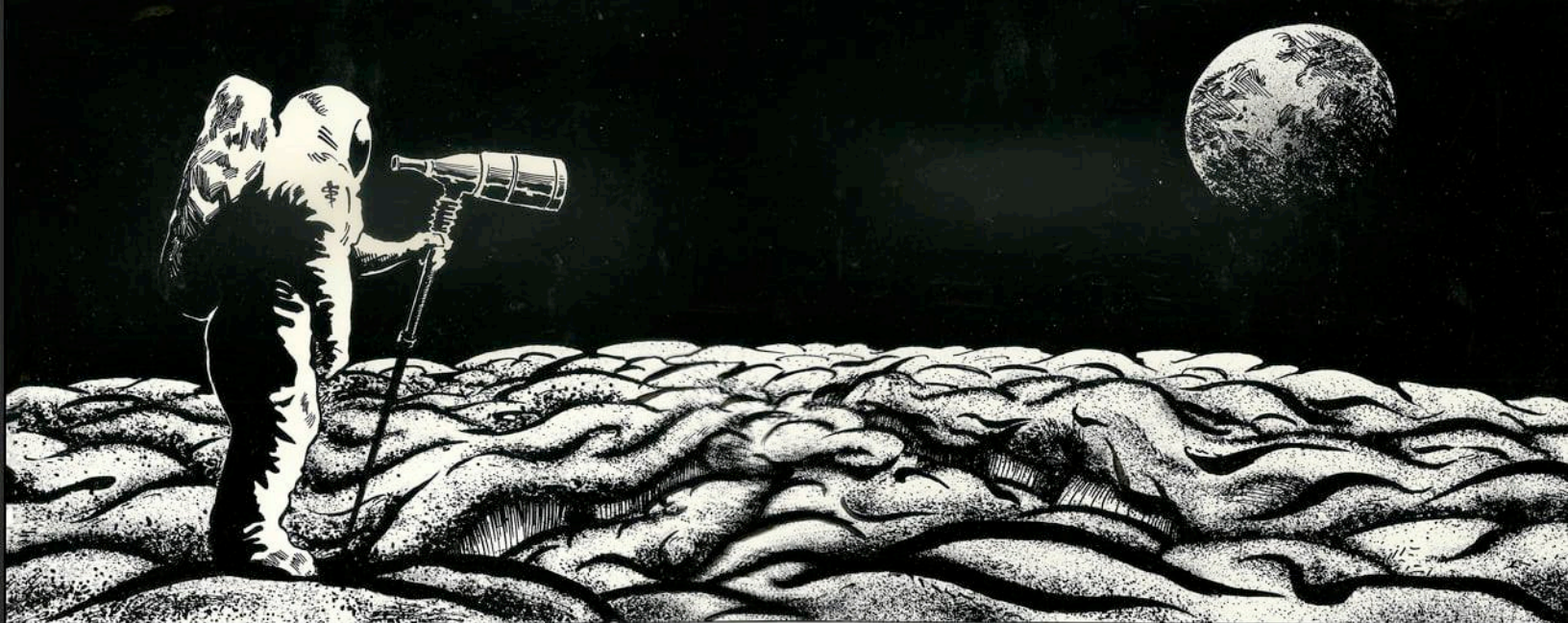
Xerox Copies and early impressions of storytelling.



Violent Cases

A Graphic Novel that inspired me in so many ways.





Related to Schizophrenia, a mental illness within the brain in which the mind doesn't see clearly between fantasy and reality. The concept of this illustration was an attempt to show the searching that goes on from within the brainwaves.

Black & White

Black and white is considered an “abstract” portrayal of reality. The natural world to most is filled with an entire spectrum of colors and a variety of hues containing all the pigments of nature. There is no hard black line that appears in realism that takes shape, form and structure. Pen and ink is perhaps the most widely used medium for reproduction of black and white, yet simply defines the world of realistic nature through abstract markings.

One such example is when a group of English explorers discovered a tribe in Africa and attempted to teach them through photographic journals. Never having seen a graphic representation of something on a one-dimensional piece of paper, the tribe could not comprehend what they were looking at as they had never been exposed to printed material and did not recognize features in black and white.

As it pertains to art, black and white is typically the means to generate a composition. Drawing is a development of lines and embellishments that create an image. Most painters create an underpainting that contains a tonal range of contrasting colors such as sepia or Payne's grey before overlaying colored paint. The tonal values provide a blueprint for expression that often determines the light and shade visible within the image.

One can study color theory until the next blue moon, but understanding the basic contrast between black and white forces a strong concept and design. Pen and ink becomes a more disciplined medium that forces precision in draftsmanship.



An illustration published in *The Crescent Review*, 1996 (Volume 14, No. 1)
"Gray Squirrels, God's Will and and Sliced Liver" A short story written by Paul Bennett

The pen and ink illustrates the conversation over the phone in which a man delivers news to a friend of a 92-year old woman that just recently passed away. The elderly woman goes on a tangent about a variety of issues as she hears the news. The emotional outrage was core to the author's story portraying stress and anger that often becomes ignited from tragic circumstances. The caricature of the elderly woman was one chosen for the story.

My first official job in television (WCYB TV-5) had a marketing initiative the station took on through the Tri-Cities school systems to entice students not to drink and drive during their Senior Prom. Evidently, this had become an issue and I was assigned the task to create a poster design and other graphics in which students would sign pledge cards to ensure they would be responsible for their actions. Creatively, it was a fun project for me as it was a full color image, but the following year, they school system was no longer willing to spend the same amount fo printing full color due to an economic recession. I was forced to find a means to utilize only black and white while continuing along the same concept that had been a successful campaign. The theme and basic premise was an illustration of a joker or fool that needed to use it's brain to avoid tragedy. See this magazine's cover as it was an airbrushed painting printed in b/w.

Storyboards were also integral to the station's commercial advertising as producers would write copy for me to illustrate. I began with simple pen and ink that were xeroxed for clients, but eventually found other techniques that enhanced artistic quality and generated more sales. The Producer/Writers were all gifted in their concept, so it became a challenge for me as an artist to bring their concepts to life and to sell their ideas to clients before production began.

Having our own printing press, WCYB could print in-house without being reliant on outside printing costs, which were often expensive. Initially, it was used primarily for Sales sheets and formal documents, but became an advantageous tool to reach the local market through the distribution of a newsletter, which I designed for the station. "STAND-BY" included news and information about the station to share with a list of viewers that took interest through various event activities in the community.

STAND BY...

The Monthly Newsletter of **WCYB-TV 5** February 1991



The premiere issue of **STAND BY**, a monthly newsletter for **WCYB-TV 5** featured an article about our Satellite truck, which became a standard for news stations in that it enabled reporting news from anywhere through satellite technology.

Computer technology and digital solutions have redefined artistic innovation through mass media which is no longer dependent upon the limitations of those procedures from the past. Art and Graphic Design was once a meticulous process involving T-Square ruling measures, wax machines that would enable slight shifting upon a paste-up composition board. The line art would then be super-imposed through the printing process...and if there were photographs that were used, it would require an extra layer filled with a special lithograph film in which the photo could be adjusted. Technology took away the manual labor involved with graphic design as new computer programs had been developed to generate an easier process



A Black and White Pen Illustration on Transfer paper created for the Atlanta United Soccer Team after winning the Championship in Atlanta at Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

