

Guest Artists



Local creative professionals shared their careers with Upper School art students in October.

John Brennan Graphite Portraits

Background: I was born and raised on the South Side of Chicago. I've done art since I was 4 years old, and it's gotten me through hardships. In '94 we moved to North Chicago, where I attended Loyola Academy, where Bill Murray attended, and as a sophomore took college-level art classes. Then I was a full-time student and part-time underground plumber at Columbia College in Chicago.

After college I moved to the West, but in '97 decided to move to Ireland on my own. It was only \$210/year for tuition, room and board, but "The Troubles" were happening so I returned to the U.S. I wanted to do conceptual and character design for film, so I took two years of medical school anatomy, drawing cadavers. You have to learn how people and animals move to make designs.

I've been drawing rock stars since 2017, and the pandemic helped me when I got exposure from re-tweets of my work. During the pandemic I released 60 drawings in one year. I get commission work as well, so I'm very busy for Valentine's Day. I also did a drawing of Peter Jackson, so his WETA workshop in New Zealand wants to hire me.

Then after the Pulse Night Club shooting in Orlando, I posted the drawing "Tears for Orlando" that reached 25,000 shares in just 15 minutes. My younger brother is gay, so I've been involved with the bar scene and now work at the Globe in downtown

Spokane. I've done a big mural on their outside patio - I used to be a muralist, but not anymore. My son Liam had Peter Pan murals I created in his bedroom, but now it's my wife's office.

Current Work: I love drawing - I'm covered in tattoos, most that I designed myself. For me, drawing is like breathing. I can explain the techniques, but I can't explain how I draw. It's like asking a kid how they play. They just do.

I spend a minimum of 1 hour per day drawing, and on good days I get in 5-6 hours. I draw my wife and kids. When my dad was a witness in the Paul Manafort trial, he was in court drawings, and I've drawn him as well.

I drew a werewolf the first time when I was 13, and I redraw that character about every year. But after 30 years, I'm still not satisfied with it.

This summer, I was in charge of clearing out graffiti in Spokane City Parks, which was ironic since my own graffiti is still up on walls in Chicago from my high school days.

— John Brennan, parent of Josephine (3rd grade) and Liam (10th grade)



John Brennan in a self-portrait drawing

On the Web

View artwork by John Brennan at [www.facebook.com GritConceptArts/](https://www.facebook.com/GritConceptArts/) or scan this QR Code:



Eric Horsted TV Writer/Producer

Background: Originally I wanted to write movies. Attended University of Texas at Austin and worked on movies at a low level. A director read my sketches and liked them, but told me I'd need to move to LA. So I moved and became his assistant – reading scripts and books. I realized I liked TV comedy scripts best. So I got a job on a sitcom as a writer's assistant working in the room with the writers. It was an incredible education.

I wrote a sample script of *The Simpsons* to get an agent. Agents find you work and negotiate your fees. My first TV show job was on *Coach* starring Craig T. Nelson, who grew up in Spokane.

Current Work: *Futurama* is animated but written like a live-action sitcom. The stories are complex, surprising, and hopefully emotionally satisfying.

My job is very collaborative, and I work with a team of 6 to 15 other writers. We each pitch story ideas to our fellow writers and everybody gives their opinions. We settle on an idea and the group adds details, subplots and jokes, and we set the “act” breaks to give it a strong dramatic structure.

The writer who pitched the idea then creates an outline with all the story details (plus often a B story) for the team to discuss and give notes on. Then the writer creates the complete script, which takes about two weeks and involves lots of coffee, napping, sweating... The writer turns in the script and it's polished by the team to become a “table draft”.

Next comes the table reading by the cast with writers and executives present. The table read helps identify what jokes and story elements need improvement. Afterwards, the team does a final polish and the script goes into production on a sound stage, or with animation like *Futurama*, it goes to a sound



Eric at Art Class with daughters Talia and Lily holding Futurama artwork

booth for actors to do the voices, and to the animation studio which creates the animation.

It's fun to go from a single broad notion to a final production. It's also stressful, since you are kind of a freelancer doing this season by season, but very fun.

Futurama has 10 new episodes on Hulu. Check it out.

Q & A: What are your best episodes?

In the best ones, there's an emotional “spine” that provides a satisfying payoff at the end. *Futurama* is about a guy who is frozen in 1999 and thawed out in the year 3000. Our most beloved episode is about the dog he left behind in 1999. It has an emotional ending that packs a wallop.

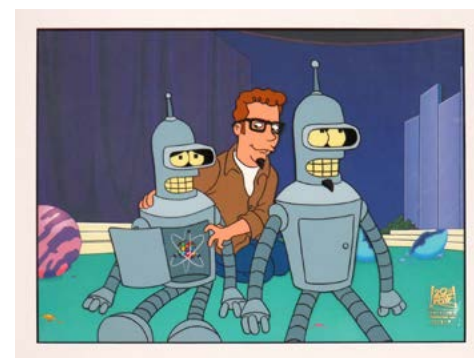
Have you ever won an Emmy?

(asked by daughter Talia)

I have attended the Emmy's. You wear uncomfortable clothing, but get to meet lots of cool, famous people. I've won two Emmy's for *Futurama* episodes that were 10 years apart. I'll be cremated with them.

