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Jaguar



Concours d' Elegance

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COME SEE THE SHOW!

Local Artist Creates Automotive Memories...

Mike Kelly paints cars and trucks. No, he doesn't operate a collision or body shop. And no, he doesn't run an assembly-line paint shop for an automaker like GM, Ford, or DaimlerChrysler.

What he does is paint pictures, or more specifically, commissioned "portraits" of classic cars and trucks—and a few trains, too. For a modest fee, Kelly will turn that prized sheet metal in your garage into a suitable-for-framing, full-color illustration that will make it a lot easier to show off your favorite classic car in your home, or at your office, even if it's 10 degrees outside and snowing.



"Many people like to have portraits painted of their family, sometimes including the family patriarch or matriarch, and hang them on the wall to proudly show all," said Kelly. "Some even have portraits painted of their pets, and there are artists who specialize in that too. I decided a long time ago to specialize in painting what has helped make Detroit the Motor City."

"I've found that there are a lot of "gear heads" in town who spend great gobs of time and money getting their classic cars in top shape, and are quite proud of the final product. It's an added bonus to have an original, one-of-a-kind rendering of their pride and joy, and I'm more than glad to help out. It's great to see the look on someone's face when first seeing their '49 MG-TC or '69 Z-28 turned into an actual work of art."

Kelly has been painting automotive portraits for over 20 years. He also spent a good portion of his career in the automotive industry working on designs of some of the same cars and light trucks he "paints" today. He's even designed semi-trucks. Kelly spent a number of years working for Mayflower Vehicle Systems, a supplier of body assemblies for heavy-truck manufacturers like Mack, Kenworth, Volvo Trucks and Freightliner. Mayflower, which is based in Coventry, England, also designed and produced car bodies for Jaguar, Rolls-Royce, and Aston Martin vehicles. So Kelly became well-schooled in European automotive sheet metal as well.



Prior to Mayflower, Kelly worked at what was the world's largest manufacturer of semi-trailers. Fruehauf Corporation taught Kelly that even a big box on wheels could use some aesthetics.

"At Fruehauf, we used to kid around and say that being an industrial designer at a trailer manufacturer was like being a stylist at a ball-bearing factory," said Kelly. "But in reality, what we did there was just as important as what we did as car stylists later on. Truck aerodynamics is a very critical part of their overall design, especially now with fuel prices at all-time highs. We did a lot of projects and studies that included the entire truck, front to back, and some of the truck designs were really cool. Many of the ideas we came up with back then are on the road today."

These days, Kelly's "day job" is still in the automotive industry. He is a PR and advertising manager for a major auto-components supplier. But he really relishes the time away from the office where he can roll up his sleeves and mix paint on the palette for his next portrait.

"A while ago, a woman wanted me to do a painting of the three Corvettes her father had owned in his lifetime,"

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Kelly recalled, "She and her sisters gave the illustration to him as a Father's Day present. She later told me he was very happy with it—'ecstatic' is the word I think she used. I get a lot of satisfaction out of hearing things like that."

Contact Mike Kelly at 313-640-8935 or 248-709-5858 for more information.

His e-mail address is: mkelly6835@aol.com



Car Art

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Call 313-640-8935 or 248-709-5858

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