



THE ONLINE NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT STOCKART.COM



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ALPHEA

featured artist

Peter Buttecali

"A job as a professional artist was pretty much a dream that came true for me about 15 years ago, thanks to my brother giving me my big break with an introduction to his associate in the advertising industry, Raffaele DeGregorio, a design firm owner and formerly a VCU arts professor. Raffaele hired me at age 20 -- with no degree or experience -- to work as a production and paste-up grunt and generously provided me with support and instruction for over five years. Most importantly I was continually instructed to stop whining and raging every time my ideas were either edited or -- God forbid -- rejected, and focus all mental energy on solving the problem again with even more intensity. I spent the better part of all waking hours throughout the 90's at work, honing skills, smashing leaky Rapidograph pens, bathing in pasteup wax, breathing stat room chemicals, and reaching for every opportunity to be involved in any design or illustration project available. In my second studio position, I pestered whoever I could to learn whatever I could about our new best friend, Mac, from the woefully unfortunate ones who knew anything (Fred Flerlaghe and Norvin Stevens, thanks).

It took several years and two different studio experiences for me to get the memo and loosen up, accepting comments from clients and colleagues for what they are -- keys and clues. And after building experience in allowing the ideas of others to influence my own, reason and maturity caught up with my drive to improve as an artist, enabling me to start my own company and serve clients with effective design solutions. This coming of age provided a vast scope of opportunities to both better enjoy and participate in the field, and gain recognition from respected peers. Since 1995, I've been fortunate enough to have work recognized around the world, with several logo designs and illustrations published in numerous logo design books and annuals by such publishers as Graphis, Taki Ono, and the Ad Club. After working with Stockart for over five years, I've had nothing but positive results and experiences and have continually benefitted from their professional representation and unwavering commitment to protecting and maintaining the value of the artist's work. I know from experience that their program offers one of the most capable vehicles for long-term pricing security for illustrators struggling through the onslaught of the artist-fleeing royalty-free market. I recommend to everyone that we appreciate and applaud their commendable contribution to our industry, and do whatever we can to support their efforts."



P E T E R B U T T E C A L I

maile

Hello and Happy New Year to all! I hope everyone is doing well and has had a good start to 2003. Just a quick note this month to let you all know what is going on in the Art department.

We are working on a new marketing promotion, a flip book catalog: the high quality heavy cover paper stock will be bound by a spiral ring. I will be sending out all the details in the upcoming month of February, and hope that you all will be involved!

As Rich mentioned, we are working on re-branding the website to a new hip look that extends our clean, simple components of the past. We are very excited to go 'live' with it! Can't wait!

Thirdly, in efforts to maximize efficiency, decrease paper and postal costs as well as work load, we will now be sending your 'bi-monthly' reports quarterly (every three months) instead of every two months as we have been doing. So your next set of 'quarterly reports' will arrive at the beginning of April.

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letter from the prez



Happy New Year to The Prime Pixel Posse,

I want to personally thank each and every one of you who has decided to stay the course with Stockart.com. I truly believe that you are part of something important. Hopefully, we can help you make money during these challenging times. Trust me, if I could give each one of you a big bucket of money...I would! Even though that may not be possible I still believe we can make a dramatic difference in your professional life. You can rest assured that we are not giving up on the problems which saddle the illustration industry. Here is what we have going on this upcoming year to change things for the better!

As many of you are aware, we have a plethora of infringement cases for which we are trying to recover licensing fee's. I truly believe that we are losing as much as 10 times more income due to image theft than we license legally! With the economy the way it is, this really rubs me the wrong way. Many of my good illustrator friends can no longer make a living illustrating. You would be amazed, everyday it seems that I see the same old users on the site and yet they never do business

with us. Sure, some of them are just looking for ideas and style directions, but I think we are naive to think that most of them are not. This makes me sick to my stomach. So much in fact that I have been developing a smart spider which goes to the web sites most likely to be stealing based on a users behavior on our site.

We have found over 2,000 stolen images from around 150 different companies. In the worst case, we have educated 150 professionals and hopefully their colleagues that it is not acceptable to steal images online just because it is easy. With a little luck maybe the word will get through the design community that 'maybe I might get caught'? Best case, some of these settlements are recovering some pretty darn good dollars to some of our artists.

I must admit, however, that these cases are much more difficult to settle than I thought they would be or better yet, than they should be. The legal system is not very empathetic to a creators position. Unless the image is directly related to profits gained by a company (in which we are granted a percentage of those profits). We can only settle for the amount which the image should have been licensed for to begin with. On top of that, we then need to take out our legal expenses (unless the works have been already registered with the copyright office), leaving us to split up the remainder. So you ask, "is it worth it?" Well, I have thought long and hard about this one and I believe the answer is a resounding YES! If someone doesn't devote their life to changing piracy on the internet, the perceived value of your amazing beauties are going to erode into Penny's Heaven.

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WHAT'S UP?

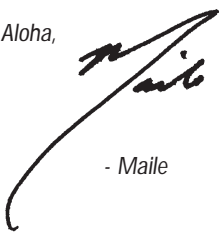
maile continued

Additionally, and for the same reasons, payment reports and checks will now only be run/cut once a month (previously, Stockart.com had run payment reports on the 15th and 30th of every month). The next run of Payment Reports will be on the 31st of January and checks will be cut and mailed within a couple of days after that.