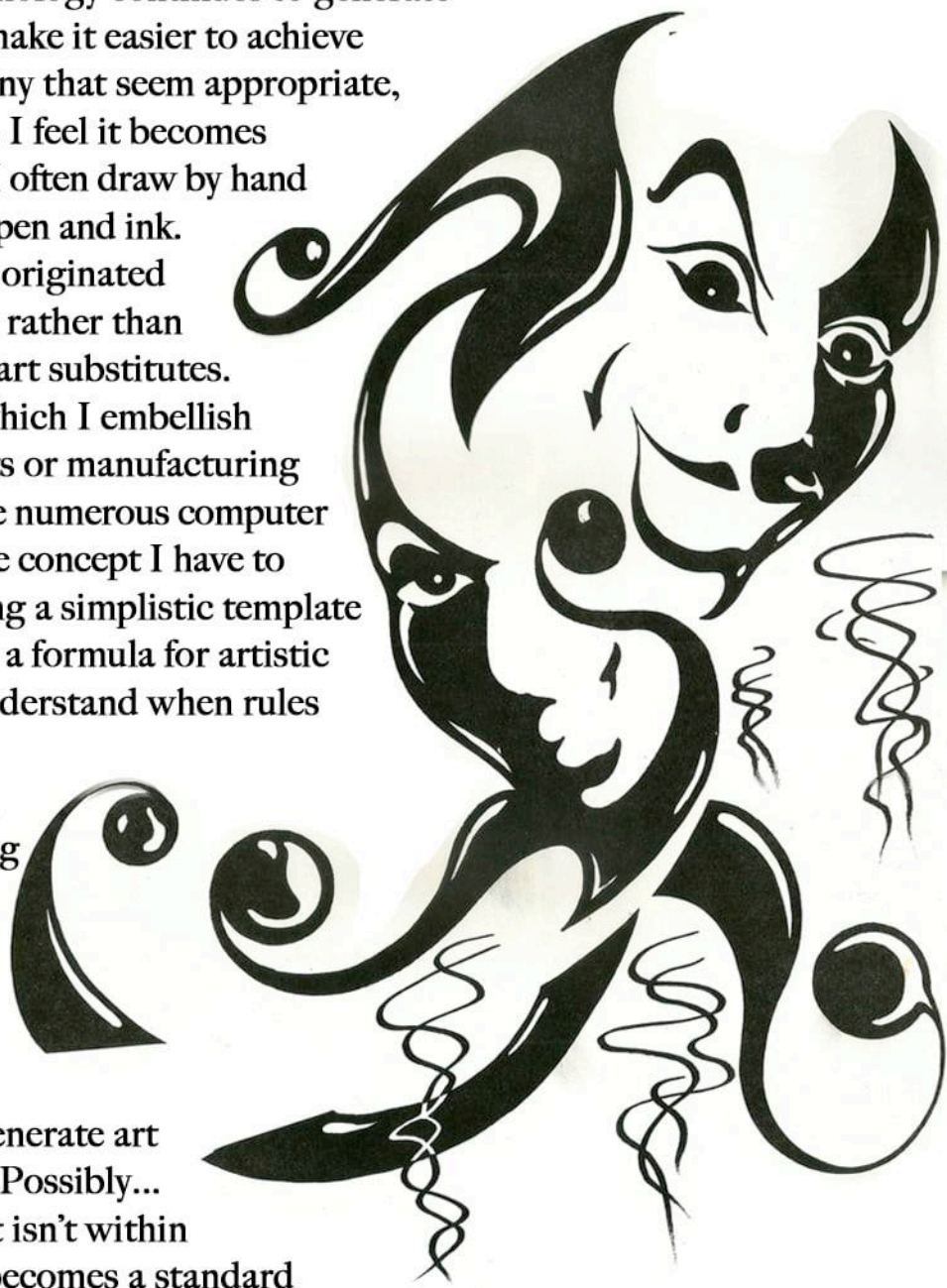
The adjustment for me at the time was having to re-learn everything I was taught in college as those skills were no longer valid amongst an industry that had changed almost overnight. It was a frustrating time in my life as I would need to go back to school and learn how to adapt to the new computer age. "Back to the Drawing Board" may be an old cliché expression, but that was what I had to do if I wanted to continue along the path of graphic design and illustration as well. Ultimately, I took advantage of the opportunities and realized how valuable computers have become to artistic endeavors. Imagine Norman Rockwell in a computer age of technology and how much more he could achieve with less effort.

The new age of computers and technology continues to generate new effects with additional tools that make it easier to achieve desired images. I take advantage of many that seem appropriate, but do not rely so heavily upon them as I feel it becomes deconstructive to the creative process. I often draw by hand on paper or board that I refine through pen and ink. I feel more satisfied knowing an image originated from my own personal vision and labor rather than sophisticated program effects and clip art substitutes. This is true of many of my designs in which I embellish through cutting out individual elements or manufacturing some texture needed. Although I utilize numerous computer programs in a variety of ways, I want the concept I have to dictate the tools I use rather than having a simplistic template of a one-solution method that becomes a formula for artistic quality. The artist should know and understand when rules can be broken to enhance design.


Basic design and illustration should become the foundation of anyone wanting to explore beyond what computers do. The dehumanization of human creativity is being replaced by quick program effects that do the work for the artist. There are those today that have never touched a paintbrush, yet create and generate art from codes on a keyboard. Is that Art? Possibly... I mean who is to argue the point, but it isn't within my nature to simply apply effects that becomes a standard procedure. I would rather keep my mind active with new solutions to old ideas that becomes a turning point in my own vision than relying upon technology to do all the work for me.

A Good day for me is feeling accomplished in productivity. It's when I've given all I have to anything I do and feel a sense that it brings something to others that will be appreciated. It's never immediate and oftentimes it takes weeks, months, years, and even decades to deliver... but that becomes part of the essence of being an artist. It doesn't happen by capturing lightning in a bottle as it takes a lifetime to develop. Old School academics and New World Technology are both a benefit as I take advantage of each, but I remain guarded in my need to simply be one that is in a position that helps through the process of creativity through so many mediums.

Black and White...Back to Basics...That has always been my playbook for design as it becomes a foundation for the solid principles that enhance creative problem-solving solutions. If a design is solid, the colors added will bring it more life and vibrancy and that helps with most artistic ventures to emphasize the contrast of tonal qualities!



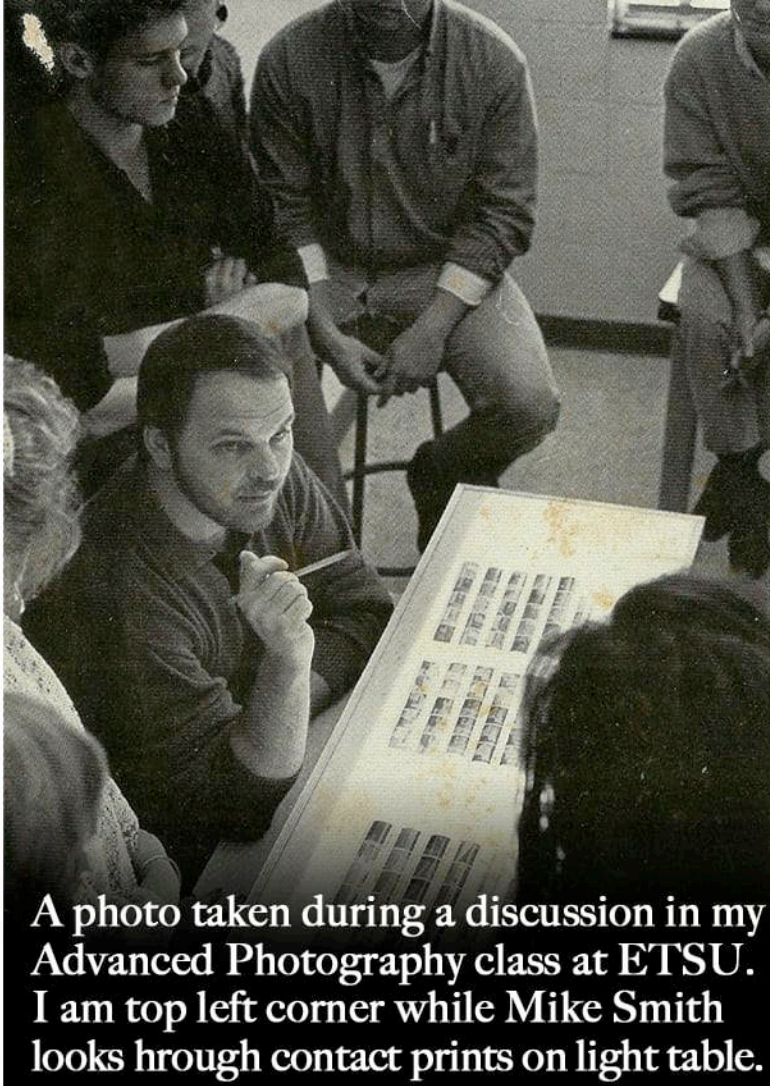


 A friend in college that posed for one of my many assignments for Advanced Photography class at ETSU.