– Eric Horsted, parent of Finn & Lily (11th grade) and Talia (12th grade)

“The stories are complex, surprising, and hopefully emotionally satisfying.”
- Eric Horsted, describing the animated TV sitcom *Futurama*



Animation still from Futurama with Eric included

Jeff Sanborn

Ad Agency Founder/Designer



“There are great jobs out there if you want to be creative.”

- Jeff Sanborn

Background: I went to art school to be a designer. At 12 years old, I discovered vinyl records and the art on the record albums. All I wanted to do was design logos and record art.

I discovered that commercial artists answer to others needs. You have to ask “why” questions, and you have to understand the audience.

Current Work: I’m the Chief Creative Officer and Founder of Chapter & Verse, an ad agency with three offices and 35 employees. Our clients include Netflix, Meta, Apple, Microsoft, and Expedia.

We did a lot of Netflix red envelope designs over the years. As Netflix moved to producing its own shows, we added those to our portfolio. The art and website for each Netflix title has to be made by a designer. There is no “key command” for good design.

For *The Irishman*, we are teaching other agencies how to make a Netflix billboard. We develop the tools so you can replicate it for other shows. You can do any genre with this basic grid of photos or art. It’s a collection of pieces that work together to tell a story.

Another project was the “Let’s Keep Rolling” series of designs posted on the sets of Netflix shows during the pandemic.

Slide identifying the elements of a Netflix billboard for *The Irishman*



“Keep your distance from strangers”, “Wear a mask”, and “Protect yourself, protect your crew” all use images and text that speak in the language of those shows to help everyone stay safe.

As the world continues to change, we’ve mostly stopped doing print ads. But magazines are still a great way to get design into your hands.

Q & A: *Do you need to go to art school?*

I encourage young artists that art school is legit. Although now you don’t need to go to an art school. SFCC’s graphic design program puts people in agencies all over the state. WSU is strong on the marketing side, UW has a good design program, and the VCU Brand-center is world class.

Your most memorable design?

In 2003 when we started the agency, Thomas Hammer needed a design for their coffee cups. I took photos of the coffee aisle in the supermarket, and it was all dark green and brown like Starbucks. So we made white bags and an orange cup for them to show they were “not Starbucks”. The color orange is the most important thing, since you can see a Hammer cup from a block away. Twenty years and millions of cups later, it still works.

Is design a good option for students of color?

We live on screens and all of it needs content. It’s a challenge getting kids of color into design and advertising, but we need their voices. There are great jobs out there if you want to be creative.

– Jeff Sanborn, parent of Gannon (11th grade)

Jan McIntyre Fashion Designer and Marketer



Background: I grew up with a passion for fashion. I went to Western Washington University for over a year, then left for art school. I earned a B.A. in apparel – I had math and science classes, but also pattern making. I then got an internship and job with Lucy Active Wear, that is now owned by North Face.

I missed pattern design, so I collaborated with Jason Wu on dresses that Michelle Obama wore on the campaign trail. (I learned classified information about her measurements.)

For the last 15 years, I've been at Nordstrom doing special projects, then focusing on women's apparel. In the last few months, I've taken over global sourcing for all Nordstrom products.

Current Work: Fashion gets glamorized, but it's really hard work and long hours and competitive. There are a variety of companies and experiences you can have.

We have a complicated relationship with sustainability. The industry is responsible for 8-10% of global carbon emissions. One pair of jeans takes 1800 gallons of water to produce, and 400 gallons for a typical t-shirt!

If it's too cheap to be true, it probably isn't. Research where you get your clothes; we all vote with our dollars, so choose responsible companies. Buying at Goodwill or Buffalo Exchange is a good thing too.

A product's life cycle has some major components. In the case of BP Label, the Nordstrom young adult brand, our merch team identifies trends and customers. For example, a teen uniform might be Valentino Pink, or the next big trend of Barbie Pink. Or when Taylor Swift wears a denim jacket,

they see what's happening in the world and strategize for clothing.

They will create a concept for the season, including color, print and pattern stories. These trend photos can go on for 60 pages. They look at color harmonies and how they will ship – month by month or for a full season. Then there is the technical design of the clothes. All of this goes into the collection for stores that will appear next May.

For the BP brand, we have concept designers, product designers, a big team. The product group for Nordstrom is 230 people. Fashion is more than art and design. People are engineering patterns with software, using economics, managing social media, working on photo shoots and as stylists.

Product development works with all parts of the process. So many people touch a product from creation to stores.

Q & A: *Are there really standard sizes?*

Yes, there are American Fit Standards, but sizes and bodies have evolved over the decades. And some companies use “vanity sizing” to vary the size, so that's why someone might be a 4 in one brand and a 2 or 0 in another.

Are women's pant pockets so short so that you can sell purses?

That's a theory...

Why so few pockets in women's dresses? We want them!

Sometimes it's a matter of the cost to produce them. Adding pockets can mean up to a 10% addition in the fabric needed to make a dress.

— Jan McIntyre, friend of Upper School Head Nathan Lill

Jan explains a slide showing the impact of the fashion industry on the environment

**“Research where you get your clothes; we all vote with our dollars, so choose responsible companies.”
- Jan McIntyre**