

About the Artist

I'm a creative guy, compelled by the muses to be a maker, a doer, a restless soul with a pencil and paper. Growing up, I was surrounded by a creative family, skilled in working wood, ceramics and fabric. Encouraged to express my art and music, I knew early on that I wanted to apply my talent within the realm of communications. I became a technical illustrator, draftsman, and graphic designer, working with engineers and marketing professionals to convey information through graphics. I've been very fortunate to be paid to apply my natural talents, and to do what I enjoy doing!

I have always been a huge fan of illustrators, cartoonists, and expert draftsmen. I can gaze for hours at the works of Albrecht Dürer, Franklin Booth, Winsor McCay, Arthur Rackham, or Virgil Finlay. I browse wistfully through vintage mechanical drawings, the wonders of the quadrivium, or the elegance of geodesics. On the other hand, I love watching classic animation, too - from Disney to Bakshi to the Fleisher brothers.

These inspirations have in common a level of precision - be it in the technique, the tools, or the subject matter. The balance of right and left brain that takes a vision, whether profound or whimsical, and impresses that vision into some sharable medium fascinates me. Although I appreciate the abstract, I prefer art that tells a story or conveys useful information.

Precision of visual expression is an illusive quality, and a thing I have always reached for.

Here are two quotes that sum up my artistic quest: Robert M. Persig said, "Art is anything you can do well. Anything you can do with Quality." R. Buckminster Fuller said, "When I am working on a problem, I never think about beauty, but when I have finished, if the solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong."

- D.M. April, 2019

Isabelle PHOENIX Gallery

342 W. Main St.
Ionia, MI 48846



Acknowledgements

There are many, many folks I should thank who have inspired or encouraged me during this decades-long journey. But specifically with regard to this exhibition, I need to thank Vivian Grady, owner of the Isabelle Phoenix Gallery, for convincing me that I should do this.

The life-long support of my family through thick and thin has no equal.

There have been a multitude of teachers (professional and otherwise). Oddly, I never took an art class in high school (except drafting), but I befriended the art teachers nonetheless, and learned from them at every opportunity. Thanks to Mrs. Buxton's oil painting class when I was 10 or 12, and to Gary Smith's informal tutoring at IHS.

Thanks to several people for their expertise in creating digital prints that hang on the walls here - Colleen Farrell, Tyler Basler, and Vicki Kennedy.

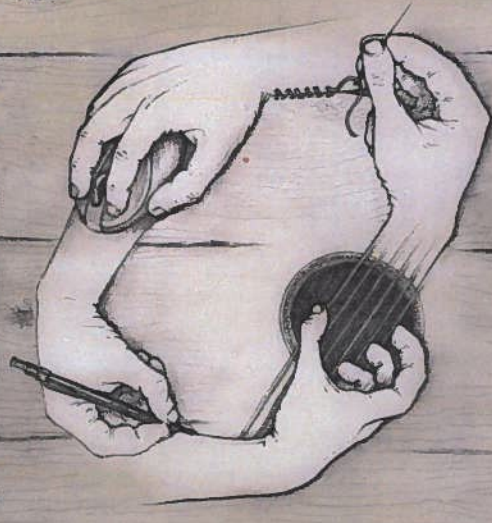
Thanks to my wife, Annette, for her critique.

Thanks also to the folks who helped pull together the refreshments and entertainment, and other suggestions along the way.

And of course, to everyone who showed up!

- D.M.

DAVID MCCORD



CREATIVE

A Display of the Artist's
Creative Works at the

Isabelle PHOENIX Gallery

May 8 thru June 22

2019

About the Art

Gathering pieces for this show, I sifted through many piles of papers and many files of digital data. I've amassed quite a collection of artwork over the past six decades! It's been very difficult for me to evaluate the worth of my work, but with the help of a few trusted friends, what you see here is a fair representation of my creative output - my life's work (so far).

To help me sort it all out, and to help you experience the work, it's been gathered into categories. I've also prepared some captions to help explain what you're looking at.

Section 1: Architecture

This area includes renderings of buildings—inside and out, old and new. Often my drawings are based upon on architects' designs, concepts for structures that have not actually been built. Working with CAD files, blueprints, and notes from designers, I create conceptual drawings to show laypersons what a proposed structure might look like. I also create lots of detailed structural drawings, cut-away views and diagrams to help both professionals and do-it-yourselfers to visualize and implement their ideas.

The second part of the Architecture category is what I call "Fantasy Architecture" and includes what are essentially caricatures of buildings that are fanciful flights of the imagination.

Section 2: Vehicles

I'm not a mechanic by any means, but I have a great admiration for the design and styling of vehicles of all kinds, not only as modes of transportation or machines built to do a specific task, but as innovative solutions and works of art in metal and glass. Many happy hours were spent at the Henry Ford or Gilmore's Auto Farm with my dad admiring wheeled machines from tiny pull-toys to

giant steam locomotives.

Some of these examples are works-for-hire, illustrations created for clients to teach or explain some system or function. Others I've drawn just for the joy of drawing the beautiful or the exotic.

Section 3: Products & Processes

This section is all about "visual aids." Every time you purchase a product with an illustrated owner's manual or read a "how-to" article, you'll likely find drawings that illustrate a step-by-step procedure. Here, too, are drawings of objects that one might find in a visual encyclopedia, text book, product catalog, or training video. As the saying goes, "A picture is worth 1,000 words." Imagine if there were no pictures in that troubleshooting guide for your malfunctioning printer or your next "some assembly required" gadget!

Section 4: Illustration

I like books with pictures. Not just because I get paid to draw them sometimes, but I just like them. From comic books to text books, a well-executed illustration brings the author's vision to life for the reader.

Alongside a collection of scenes and characters, I've decided to show a few of these pieces step-by-step. You can see my initial concept sketches, refined pencil drawings, ink drawings, and colorized final versions.

One of the aspects of the creative process that I continually remind art and music students about is practice. Each composition involves iterations and refinements - especially when a piece is being done for a client who may not know what they want, but definitely know what they don't want!

Many of these examples were commissions, but an equal number are my own self-promotional pieces. As I always say: "Everything I do is practice for the next time."

Section 5: Table-Top Games

I do like playing table-top games, and I've been designing games for many years. I don't consider myself a serious game designer, but the design process and development of the artwork that goes with a board game or card game is a very satisfying experience. I've designed over a hundred original games, and a few are available for purchase! I've chosen a number of my designs for this show that you can play if you like.

Section 6: Wood & Leather

I enjoy building furniture and useful items, especially if I can repurpose or recycle the materials. Along the wall are a few examples of woodwork and leatherwork, made almost exclusively from used materials. Just another hobby of mine.

Section 7: Promotional Items

I have been privileged to work with many organizations over the years to promote events and activities in Ionia and beyond. I thought this rack of T-shirts was an interesting way to show you some of the "wearable graphics" I've designed.

Section 8: Publications

There are a few other items scattered throughout the exhibit here that are examples of my work in print. As an author, designer, or contributor to publications, my work has found its way into many published forms. Enjoy!