Photography

From the very moment my Advanced Photography class began, I knew this was going to be a challenge. Mike Smith made certain there would be those who would struggle as expectations were high with the demands and the quality of work as he was a product of the University of Yale graduate studies and rumoured to have exhibitions for the Museum of Modern Art.

I was amongst many other designers and illustrators who thought photography was less than art as it seemed the only skill involved was pressing a button on a device...no special skill to that as even a caveman could do it. I was wrong in thinking it was just something special for those that found a niche or had perfected a genre such as Ansel Adams or Mann Ray. Photography was an "Art" and not just a tool for reference. My mental awareness of what I captured on film became evidence in a courtroom of criticism as I had to defend each selected image I chose to exhibit. The jury (my classmates) took no mercy on how I could've improved the shot by doing one thing or another differently than I had. I was under trial for a simple click of a button.



A photo taken during a discussion in my Advanced Photography class at ETSU. I am top left corner while Mike Smith looks through contact prints on light table.

The class was by far the most demanding of any other I had taken with respect to time needed to fulfill the assignments. I still have nightmares today I could never do enough to satisfy the lesson. The truth of the matter was the class became the most determined factor in everything I would ever do in art... photography or otherwise. It formulated a sense of quality for anything I would create moving forward. A click of the button is easy, but it is the “artistic mindset” that goes into a captured image that makes all the difference. Composition, tonal values, contrast, lighting were just a few insults that could be thrown at you from any direction and I learned more from my mistakes than I did from anything I ever captured in the darkroom of negativity. It was constructive criticism in that critiques were designed to improve skills and enforce mental practices as much as physical ability.

Digital imaging was not available in 1988 as photography was a process of film that I would wrap into a canister, shoot, and then take the negatives into a darkroom to develop through a chemical process. That took time as well, typically an overnight scurry to meet the next day’s deadline for presentation. The discipline I learned when it took more time and effort to provide a single image propels me to take advantage of photography in the digital age that makes it easier and less of an effort of a time-consuming process and I can take as many liberties to explore the options at my disposal.

The Advanced Photography class had a profound impact on everything I was doing in art. It wasn’t enough to fulfill requirements as I had to go above and beyond expectations to make an impression. I had reached a level with my grades in that I knew I could easily make the grade, but that class pushed me to the limit just to keep up and maintain the basic requirements. Ultimately, it wasn’t the grading system in the end as much as what I had taken away from the class. That was more valuable than a letter descriptive of results for a learning ability that would carry through so many other aspects. Simply pushing a button to release a shutter has become my analogy for pushing for more potential. I understand now what Mike Smith was trying to develop in the mindset of students in that to take Art seriously, whether photography, painting, graphic design or otherwise...it must become a discipline of passion and working towards a higher level of quality.



Another honorable mention from the literary/arts publication was a photograph I took of my grandmother's tall chiming clock tower. "*It's A Matter of Time*" was the title I chose for the piece and it is one of my personal favorites as it has as much meaning today as when I took the photograph. I honestly was unaware of my grandmother's cat lurking in the background and didn't realize the mouse in front of the clock, but the moment captured an essence of reality in search of fantasy while the clock struck midnight. (It was actually noon, but don't tell anyone!) I'm not certain what the specific topic was for the assignment as each required quite a number of prints selected from the hundreds of photos taken, but it took a life of it's own after I noticed the cat and mouse with the inevitable matter of time.



"*Body Rhythms*" was another selection that made it into the publication. It was on one of our Student Design Association trips to New York City when I came across this guy somewhere along 42nd street tying his bike against the rail. The patterns and textures he wore seemed fashionable to the human body design spirit and it was another split-second decision to snap an image in time as I walked by in passing. Those are the best images when you are able to capture unexpected observations with no time to consider as if you become an artistic narration of something that happens in a blink of an eye with a click reaction from a camera.



There were more things in development as much as those prints that began to reveal through the chemical process in that I had to discover aspects of myself I never knew existed. I was changing from a reserved shy boy into a man on a mission. The one memory that pops into my head comes from that same photography class in which the topic was capturing people. The Veterans Administration is just adjacent to our campus and I found myself walking the short distance to quickly take a few photographs of some of those elders that were often there in the courtyard. I was courteous and asked a couple if they wouldn't mind me taking a few photos. The man became outraged and called me a communist bastard and told me to "Fuck Off!"

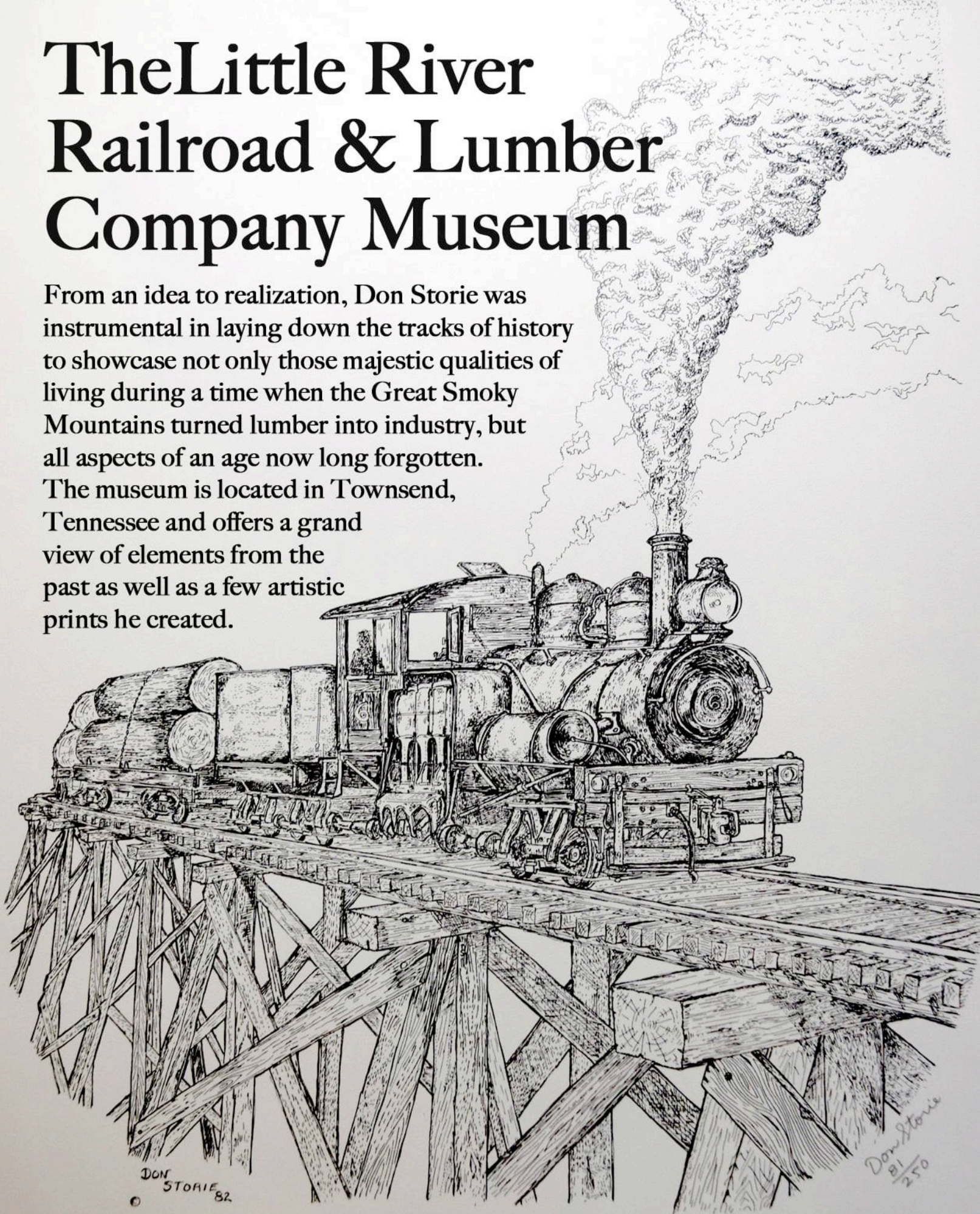
That didn't go well, so I asked my friend Patricia if she would be willing to model for me in different settings to get a variety of photographs to fulfill my assignment. She said yes and we both had such a fun trip through the Roane Mountain and back to downtown Johnson City to find various scenic backgrounds that made for a much more interesting slideshow than I had for my original plan. Creativity often becomes the mother of invention when there are obstacles unwilling to support an idea. I developed extra prints to share with her and Patricia and I became good friends.

