

Commander Mark shares advice on turning hobby into career

BY PATRICK PAGUIO

Some may know him as Commander Mark on the PBS show called “The Secret City” and later “Imagination Station,” Emmy award-winning host and artist Mark Kistler sat down with The Dateline through Zoom to talk about all things art.

He started at 15 years old in his first drawing class in high school. When asked why he picked 3D as his main focus, he said he wanted to give depth to his illustrations. “The whole goal of drawing is to communicate something,” Kistler said.

As he showed pictures of a regular 2D drawing compared side by side with his 3D version of a drawing (one of them was a 3D donut), I was impressed with his attention to detail.

For starters, Kistler has been living in Tomball for 20 years, has been teaching drawing for over 40 years, and has written 20 books.

He started hosting “The Secret City” in 1985, which was aired around the world, and “The Imagination Sta-



Commander Mark

Mark Kistler,
Author, Illustrator

Credit: Edward Saenz

tion” around the mid-‘90s. How did “Half Hour of Pencil Power” come about?

During the pandemic, he and his son with special needs named Mario did a livestream at noon to do the aforementioned title (“Half Hour of Pencil Power”) Monday to Friday.

Now they are available in Draw3d.com, which is a

monthly membership with 400 recorded lessons for all skill levels. An interesting fact is that growing up, Mark’s mom allowed him to use a closet and set up a desk for his first studio. Also, Kistler was inspired by a Disney artist named Bruce McIntyre. Kistler’s past students have animated in world famous movies like: “Big Hero 6,”

“Kung Fu Panda,” “Wall-E,” “LucasFilm,” and some created the minions from “Despicable Me.”

“Dreams do come true with hard work and determination and relentless pursuit that you can do it,” said Kistler when asked to summarize his professional and personal story.

He calls his kids his proudest accomplishments, calling them amazing people and the reason for being able to do what he does for so long. Kistler enjoyed going to 4,000 schools. According to Kistler, life itself was one of the challenges he overcame in his professional and personal life.

“It kicks dirt in your face sometimes and you just have to get back up and refocus and reassess and adjust and navigate,” Kistler said.

“Being an artist has helped me have a creative mind to be able to navigate through the many levels and layers of problems that you come across every day and to be able to think of things and see things from different dimensions. I always say draw

in 3D, think in 3D.”

To UHD students, he encourages to take advantage of learning how to draw as a valuable outlet.

“Drawing in 3D is joyful, it’s fun, its positive and builds eye-hand coordination, build tremendous problem-solving skills.”

As far as UHD students considering learning about his techniques, he says as an encouragement—especially to the ones teaching, that drawing is like, “a vehicle to teach any subject better, any subject with more fun, more passion and visually get more understanding and comprehension and you can tie drawing to English, reading, writing, history, geography.”

Kistler has a new book entitled “Half Hour of Pencil Power,” which is available now in stores.

He goes live for his Draw3d.com members via Zoom, starting with “Turbo Tuesday Live!,” “Wondrous Wednesday,” and “Throwback Thursday.” He will be appearing in “KadabraCon” in Portland, Texas from Sept. 29 through Oct. 1.

POST Houston expo promotes small businesses, local artists

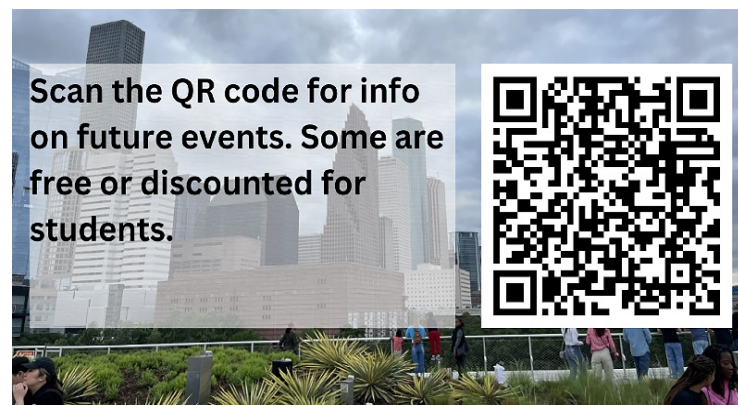
BY KARLA CARRILLO

On April 8, POST Houston hosted an expo event opened to the public with invited vendors to sell their merchandise as well as food from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. POST Houston announced the event on their Instagram page.

The event was vibrant and filled with an illuminating ambiance, accompanied by music from various artists and eager buyers.

POST have changed their usual scenery of an empty hallway of paintings on walls into a ravishing gathering of small businesses and locals lined up all over the first floor.

Vendors were selling a variety of things such as novelty Crocs charms, stickers, handmade earrings, bracelets, rings, action figures, Y2K fashion (also known as the Year 2000),



Credit: Edward Saenz

CBD oils and supplements, toys, and anything else you could think of.

Vendors from as far as The Woodlands, and Austin came to downtown Houston to showcase their art and promote their businesses.

A junior from UHD named Paola Guerrero attended the event and expressed her gratitude for the variety and inclusivity of the event.

“I think it was defin-

itely worth going because there were so many different vendors from all types of backgrounds and so many different types of products,” Guerrero said.

The endless options of items for sale fascinated many other Houstonians that attended the event, leading to many businesses rising in prominence. Prices were reasonable for a lot of handmade items, and many vendors showed dedication to provid-



Vendors selling merchandise to their customers from the front entrance of POST Houston. Credit: Karla Carrillo

ing the best service for their customers.

The POST also continued their normal business hours for those who wished to enjoy a regular day there. When they did not feel like shopping anymore, they could grab a bite at the food court on the first level and enjoy the view of downtown

Houston from the top floor.

This was the perfect day to support small businesses and help them experience economic growth. From the unique, handmade items to the low prices, the only complaint one would have would be that they spent too much money during this event.