



THE CALGARY JOURNAL

Calgary, Alberta ♦ Serving areas including Marda Loop, Glamorgan, City Centre, 17th Avenue and Westhills ♦ November 4, 2004

Website inspires blues artwork

By John Pigeon
Journal staff writer

Local artist Earl Klatzel's paintings are inspired by a group of photographs of the deep-south United States, taken during the Great Depression.

"I came across a website on the Internet that had 50,000 black and white photos of the Great Depression," Klatzel said. "I thought that they would be a great basis for my blues series, which captures the feel of blues music."

Klatzel has been painting his blues and rock-inspired works and selling them out of the Bob's Create-a-Frame store in Strathcona Square for more than five years.

Claude La Pietra, owner of Bob's Create-a-Frame, said Klatzel's work is an asset to his store.

"When I bought the store, I didn't really know that much about the art world," La Pietra said.

"We framed one of Earl's paintings that was given to the CKUA (FM 93.7) radio station and I thought, 'why not carry his work, I really like it.'"

Klatzel has developed his own unique style of painting. He is very particular with the paint he uses and the consistency he maintains.

"I do all my backgrounds in acrylic and my characters in oil-based paint," he said. "I don't use acrylic thick like a paint, I mix it like a Kool-Aid so it is more thinned out."

To this day, La Pietra is happy to see Klatzel's paintings in his shops as they have sparked a following in the community.

"For the first three months we carried Earl's work, nothing happened," La Pietra said.

"Then people started coming back, and after two or three more months they started to buy them.... Some people have two or three."

La Pietra said one of the problems the store has been facing lately in selling Klatzel's work is because the art industry has been slow since the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

When Klatzel first started marketing his work he would sell up to 12 paintings a year.

"Over the last two years it has dropped down to half the number of sales," Klatzel said.

Despite this, he still has confidence in his work and won't be discouraged by a slow period in sales.

"I have never had someone come back unsatisfied. People come back and tell me that the piece has become a part of their home."



Photo courtesy of Earl Klatzel

Earl Klatzel paints blues and rock-themed pieces, inspired by photographs of the Great Depression.