

THE ONLINE NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT STOCKART.COM



VOLUME 11 • NOVEMBER 2003

STOCKART

featured artist

Steven Noble

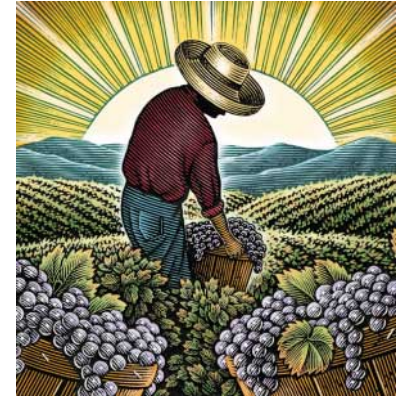
Over the past seven years, Stockart has become an invaluable asset to my career as a commercial artist. It has provided me with that additional needed exposure to my already existing source book advertisements which has successfully translated into many additional custom assignments and passive stock sales. Furthermore, I have on many occasions referred many of my clients to Stockart's website which is unique in that it is very practical, comprehensive, and easy to use.

At the beginning of my relationship with Stockart, I was a little reluctant to further explore the possibilities that may arise from providing them with a steady flow of additional stock art. My worst fear being that this might come back to haunt me by putting a slight damper on the demand for commissioned art. I had to confront this dilemma by either joining this growing industry or ignoring it altogether. In addition, I became weary of the fact that other stock houses were beginning that ugly practice of "pricing down" their images.

After careful observations and study of Stockart's pricing practices, I came to the conclusion that they had kept their pricing structure relatively high and within industry standards. I believe this is extremely vital to the long term health and well being of the industry because once you open that "pandora's box" of lower prices it becomes virtually impossible to raise them back-up again and reverse that downward spiral. For example, I've seen especially large stock houses lower their prices just to stay competitive creating a price war and a bottoming-out of art prices thus threatening to damage both custom and stock art pricing.

What has continued to attract me to Stockart.com since the very beginning has been the simplicity and ease with which they conduct business. Once you submit images, the staff at Stockart are prompt with posting them on their web site and are always available to answer any questions. They have even been helpful in advising me on my own pricing estimates and learning and understanding more about questions and specific issues concerning usage rights, exposure, and print run.

I wish continued prosperity for Stockart as it has continued to be the leader in innovative and creative ideas which have greatly contributed to its success....



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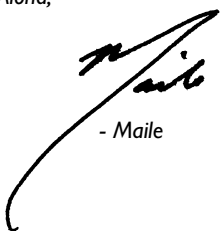
Happy Autumn to everyone! It's beautiful here in the Midwest – crimson leaves, bright, sunny clear blue skies ...

This fall I will be negotiating with the Directory of Illustration. We would like to create a presence in the book for the December 2004 edition. Currently a page in the book is around \$2,500.00. We aim to have information available to you in December regarding our offer to jointly tackle this project. So keep it in mind, and we'll talk soon..

Also a number of you have been asking about ideas for new illustrations. I have listed our top keywords for the past three months on the next page. Hopefully they will give you inspiration for new ideas. We are always looking for new art pieces!

Please feel free to contact me anytime if you have questions or just want to chat. Have a beautiful day!

Aloha,



- Maile

key words shown on next page >

letter from the prez



Hello Stockart 2.0'ers!

Here we are closing down another year. I'm feeling good about what's coming around the corner and the future looks very promising. However, I recently experienced a loss of unbelievable proportions. My father, best friend, mentor, and spiritual leader passed away from heartless cancer. Some days it is difficult to even put on my shoes. The world is intensely cloudy and clear at the same time. I now have a new purpose and responsibility to spread his beauty. I want to tell an inspiring story about my Dad, and then we'll get down to business and talk about where Stockart.com is going in 2004.

While serving an impoverished neighborhood as a Principal in Colorado Springs, my father noticed a 2nd grader named Tyler was coming to school every morning without breakfast. One day my father decided to improve things. He grabbed the kid out of class and drove over to the youngster's house. As they entered,

Tyler's mom was still in her robe on the couch, cigarette in hand. Dad said "hello" and followed Tyler into the kitchen without ANY acknowledgement from the mother. My father asked where his cereal was and pulled the chair over so the boy could grab his own cereal. Before Dad could say another word the boy swooped the milk from the icebox and a dirty spoon from the sink.

After the boy finished his breakfast they put the bowl in the sink and headed back through the living room, again without acknowledgement from the mother, and back to school they went. About a week later Dad asked the 2nd grade teacher if Tyler had been getting breakfast lately and she said "YES, every morning his momma has been making it!" Kelly Askew just winked at Tyler's teacher and she winked back and smiled. Mission accomplished!

Life is funny! I had to wait until my father's funeral to ever hear this charming story.

He never tooted his own horn.

Well, back to work!

I can finally see the economy is slowly turning better, and we have noticed more of the big projects starting to break. October was our best month in quite a while, so keep your fingers crossed for the remainder of the year. Lets go out and make the best of tomorrow and the best of what the market gives us, whether phat or not all that.

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WHAT'S UP?