Even after the Advanced Photography class ended, I continued to utilize my camera for a variety of artistic developments. One such circumstance involved a textured print canvas that allowed for certain guache and acrylic paints and other soluable mediums to paint over a photographic image. I had a story idea in which I needed a sexy woman placing lipstick on her face in the mirror. It was a concept idea from Norman Rockwell's "Girl at Mirror" mixed in with the cover album for "Invasion of Your Privacy" from the rock group Ratt. Kathy modelled for me and the images in black and white were more powerful than what I could add with paint.

Fast forward to more recent events as I continued to maintain a routine photographic discipline. It has served me well since that class study as I have been able to contribute to employers. Football Fridays in Georgia was an opportunity for me to capture many behind-the-scenes and field action from the games that were often used in social media and other promotions. I captured moments from the many vendor events in which GPB had been involved as well as other special occasions in which we provided something for the community. The Brenda Lee Gala in September 2019 was perhaps the most memorable in that my photographs became requested by so many. It was a fortune of fate in that I just happened to be in the right time at the right place and had the respect of so many that had confidence in my ability. That was rewarding enough to know that I've been asked on many occasions to cover certain events and capture a few images to share with others. I am not a 'professional' photographer as I do not make my living from that medium, but it's become an obsession for me to extend my artistic endeavors beyond a simple click of the button from a camera to capture life as if it were just a moment in time!

The Little River Railroad & Lumber Company Museum

From an idea to realization, Don Storie was instrumental in laying down the tracks of history to showcase not only those majestic qualities of living during a time when the Great Smoky Mountains turned lumber into industry, but all aspects of an age now long forgotten. The museum is located in Townsend, Tennessee and offers a grand view of elements from the past as well as a few artistic prints he created.



On our way to Cades Cove in the Smoky Mountains with my parents my dad would pull over going through Townsend to see what was new with my uncle's train dream. Both shared a passion for history and Uncle Don had his mind working overtime with bringing ideas to something that helped to build a legacy of proof that life was much more than history. It was Don's passion that laid the soul foundation with others that became committed to the idea of creating a museum to share history.

I saw the progression from the very beginning in which not much existed but a patch of land. Don was instrumental in bringing one of the original trains that was discovered in North Carolina and had it returned to it's origins. He understood the relevance and how much it meant to the local community when the lumber business had generated so many opportunities for families living at the foothills of the Smoky Mountains.

My uncle's passing was many years ago, yet the legacy of his vision lives on with the museum and the many interests, supportive agencies, and welcomed visitors that take the time to learn through history how important the Little River Railroad and Lumber Company offered to working families and business enterprises. I am impressed with the museum as I witnessed it's progression from just an idea to a glorious realization of how history laid the tracks for so many people living near the Smoky Mountains.

Don's vision was fulfilled after many years of development from those who took interest helping in a variety of ways to sponsor the museum. It is now a rich historical account visitors experience with an understanding how the railroad and lumber business was such an important aspect of life.

On the Fourth of July just a few years ago, I took a friend and her two boys to the museum and they were given the honor to raise the flag on their pole that day. It was a monumental moment! I felt an inner sense of pride myself in that this was special as life was leading me from past to present. It was a tribute and honor to both family and country.

Don had taken much interest in my studies in art while in college and had artistic qualities of his own. He created several pen and ink illustrations that he had printed and sold to generate funding for the railroad museum project. I was equally interested in his work as we shared that commonality of artistic exploration

I never miss an opportunity to visit the museum when I am in the area as it is a special place with memories of Don, family, and history. I encourage others to visit as the museum contains much more than a vision. What began as an idea has now become an impressive museum that showcases a part of history in which many families triumphed through the Little River Railroad & Lumber Company. As for me, I wish Don were here to see the tracks he laid that provides a path to history.

<https://littleriverrailroad.org>



Pen and ink illustration from college (ETSU) depicting nature, 1987.

The Great Outdoors

Trips with my parents to the Great Smoky Mountains and those weekend ventures on the many lakes in Tennessee provided an escape to nature, which was often a contrast to the hustle and bustle of working through the challenges of a career. As a family, those were the moments in the great outdoors in which adventures to discover nature's beauty provided a deep impact on me to simply watch God's creatures going through their own routine as I began to learn an appreciation for nature. The simple pleasures of watching birds feeding often stimulate my mind with imagination as it provides a solitary existence in which I realize I am not alone and provides some gift with the joys and wonders of all creatures.

Fort Loudon Lake (Tennessee River), Melton Hill, Norris and Tellico Lakes were often those we frequented as the scenic landscapes were a breath of fresh air in which the wind would carry any worries away for the moment to put my mind at ease.

