



An Exclusive Interview with
MASTER ARTIST
KEVIN MURPHY

➔ According to famous Artist Pablo Picasso: “Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.”

Kevin Murphy began his career in the art industry at the age of 23 as an illustrator with absolutely no measurable formal training. Over the eight years that followed, he was commissioned to create artwork for nearly 250 commercial works. His major client base includes mogul entities such as Random House, R.J. Reynolds, Viacom, Putnam/Penguin, National Geographic, Milton Bradley, St. Maarten Press, Barnes & Noble, Sega, MTV, L’Oreal USA, Virgin Records, Lucas Arts, and the Rolling Stones.

In 1997, Kevin, was commissioned by the Rolling Stones to create the iconic image that would adorn the “Bridges to Babylon” album cover along with all of the merchandise for the tour. An ultra-high profile image with global reach, the Rolling Stones’ Bridges to Babylon commission was easily one of the most coveted illustrations of the decade. He worked alongside Stefan Sagmeister. In August 1997, with an 85 ft banner of Kevin’s painting draped from the Brooklyn Bridge as a backdrop, the Rolling Stones announced their tour and album release to the world.

This project was monumental and brought him a high degree of notoriety. After years of creating artwork for commercial use, an interest in the historical traditions of art had developed and were now swaying him in new directions. According to Kevin, he began investigating venues that would offer greater artistic freedom while allowing him to utilize his skills to cre-



George Washington has been consistently counted amongst the most recognized men in the world. Couple this with the knowledge that George Washington died 35 years before the invention of the camera, one begins to get a sense of the importance of portraiture. Consider the fact that our only grasp of what the Father of our Nation looked like is derived from his painted portrait



ate works with deeper meaning and purpose. End of 1999, Kevin turned the page on his life and career in the commercial art industry and took a self-imposed two year hiatus from painting. During this time he enjoyed his first vacation in almost a decade. In 2001 he returned to painting.

Kevin's renewed focus in art was directed towards traditional portraiture. Though this niche was not initially his main focus, a constant stream of requests for these family heirlooms eventually gave way to what has become the primary focus of his work over the past fifteen years. Kevin attributes his interest in portraiture to the challenges it consistently poses, the opportunity to meet people with whom his path would not otherwise cross and the genre's status within the hierarchy of historical art.

EPN: How do you illustrate the value of

portraiture to potential clients?

Kevin: I enjoy sharing this thought on the impact that a simple portrait can hold: "George Washington has been consistently counted amongst the most recognized men in the world. Couple this with the knowledge that George Washington died 35 years before the invention of the camera, one begins to get a sense of the importance of portraiture. Consider the fact that our only grasp of what the Father of our Nation looked like is derived from his painted portrait. This perspective breathes real life into a form of art that so few people these days consider for themselves. When people discuss legacy, we need look no further than this age-old tradition for the greatest means of creating an enduring record of one's life."

EPN: How many portraits have you created since entering the field of portraiture? What is your clients base?

Kevin: I have created approximately one hundred and fifty portraits. My portrait clients come from a broad range of backgrounds and vocations, each with a unique life story waiting to be immortalized.

EPN: When did you open The Art Academy? Why?

Kevin: In 2009 I expanded my position in the art world with the founding of the Art Academy in Somerset County, New Jersey. This school was designed as a means to share the knowledge I accumulated over nearly two decades of working at the high-end of the professional art world. With the success of the flagship Academy in Somerset County, I opened a second school in September 2015 with plans for several more in the near future as the base of what will eventually grow into a national franchise.

EPN: Tell us about the programs offered at The Art Academy

Kevin: The programs offered at The Art Academy are designed around the needs of everyone, from beginners to skilled artists interested in further developing their craft. Our educational philosophy makes extraordinary results attainable to any student through a simple, concise and thoughtful approach to training in a warm and welcoming environment of like minded artisans.

EPN: How do the programs support students' advancement in the world of Art?

Kevin: In the few years since the Art Academy's founding, this program has shown itself to be a true standout with unparalleled results. Students have enjoyed a 100% acceptance rate to top art universities internationally, while consistently being awarded Presidential level scholarships. In addition, high school aged students at the Art Academy have been recognized in national and international competitions contending directly with top-tier professionals.

In Kevin's own words to aspiring artists: "Great artists are not born, they are trained." Come in to discover this truth for yourself.