Key Words



our top keywords for the past three months

Christmas	wedding
house / home	music
tree	medical
fish	apple
sun	book
computer	cow
car	brain
dog	football
hand (s)	sports
flower (s)	water
halloween	golf
leaf	children
cat	party
star	coffee
people / woman	beach
eye	family
money	snowflake
heart	airplane
baby	school
globe	leaves
food	
phone / telephone	
compass	

WHAT'S
UP?

letter from the prez continued

Here is our plan to upgrade to Stockart.com 2.0!

Advertise: The most important dollar spent during down times is for promotion. I can personally note that 1/2 of our Flipbook promotion was funded through the sale of my house, and the other 1/2 by those brave enough to participate. We have just been contacted by JoAnne Miller with the Directory of Illustration about joining in on their upcoming sourcebook. Maile will be working out a deal with her if we can get enough of our alliance to participate. She will have more information on this in her section. I strongly urge ALL OF YOU to take a chance with us and dominate this publication to a point where we co-brand it! In addition, Stockart.com 2.0 is planning on another Flipbook promo in 2004. So, be sure to put some money away in your budget as our last effort truly produced fantastic results.

Improve our Assignment Product: I believe as a group we need to improve our assortment of product styles. A few of the Stockart.com artists have seen first hand how well producing more than one style has helped their earning power. Think of your business like any manufacturing entity. The more products you can offer to the market, the better chance you have of finding a "hot" selling product. Our business moves so fast these days that a look that worked last year could be out this year. We all need to continually reinvent ourselves. Now do keep in mind that we still need to manage past styles that have been winners, but also experiment with new looks that may be the flavor of the day! I realize that many of you express your fine art sensibilities through illustration and may see this ploy as too commercial. Trust me I understand, but if this is your approach and you are one of the lucky ones whose style is timeless, you will still need to continually tweak and refine to keep your look fresh.

Add More Stock Product: I realize that when things are down it is hard for you to work on producing stock but it is a must. I have proof! Those in the alliance who make consistent monthly income have LOTS of images. You can't substitute for work ethic. Take advantage of the statistics information we provide to give you direction on what images would be good for you to produce. I'd would keep an eye on which of your current images seem to draw the most interest. The illustration market has changed and you can greatly improve your chances to stay alive and thrive by adding assets to your future earning power.

Keep Price Standards: We have had more and more of our artists ask us to lower our pricing standards because a little sale is better than no sale. To this I say "Short term perhaps, long term death!" This isn't the answer. What we need to do, whether it is through Stockart.com or not, is to stay together as a group and keep the standards high. I don't care if it costs you no time or money to sell stock images, if you decide to sell them cheap you will cheapen quality illustration altogether. Next time they come back they will expect you to do a custom assignment for the price you sold them stock. Listen, lately and quite frequently we have seen Stockart.com users go around our agency and directly to the artist. Most artists don't know or ask how they found them but I can assure you one thing, they are doing business with the artist as the price is cheaper than Stockart.com's! 90% of you folks are true blue and always turn those sneaks back over to us but we have kicked out a few artists lately for stealing the business that Stockart.com's alliance has created. Those of you who participate in such a practice are only hurting other artists in our group.

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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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letter from the prez continued

Battle Piracy or Die: From my experience, I believe that we lose 10 times more income than we make due to stolen images, and this is probably a very conservative estimate. To date we have busted 120 different companies stealing over 2,000 illustrations from us. Fighting piracy isn't just preventing the act but also recovering the money within our outdated legal environment. The small companies that steal don't make enough money to pay, as the value of recovery is based on profitability of the usage. The big corporations steal and hold onto your wallet. They will use every legal piece of red tape to drag you on and on hoping you go away with your tail between your legs. FTD is trying to do this to us. Stockart has already invested over \$30k just to get the case into Colorado jurisdiction. We are darned if we do but dead if we don't. If the courts don't respect our property and value it on our standards as opposed to the royalty-free benchmarks, we are all out of business. Time will tell whether or not we will get any return on this investment but I can assure you, I ain't quitting. We just recently had an image stolen and used for the 2003 Back to School event for Sears! We are gearing up for another battle.

As many of you know. I have been working diligently on software which might just become an industry standard. You can bank on the fact that if we do prosper from it we will pour any love back into the Stockart 2.0 plan. We are currently in detailed discussions with the leading digital watermarking company but very little investment money is going into tech. There isn't any product out there that does what ours does, so hopefully soon we will see the fruits of three years of labor.

My final thought on this issue: I have my third eye on the ultimate answer to piracy and we have proven that it can be done in our lab. Soon we are going to build an application which will disallow any right click, screen save, cache recovery, or any other manner of taking an image off our site. This project will take my entire team of engineers around a year to produce and unfortunately I'm not in the financial position to tackle, YET! Once our crawling technology hits the market and Stockart 2.0 catches fire it is in dead focus. If any of you have contacts that invest in things that matter, please turn them on to what we want to do.

Thanks as always for being a part of our alliance and for trusting your works of art with us. If you have any questions, ideas, or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. Life is short, as I know now like never before. If we are not meeting your expectations, I want to know so we can make it right. I can speak for the entire team here when I say that we ALL love serving you.

peace

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

-Rich