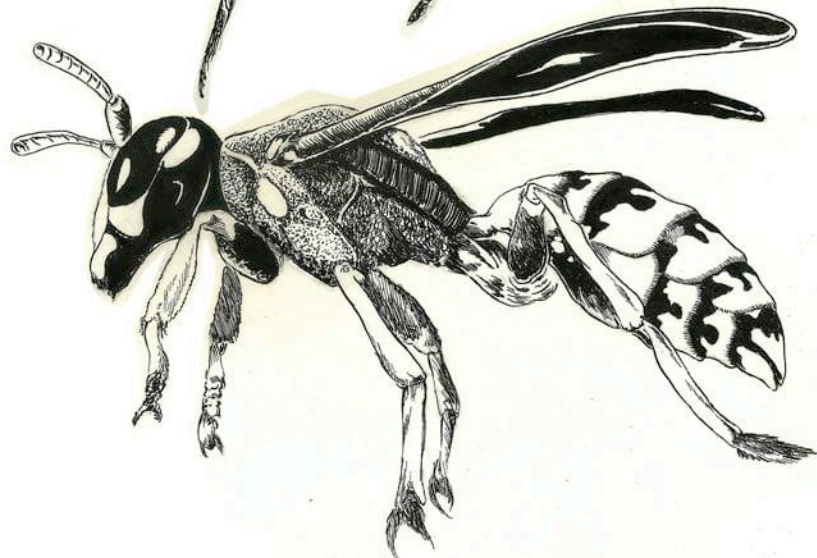
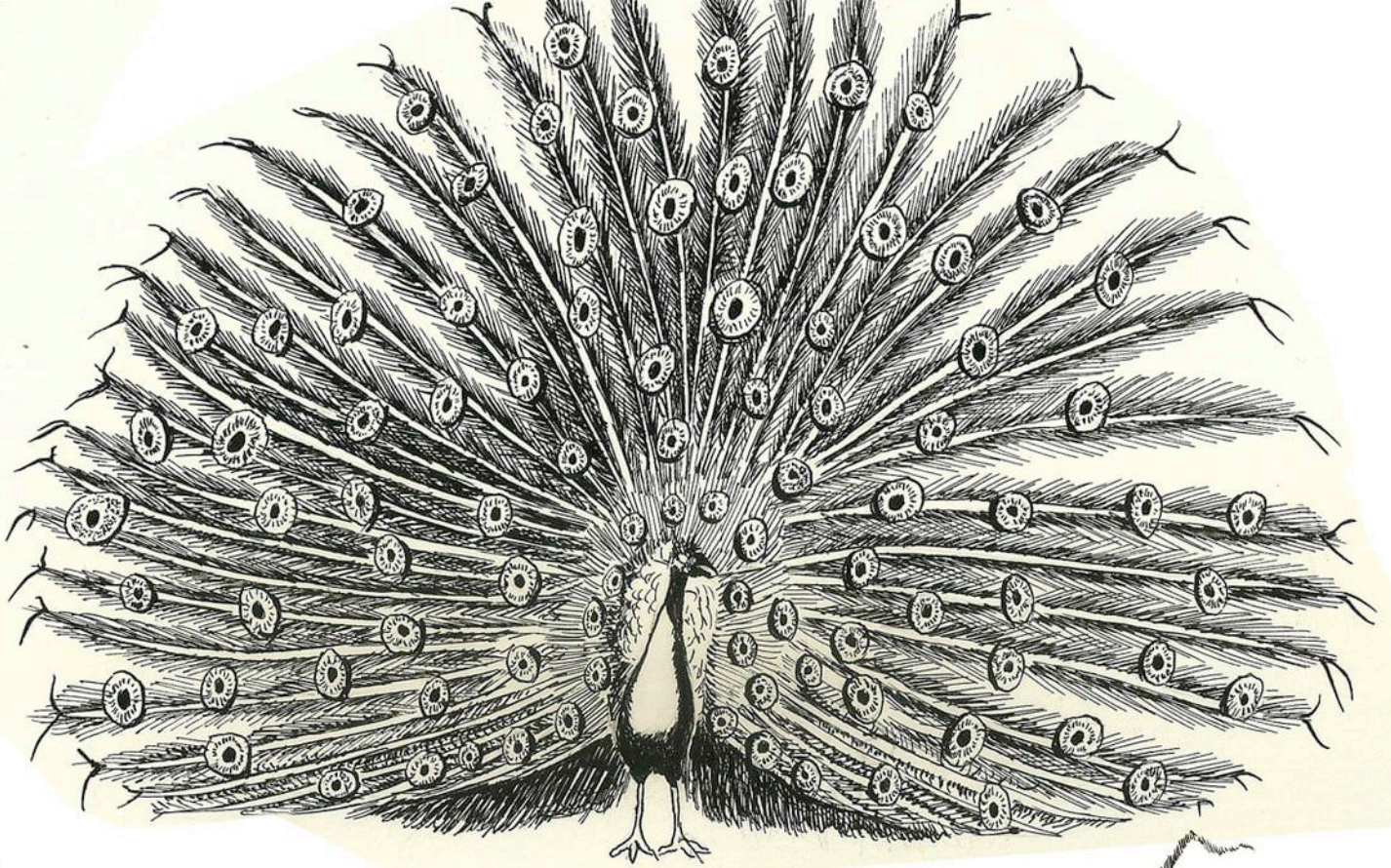
The world is full of variety with places to explore and discover and I make it a point to continue that aspect for myself as I am often confined to indoor activity and feel the need to escape outdoors. Exploration and adventure into nature provides an outlet of discovery of the world around me and keeps my mind active with thinking through the lens of nature.

