



Mark Kistler

Draws on Imagination

Emmy Award Winning Cy-Fair Cartoonist Inspires Kids with 3-D Art Lessons

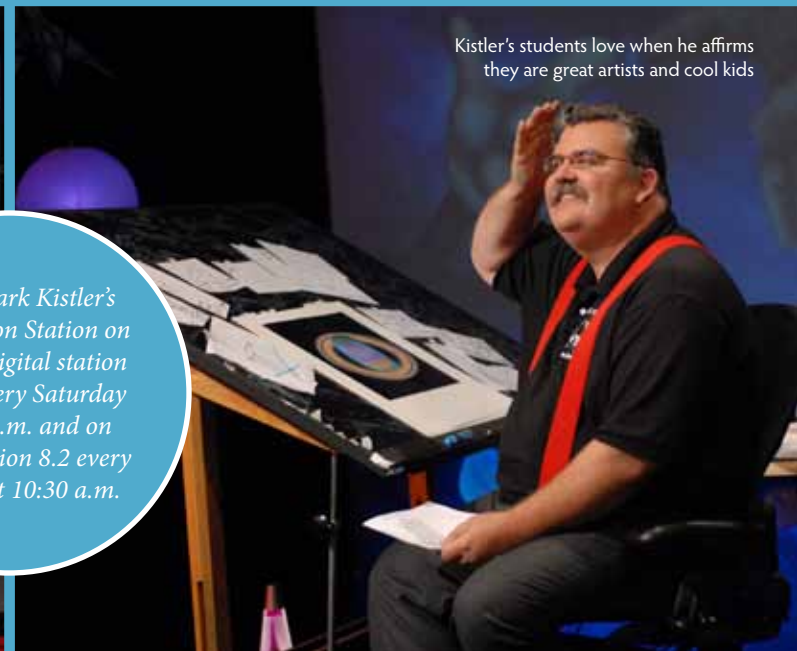
Written by Gail G. Collins

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What do ninja eggs, space hamsters, and mighty mini-marshmallows have in common? They are fantasy and any one is the beginning of a great adventure. As a professional cartoonist for three decades, Mark Kistler of Cy-Fair has shared his love of drawing through an energetic teaching style with more than 7,000 school assembly workshops worldwide. “With a powerful imagination and a pencil, anyone can spend the afternoon in the jungle or on the lunar surface,” he shares.



Kistler walks students through the steps of drawing a cartoon character



Kistler's students love when he affirms they are great artists and cool kids

Catch Mark Kistler's *Imagination Station* on KUHT's digital station 70.323 every Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and on digital station 8.2 every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Teaching Millions of Kids Around the World

Kistler began sharing his passion for teaching others about art at the age of 15. “I had a goal to teach a million kids how to draw by the age of 18 – it took until I was about 21,” he says. Straight out of college, Kistler became Commander Mark on the National Public Television hit series, *The Secret City*, which pushed his goal well beyond its original mark. His early success in the ‘80s led to the TV shows, *The Draw Squad* and *The New Secret City Adventures*, reaching 40 million viewers in 18 countries.

Many of the national broadcasters, as well as the major newspapers have recognized Kistler. Even *Saturday Night Live's* comedy crew once spoofed the author, educator, and illustrator. In 2009, the latest 26-episode run of Kistler's *Imagination Station* aired on over 100 stations and earned an Emmy Award for its positive messages and appreciation for literature, classic art, science, and the environment. “I want the fun to be educationally engaging and build self-esteem,” says Kistler.

Inspiring Budding Artists

Along the way, Kistler has offered hundreds of lessons on his website, draw3d.com, has fed a child's eagerness to draw through assemblies and art camps, and has written 10 books with companion workbooks on drawing in 3-D. His newest book, *You Can Draw in 30 Days*, is due out in February and will appeal to scribblers of all ages. “Drawing is a learnable skill and a rewarding hobby and it's incredibly fun,” he says.

Kistler credits educators for steering his talents and strives to return the favor to current students. “I had a phenomenal series of deeply committed and passionate teachers who influenced me, and the thing I enjoy most is teaching,” he shares. Every year, Kistler gathers a live audience of students in 100 schools to share his pencil power and fresh lessons on time travel, galactic expeditions, and journeys to the bottom of the sea, all in the name of teaching art. But it's not all pretend, as Kistler employs his 12 Renaissance words on concepts like size. He also introduces budding artists to the fine work of masters like Michelangelo and Edgar Degas.

