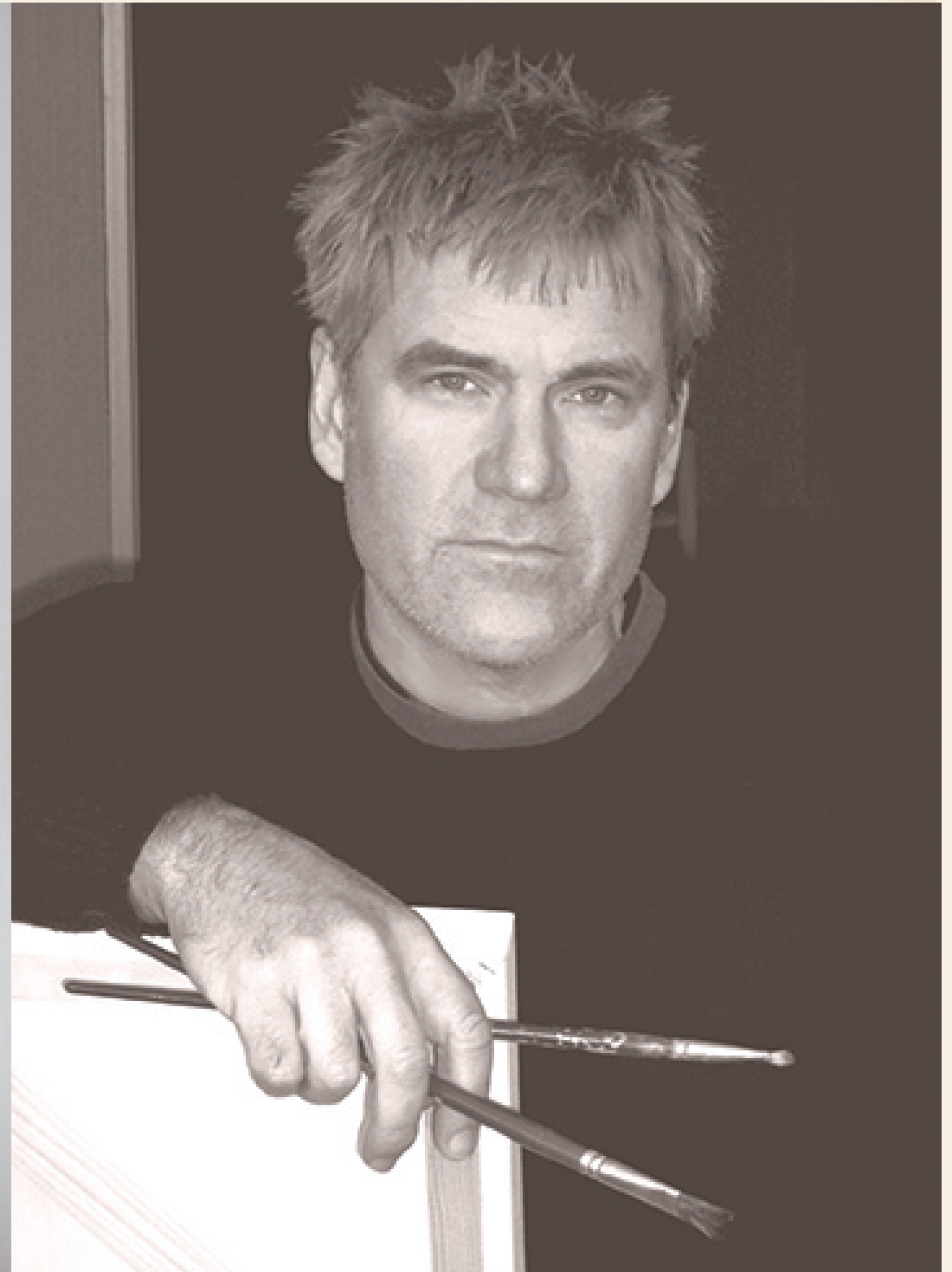




Mark Keller

LIMITED EDITIONS FROM MARK KELLER



Melody In Black & White

Giclée / Limited Edition of 95 / 610 x 457mm / 24 x 18 inch





The Student

Giclée / Limited Edition of 95 / 508 x 394 mm / 20 x 15½ inch



The Teacher

Giclée / Limited Edition of 95 / 508 x 394 mm / 20 x 15½ inch



Echoes Of A Melody

Giclée / Limited Edition of 95 / 508 x 394mm / 20 x 15½ inch

The Story Teller

We are constantly intrigued with the drama that Mark Keller portrays. We don't usually see it - the real story in his paintings has either just happened, or is just about to...

The air of mystery and suspense hangs in each piece like in a movie reel, scenes of drama from a bigger, richer storyline.

Look at the characters, their body language, and try to imagine their thoughts and feelings, emotions. Imagine the last conversations they had, or the ones they are about to have.

This is where Mark Keller's work takes on a life of its own beyond the canvas...

"It's seductive. It's haunting. It affects people." Music is what Mark Keller refers to, and acknowledges this as his main source of artistic inspiration. Like many painters, Mark experienced his own little miracle many years ago, when a stroll through a 100 year old Buenos Aires bar presented a scene so moving, he's painted its subjects again and again.

"There was something about them," Keller says in a far off voice, describing the musicians he saw playing under a stream of light, the paintings and patina surrounding them. "They had an ashtray for tips. They had a sign that said 'Gracias' but they didn't care about that. These guys were in their 60s, maybe older. They were elegant. They were playing for the joy of it. It was just beautiful."

His rich, realistic portrayals breathe a respect for music and its affect on the musician. "There's always passion when you see a good musician, or even a mediocre one, if they're putting their heart into it," he says. "You see it on their faces; you see it in the veins of their necks that they're giving it all they've got. Sometimes they turn towards me and smile and I think, 'No. Please. Just go back to what you were doing.'"

As a painter, Mark's work reflects how much music has impacted his life. From smoke-filled tango bars and jazz clubs to street musicians in subways, his imagery conveys an audible as well as a visual atmosphere. The passion in the music within each piece is used as a metaphor for other human emotions - a weeping ballad of sorrow, a feisty performance of courtship or a pulse pounding rhythm of exuberance and joy.

The recurring musical theme in his work seems just as universal as personal, as a commentary on the soundtrack of our lives, not just his own. Whether beginners or experts, performers or perfectionists, the music of his characters represents other aspects of their lives, much more than just the obvious.

Before becoming known as a painter, Mark had what he calls 'some misspent years', including more than a few in advertising. He received international acclaim for art directing some famous ads for Levi's jeans, Nocona boots and many more, and he also illustrated advertisements for TWA Airlines and Sheraton Hotels among others.

After turning to music full-time he became one of America's most successful producers, and created music for literally hundreds of television commercials working with music legends such as Ray Charles, Willie Nelson, Little Richard, Michael Jackson, and Johnny Cash.

His journey to that stage began as a kid when he tried out his brother's guitar, building an intimacy with music that is infused into his art to this day. "I was in a rock band like everybody else," he says with a laugh.

While Keller, born in 1952, has been an artist since he was a child, he launched his career as a full-time artist in the year 2000, following the path of his father, who was a cartoonist. "Growing up, I don't remember not having a pencil or a crayon, and drawing on whatever open surface there was."

With his wife and two children (who are all artists) Mark now divides his time between homes in Sausalito, California and San Juan Island, Washington.

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The Story Teller