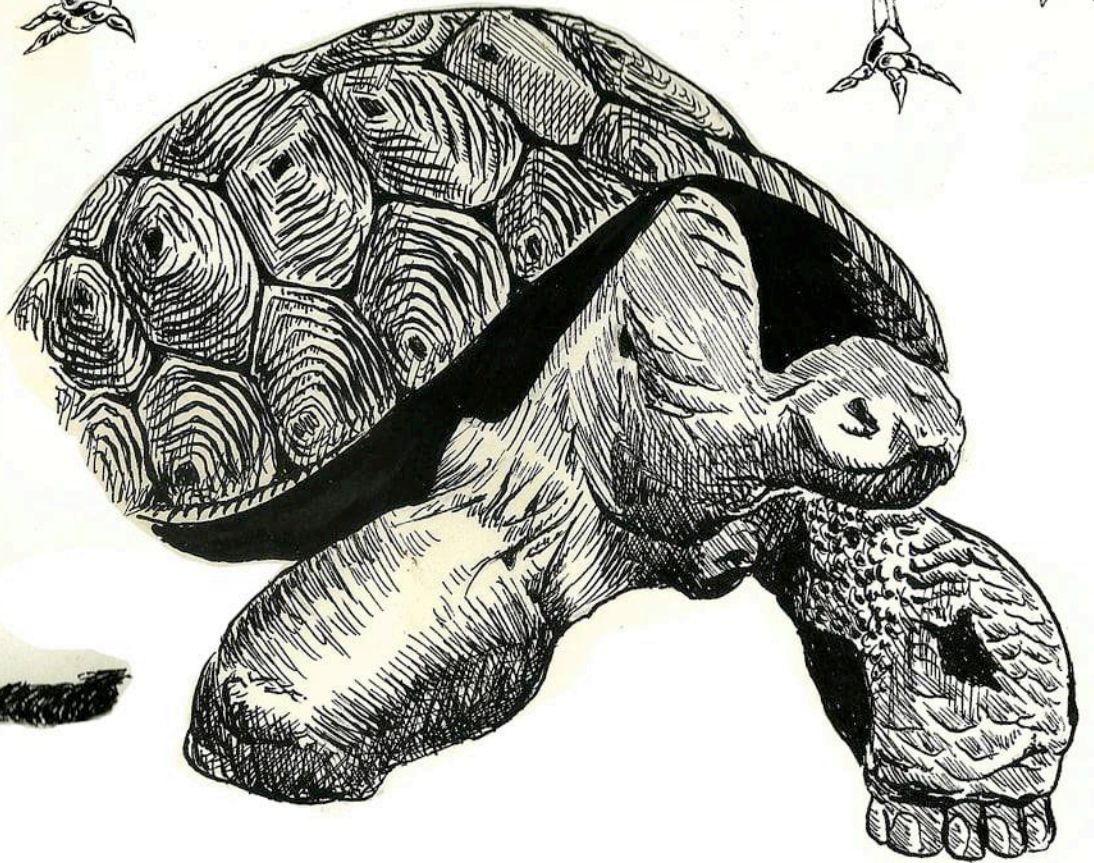
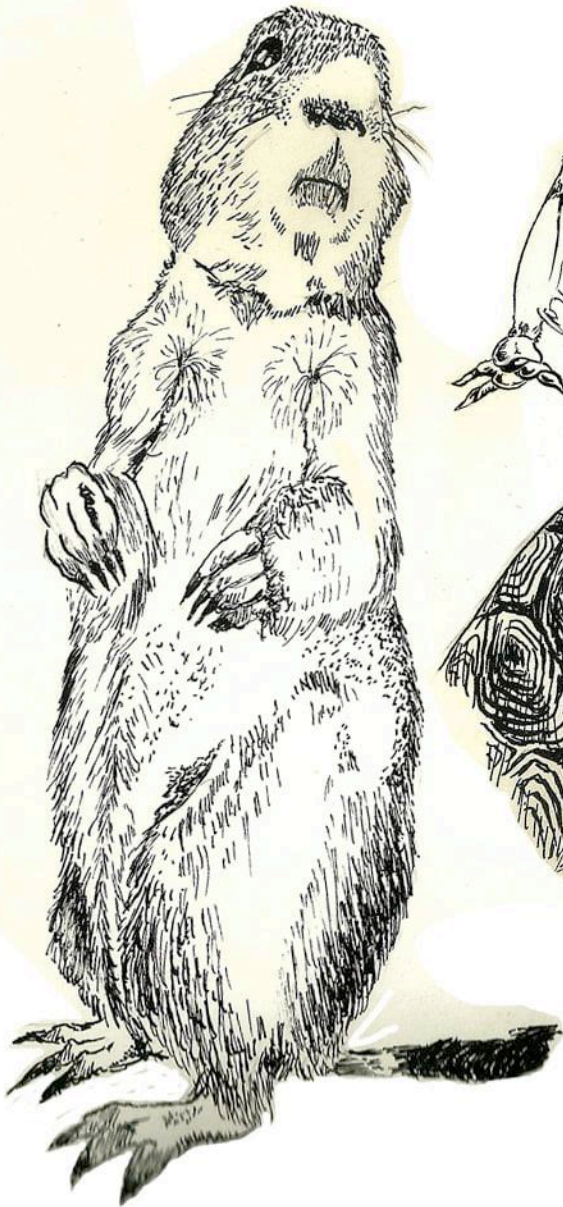
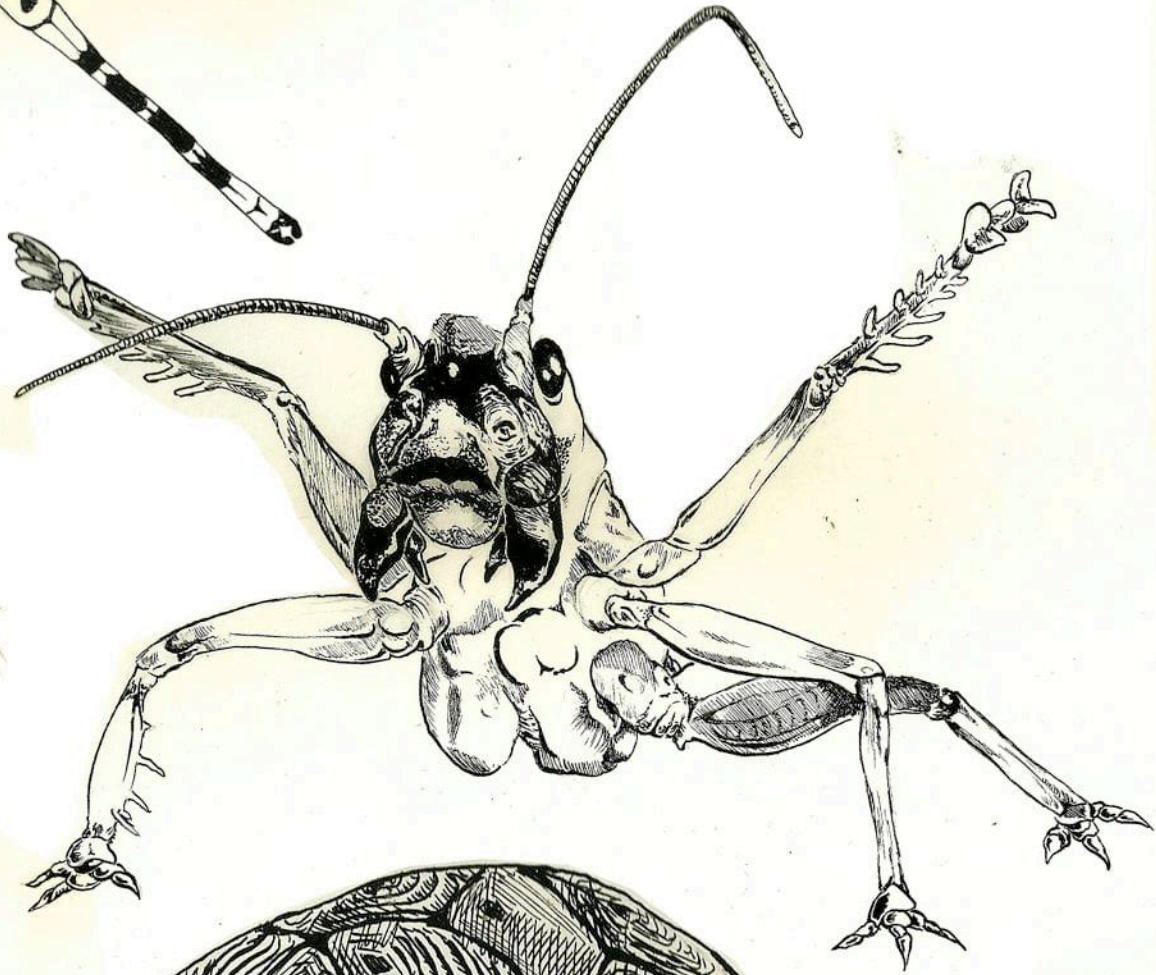
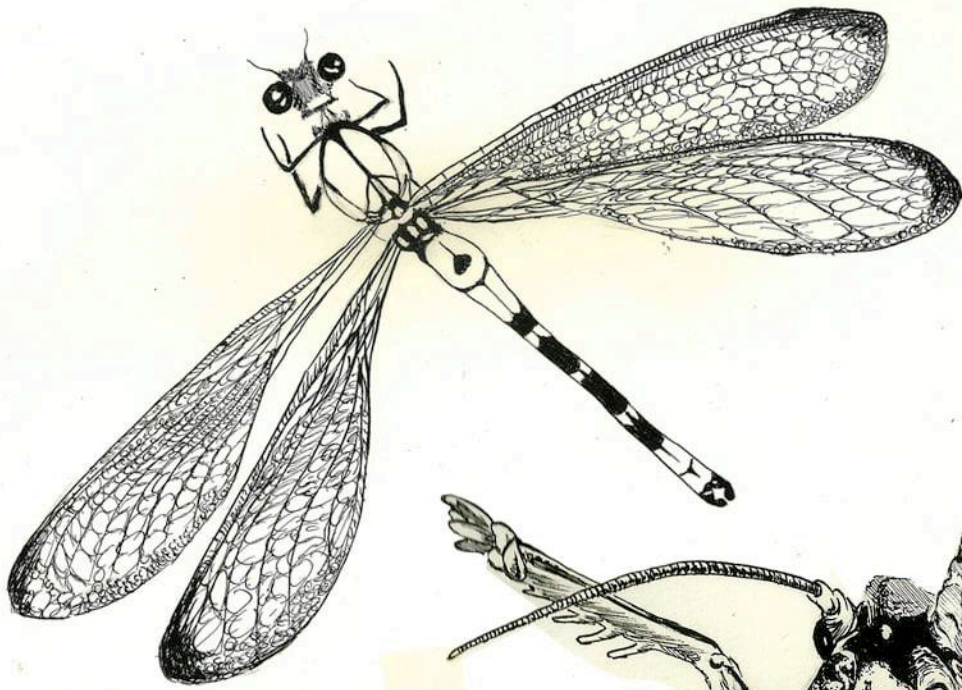
“Stop and smell the Roses,” was an old expression my Great Grandmother often said to those of us at an early age with more energy than we knew what to do with. She probably planted the seed in my mind to enjoy and cherish the moment rather than become too occupied with ambitious efforts. There is a balance to living in that both can be respected and appreciated without compromise. A mind can become overwhelmed and go through a period of habitual stagnation with the same routine day in and day out. That is why I often break out of my routine to create some new desired adventure that helps generate a new perspective. Nothing does me more good than to just take a break from realistic expectations to explore, discover, and take a moment to stop and smell the flowers in bloom that nature provides comfort.