Continuing a Creative Legacy

In addition to penguins and monsters, Kistler has created a legacy. Former students and viewers like Miley Cyrus, Rex Grignon, who supervised the animation of *Shrek* and *Madagascar*, Tim Decker from *The Simpsons*, and Don Fraga of Marvel Comics also give back. “These talented students and fans make my animation video lessons and website possible,” Kistler says. Around the world, 40,000 fans enjoy his virtual lessons and art outreach.

Over the years, Kistler's lessons have reached millions of youngsters, and more than a million of them have taken the time to respond with their 3-D images attached. On Kistler's website, he regularly posts their creativity in his student art gallery. “Everyone has to work, but the lucky ones find something they love to do and turn their passion into a career,” he says. “I want kids to learn the relentless pursuit of conquering their dreams.” CFM

GAIL G. COLLINS spent her childhood drawing with her dad and also had fun drawing with her children.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 15, 2010

“MARK KISTLER’S IMAGINATION STATION” WINS EMMY AWARD

San Francisco (May 15, 2010) The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Northern California Chapter has honored “Mark Kistler’s Imagination Station” with an Emmy Award in a collegial banquet held at San Francisco’s Marriott Marquis Hotel. The public television series, which airs locally on KQED 9, teaches kids to draw in 3-D while imparting messages of self-esteem, and appreciation for literature, science, classic art and the environment. The series airs in at least 60 other cities around the country. The 26 episodes of the 2009 series were produced and written by Robert Neustadt (Chicago), directed and edited by Douglas DeVore and Wendy Van Wazer(San Jose). The specific 30-minute episode, “Sammy Sea Turtle and The Mermaid, ” was honored in the category of best Instructional/Informational Program.

Distributed in HD by NETA(National Educational Telecommunications Association), the series was shot in Michigan at Ferris State University Grand Rapids where a team of animation students and faculty donated hundreds of hours and resources to record Kistler’s Summer Camp. Rough cuts of the 26 half-hours were edited by students at ITT Technical Institute in Sylmar, California and completed by DeVore and Van Wazer. The award-winning animated open was brought to life by a team of animation graduate students and instructors at San Jose State University, led by Dream Works, SKG Animation Supervisor, Rex Grignon (“Shrek” & “Madagascar 2”). Colorful animated vignettes

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which illustrate Kistler's 12 "Renaissance Words" were created by students from Savannah College of Art and Design, ITT Technical Institute and Ferris State University, Grand Rapids.

"The list is too long to mention the many professionals, students, teachers and parents who contributed their time and talents to make this show happen. They humble me and they have my gratitude forever," said Kistler who is also known for his Simon & Schuster Books, Summer Camps, and energetic school assemblies. Kistler has been honored previously for earlier versions of "The Imagination Station" and his debut series, "The Secret City", produced in 1985 by Maryland Public Television. Series Co-Creator and Executive Producer, Neustadt is proud of the vast body of work, "We love creating TV that is truly interactive, you watch and gotta pick up a pencil. Mark is the driving force behind every single minute of all 92 half-hours." Devore, who runs Digital Turbulence with his wife VanWazer, said "This kind of grass roots production is challenging, but we believe in the final product and the good it can do."

Major funding for the series was provided by The Sheldon Family of Milwaukee, Ferris State University Grand Rapids and the LunaTech Fringe, a cartooning and web design studio headed by Ward Makielski. Special contributions come from artists Thomas Cleveland, Tim Decker, David Jablonski, David Baker and the following museums who contributed classic works of art for "The Master's Gallery" segment: Art Institute of Chicago, Grand Rapids Art Museum, Toledo Museum of Art and the Columbus Museum of Art.

A video history of Kistler's TV programs and the latest "Imagination Station" pilot can be viewed online at www.Draw3D.com. His newest iPhone APP was just released and Kistler's how-to draw mini-lessons can be streamed on You-Tube.

PHOTOS ATTACHED: July 2008. Mark Kistler teaching kids cartooning on the set of his TV series "The Imagination Station" in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Photos by Lois Bernstein.

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PHOTOS ATTACHED: 2008, "Mark Kistler teaching kids cartooning on the set of his TV series "The Imagination Station" in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Photo by Lois Bernstein

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