Lastly, I want to thank each and every one of you for your understanding and positive feedback during Stockart's policy change in adding an alliance fee. Your support has touched our hearts. We had to say good bye to 60 artists, to whom we sent out a special package of beautiful thank you notes and archival image CD's..etc. But most of us remain -159 illustrators of 204 - with new talent continually being added to our artist family!

Thank you for all the incredible illustrations and great energy you bring to Stockart. Keep up the good work!

Aloha,



- Maile

letter from the prez continued

Our spider is a start but not my utopia. I have a plan which will allow the artist/content provider the ability to control every single usage of their imagery. My development associate and I have conceived a product which is %100 possible and will allow us to control and track every single computer which looks at our images. In addition, the user must get approval from the content owner to even print the art! Without getting too hot winded, we have already proven this hypothesis and are pitching it to anyone whom will listen to fund it. It will take around \$100,000 to develop but could be completed within a years timeframe. If any of you have contacts which may help us finally give the control of art back to it's owner, please let me know. This may sound like a pipe dream to you, but I am extremely confident that my freak programming friend and I WILL do this.

Imagine, allowing your image to be used web only for a year and when the time is up on the license, the user gets a prompt that they need to up the cash to continue. Or, when a user likes one of your images and would like to use it for a comp presentation and they try to print and can't unless they agree when prompted to pay the comp fee. Better yet, maybe you, as the owner of the art, simply prompt the user that they CAN comp the low res image but will need the key to the high res image should the project move forward, which of coarse requires a usage fee. Users will not pull any image off the web without paying!

Piracy, in my opinion is our industry's largest obstacle but not the only one. To be straight up with you, these last two months have been the worst since the days of Iconomics (Stockart.com's previous name). We are doing our best to make the most out of every phone call, every licensing opportunity, every light of hope. What is so frustrating is that our art has more eyes on it than ever. Twice as many visitors then two years ago and these are big players on our site; Fortune 500 companies and those agencies and design firms whom represent them. We have been forced to lower our prices just to fight another day. The

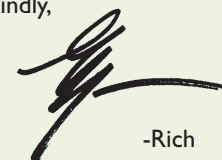
market is talking and we have to do our best to milk as much money as we can from each and every deal we work while always maintaining our premium position.

WITH ALL OF THIS SAID, we are working every day to get better, smarter, more keen, and kind. The Stockart.com business is here to stay and WILL weather the storm. I am selling my house and putting the equity back into my love... Stockart.com! We have BIG plans for the New Year which includes:

- rebranding the website (the new look extends our clean, simple, functional components of the past)
- writing new code which is going to improve our placement on major search engines
- a flipbook promotion mailed to 10,000 top creatives
- more sophisticated customer e-promotions designed to entertain and inform our customers of new imagery
- a dedicated follow up phone call routine designed to welcome new customers to the site and acquaint them to Stockart.com's passion for service

Stockart.com is going to ROAR this year. We are going to fight tooth and nail to see that your art gets not only the most sophisticated exposure possible but the sales results you deserve! I know the people in this office, I know their heart, character, work ethic and creativity. This is going to be a good year.

Kindly,



-Rich

WHAT'S UP?

matthew



Hello to all of you!

Hopefully you have all heard of my joining the Sales Department here at Stockart.com. I'm sure that you will miss Dave, as I know first hand of the quality of his character and his ability. Please fear not however, as I am very excited to work hard for all of you.

I'd like to take my first "Siren" opportunity to tell you a little about myself. I am originally from the Chicago land area, but the mountains were always calling. I've now been in Fort Collins since the summer of '96. I am a Colorado State University graduate with a degree in Visual Art, and a minor in English. The concentration of my Art Degree is drawing, and I work out of a studio that I built in my backyard.

In the winter of 2001 I met Rich, and we immediately became friends. He eventually gave me an internship position, in which I mainly worked with Maile in the art management department. Although I very much enjoyed and benefited from my internship experience, it was eating time that I wanted to spend in my studio drawing. Since I was paying the bills by bar tending at night, mornings and afternoons were designated studio hours. This dilemma dictated that I leave Stockart.com.

Rich and I still talked regularly and when he mentioned Dave's leaving the company I began to pursue the opening position. Much of my decision to apply with Stockart.com was due to the fact that I believe very much in what this company does. Our strategy truly is an alliance set to succeed, but also to protect the craft of the illustrator and their market. Once I had been accepted into the company, all I had to do was organize my schedule to meet all of my needs. It really wasn't too tuff. A little less bartending, some creative deviation from my normal studio schedule, and I was off and running. Now Stockart.com fits neatly along side of making art, playing music, hanging out with my Labrador, enjoying the mountains, and courting the greatest woman I have ever met.

I am confident that we will develop an effective as well as enjoyable working relationship, and I look forward to striving for the best recognition of your talent. Thanks for taking the time to get to know me a bit, as I look forward to getting to know all of you!

Sincerely,

Matthew Longton

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The Siren is seasonally published by Stockart.com to keep you up to date on what's going on in the world of stock illustration. Stockart.com is the number one source for custom and stock illustration via the world wide web.
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