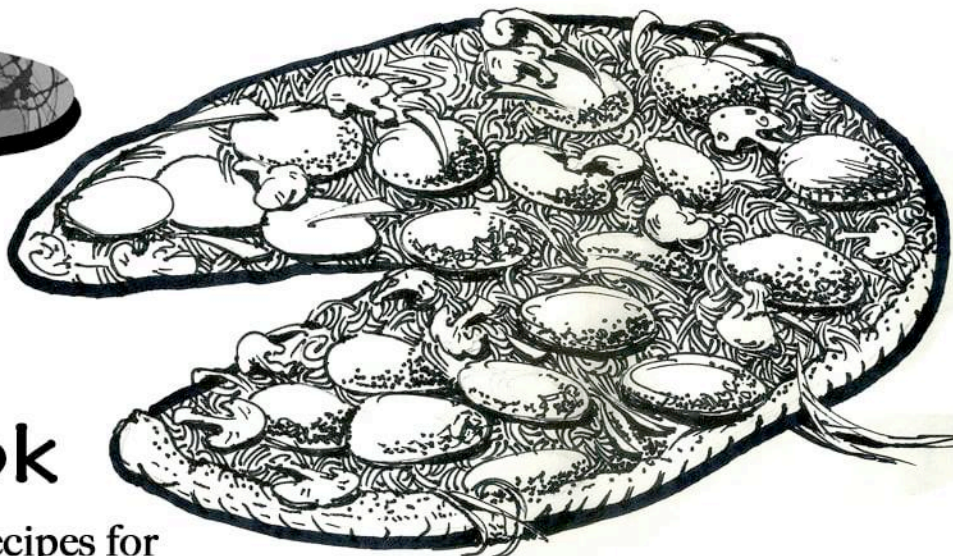


The Great Outdoors provides a relaxing escape for those who take interest. My BACKYARD NATURE project is an ambition of mine as I have numerous photos and videos of birds and other creatures to share. It is one of those many ambitions I have in mind, yet must commit much of my time to pursue. In the meantime, the following Extra pages contain some pen and ink illustrations I created in school of various plants and animals. More can be found on the link below:

<https://graphicasyllumweb.shutterfly.com/pictures>



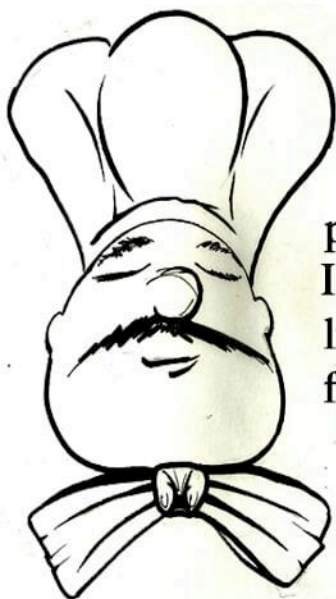
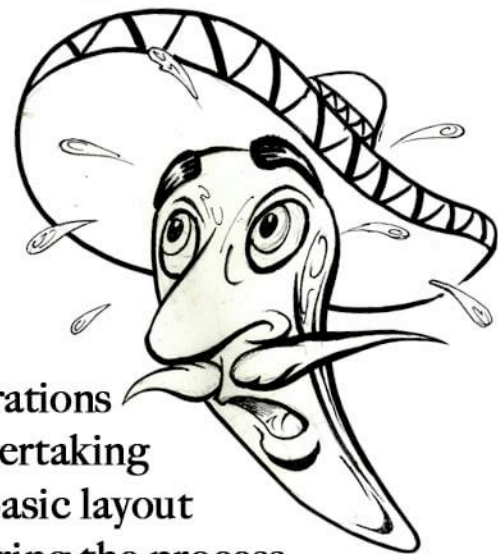




The Cookbook

I had compiled a notebook of recipes for many years as a reference source for cooking. Hand-written directions that I kept for some of my favorites. The idea of putting a cookbook together was not something I had conceived originally, but I did want some signature idea in which I could bring my passion for cooking to an artistic level. The words GOURMET GALLERY kept floating through my head and I struggled in the beginning to find a connection between the two until I began to have thoughts about turning my basic notes into a cookbook. I incorporated a painter's palette into the logo design and began my creative endeavor.

Beginning with a wink of an eye as an idea soon turned into a grand vision. I became committed to development and productive efforts as the project began to take a life of it's own. The labor of cooking all the recipes, taking photographs, designing the book with graphics and illustrations took about two and a half years. It was an enormous undertaking



as I continued to make changes with the basic layout of design and organizing the content. During the process, I was learning much more on my own and already felt a sense of achievement. If nothing else, the cookbook was a portfolio piece to showcase a variety of talents as well as culinary offerings. I also discovered cooking was as much an artistic endeavor much like the creative mindset in that the final result brings a taste and flavor that is appreciated. My ambition was to inspire others to discover the same passion for cooking as I have through the years as I seem to spend as much time in the kitchen as in my art studio. A few of my Pen and Ink illustrations from my GOURMET GALLERY cookbook are shown on these pages.



OKTOBERFEST

SAUSAGES... HOMEMADE SAUERKRAUT with APPLES



Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 lbs Assorted Sausage Variety
(Polska Kielbasa Bratwurst, and
Smoked Sausage links are favorites)
- 2 Small Yellow Onions, chopped
- 6 Cups Shredded Red Cabbage
- 2 Tart Red Apples (Cored and Thinly Sliced)
- 1 lb Yukon Gold Potatoes
- 4 Tablespoons Bacon Fat
- 2 Tablespoons Sugar
- 2 Tablespoons Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1/2 Teaspoon Caraway Seeds
- 1 Cup of Lager Beer
- Salt and Pepper to Taste



Directions:

1. Melt Bacon Fat in skillet over medium heat. Add Sugar and cook while stirring often until Sugar browns (about 4 minutes.) Reduce heat to medium-low and add chopped onions. Saute until golden brown (about 5 minutes.)
2. Add shredded Red Cabbage, sliced Apples, Vinegar and Caraway Seeds. Stir.
3. Place Sausages and potatoes on top of cabbage mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Pour in the Lager Beer, Stir and bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to low and let simmer with a cover for 45 minutes.

Collective Memories

XEROX

An illustration of one of my many characters. Frigmon Cede was inspired from a Jethro Tull album cover, "The Broadsword and The Beast" in which I needed a hero to fight and overcome fantastic stories that I would imagine.



When I first began to think about art it was nothing more than a means to create some story to illustrate for myself. The process was just how I passed the time in that I had just enough talent for an articulative mind that wanted to be productive with ideas. I would stand to reach the countertop where my parents kept their canned goods in mason jars from the garden to draw out my stories. I had an imagination that wouldn't quit and became passionate about what I was doing which led to so many other facets of life.

I soon learned that if I use ink over my pencils I could create a black and white rendering that I could make copies on a Xerox machine in which I could color. My mom was my printing guru as I would give her my drawings and she would return from work with Xerox copies of my art. I would be so excited that I pulled out my magic markers and colored pencils and began to color my stories on the Xerox copies (just in case I wasn't happy with the results of the colors.)

Those Xerox copies became a continuous gift as a reproductive effort that led to my exploration of color. It was an essential part of the process and mom always had an extra job to fulfill at work! LOL! I think she understood more than any how valuable those copies were to me. It propelled me at such an early age to keep up and continue with my craft of storytelling through letter-sized pages in which could be easily duplicated from a Xerox copy machine.

I had an entire line of various comics I created monthly...or as time would allow. As with any kid with an identity crisis, I began with "KNOCK-OUT COMICS," which should be self-explanatory in that reading them would "KNOCK YOU OUT!" The title went through other variations until I decided on "ADVENTURE COMICS."

Frigmon Cede and The Swords of Peace were my most passionate story that just came together as life was happening for me. I would take those elements from my own life and they would work themselves into my stories in some way.

It's all part of the creative process in that you can't help but to put some part of yourself into the story.

Animal-Man was another favorite of mine until I learned DC Comics had a character by that name. Mine was better! (Using my Bias Card here!) Seriously...A meteor falls into the Everglades Swamp and this Man takes on all the characteristic properties of animals that he uses to become a hero for nature. The Glider was an offshoot of Batman...He had Karate skills and a wing that allowed him to fly. I created an entire story for The Glider that I still wish to fulfill, but the unique thing about his character was he lost his memory and did not know where he came from and so is always trying to determine his origins. KO Man was my signature character as he used a magic hammer to KNOCK OUT villains. He eventually became COLONIAL-MAN in an effort to go back in time to help fight for American Freedom. RISK-RIDER was a man who survived Hell and came back to earth to save humanity. He rode a motorcycle and I'm sure I got the idea from Marvel Comics. ROBOT WARS was my lame attempt trying to bring personality to robots. It just didn't work for me as a storyteller, but I tried to make it interesting. Good Robots vs Evil Robots seemed more like a programming error than anything else. So that's my story and I'm sticking to it!



Perspective:

BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD



The more you know, the less you understand and oftentimes what seems simple becomes more difficult. Art can be as frustrating as anything else in life in that there is no common denominator or proven method that works at all times. That is what I find most intriguing as it becomes a constant struggle and challenge to reach some unattainable goal. I often keep that thought in my mind knowing I will never reach a level of satisfaction with anything I've accomplished or achieved because there will be something else tomorrow that will need work and effort that is not part of some existing template that is a proven guide for success.

That is both the joy and tragedy of creativity in that there is always a new perspective that enhances solutions. Those challenges when I become most frustrated and burning out through mental conception are signs that I just need to refresh my thoughts and get back to basics. That is when I begin to rediscover new directions to take and gain a new sense of pursuit with ideas that occur.

A lifetime of experience teaches an artist nothing more than the need for persistence in reaching some inner self-value of worth. At least, that is how I would describe my own voyage as it is never a destination so much as the adventurous journey.

The times when I suffered the most in mental angst of creative solutions were those moments when I was turning new corners and learning through my own resistance to change. It is inevitable and I'm painting with broad strokes in that it isn't just art, but life itself. It is easy to fall into complacency with familiarity that becomes routine, but life often shakes the ground beneath our feet and we must find our balance to stand strong enough to avoid disaster.

The early '90's were full of changes. Personal computers began to filter into society and the internet was just in it's infancy and there were so many dynamics that affected my life. My college degree was useless in a new world technology as I learned the old-school system of design. My T-Square, Wax pasting machine, and comp boards had become dinosaurs in a new modern age. I had to make changes if I wanted to continue in the field of graphic design as Photoshop, Illustrator and QuarkXpress were the new essential programs to learn for the industry.

Those books I collected on Basic Design, Perspective, Cinematography, Concept Design and so many others are just as valuable today as they were back in the '80's. I often refer to them when I feel a need for inspiration. It takes me back to the drawing board with revelations of new ideas and I find those resources instrumental in any progressive efforts. Yes, back to basics and that will often provide a path for new discovery.

Technology can change with new programs and effects, but the key to creativity is to understand the basics. For me, it is often problem-solving solutions through experience and continuing to find new and interesting explorations of those ideas.

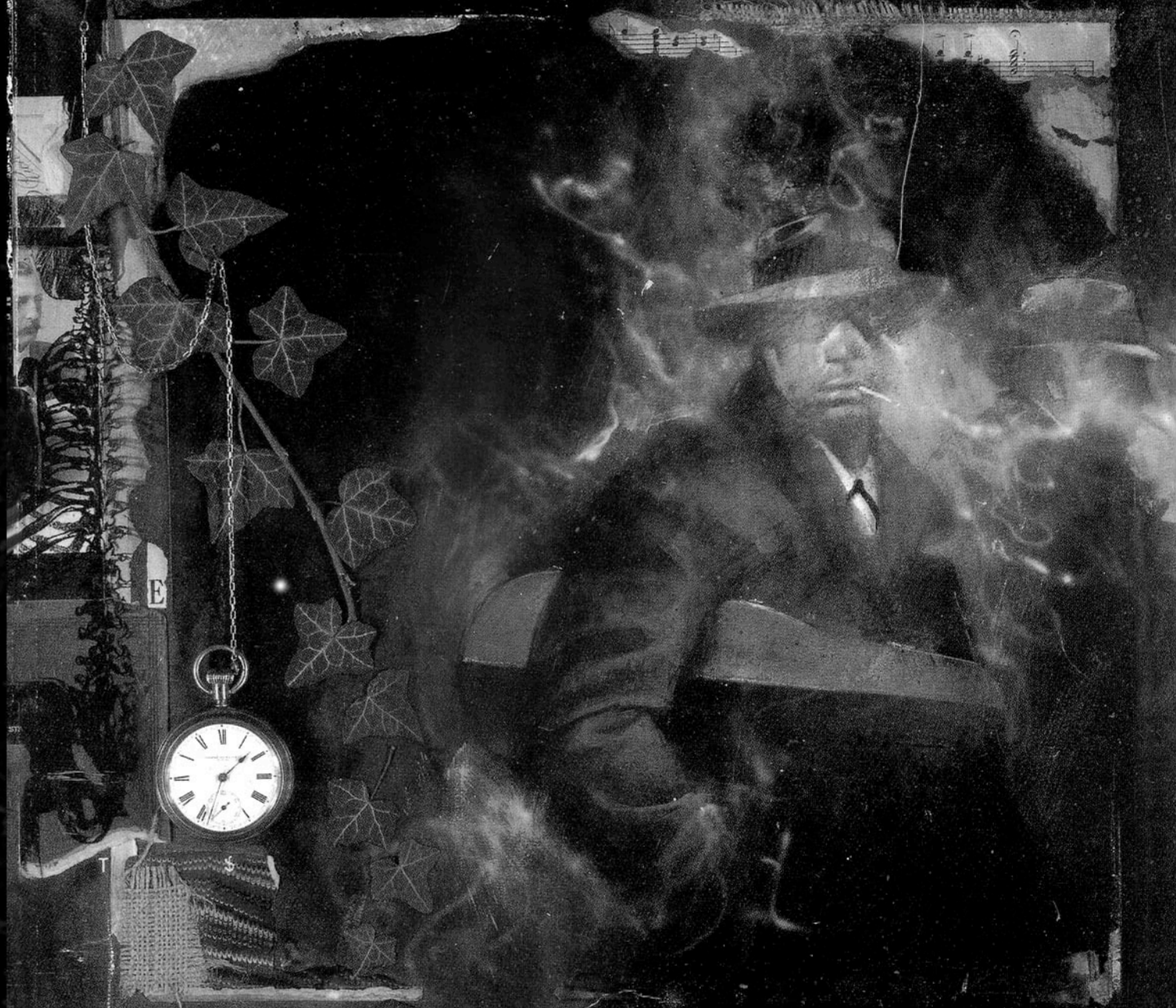
Creativity is not so much a gift as much as a suffering of mental angst within the soul. Those who become committed to such a life are performing for a basic need. It certainly isn't money that drives an artistic ambition...at least that is not my motivating factor. It has more to do with a reflection of inner sensibilities that fulfills a desire to contribute to society at large. The only gratification comes when a project has been completed and there's something new to be developed.

A friend bought me the T-Shirt which reads,:

**"I am an Artist...That means I live
in a Crazy Fantasy World
with Unrealistic Expectations..
Thank You For Understanding!"**

Nothing could be more true than the message it relates as it sums up my life in a nutshell! I wear it with pride knowing exactly what it means to me and that brings happiness to my soul.

VIOLENT CASES



written by NEIL GAIMAN

illustrated by DAVE MCKEAN

Violent Cases

A Graphic Novel
by Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean

Published in black and white by Escape Books in 1987, "Violent Cases" was the first graphic novel collaboration from Neil Gaiman and artist Dave McKean. The book's popularity soared and was later published by both Titan Books, Tundra, and Dark Horse Publishing in full color. Dave McKean's original art for the 44 page graphic novel was painted in monochromatic tones and textures with values in qualities of blue, sepia, and grey tonal values. It would become the first of many collaborations between the literary novelist featuring the amazing work of Dave McKean.

The graphic novel propelled both their careers to new heights and ambitions and inspired so many others to follow the trend they had set for an entire industry as a new perspective suddenly turned old ideas into fresh opportunities.

In my opinion, it was the perfect marriage between art and literature. "Violent Cases" is still at the top of my list as it is a true representation of how Sequential Art ranks amongst the greatest book novels ever written. There is a dynamic between the words and pictures that captures both the visceral senses as much as the thought-provoking words.

For those unfamiliar, the story is an adult's childhood memories reflecting upon his relationship with his father when he was taken to an osteopath for treatments. The osteopath doctor was affiliated with Al Capone back in history during a time when gangsters were taking control of the many liberties America pursued and capitalized on the weakness of social stability.

Gaiman and McKean inspired me to challenge myself to take part in following that path which ultimately led to a graduate degree in Sequential Art. That is the power that exists in both art and literature as it motivates the soul desire to create those things that inspire others.



