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THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

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Art By Edward J. Sozanski

A one-man show proves singularly popular

New York painter Stephen Keene arrived at Moore College of Art and Design in late October with 2,000 small paintings and displayed them over every square foot of the college's Gothic-style Gothic.

The small pictures, inspired by Keene's digitizing in the school archive, celebrated Moore's 100th anniversary by keeping with its promotional theme, commissioned by the school. Keene's exhibition-commission was called "History for Sale."

If it had a performance component, Keene set up a makeshift stage in the front-loading windows overlooking Logan Circle where he would paint hundreds more pictures during the nearly seven-week run of the show. He paints there in

groups of 36 to 48 at a time, usually in the fashion of a live broadcast. Keene began painting at Moore four days a week, and later five, 12 hours a day and sometimes longer.

He had to push that hard to keep up with demand. Number he used the gallery beds at Moore had any idea that his show would become a phenomenon, that he would end up selling about 1,700 pictures, that people would be lined up outside the gallery on the just day to pick off the last few pieces.

In sales volume, "History for Sale" may have been the most popular solo exhibition of all time. Many shows sell out, but how many artists sell 1,700 paintings?

I saw the show just after it opened. I remember that walking through it felt like being trapped inside a giant kaleidoscope. The colorful lines painted were like shapes

colored glass whirling around my head. Keene was busy at the front window knocking off more of them. When would he be there, I wondered? The public answered that question at their own peril. The initial stock sold out in the first 10 days.

I wasn't sure that Keene's exhibition had become a craze until one of his paintings in the office of Philadelphia Museum of Art. Keene had sold the first art installation to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

D'Harcourt could hang Moore's art collection in her office. Moore's art collection in her office. Moore's art collection in her office.

Keene was basically making art, which is legitimate and artistically valid, and selling them cheaply, which is admirable. De-clamp probably would have been creative membership in his

Giveaway prices and immediate gratification — they your painting come and take it home — made any dollar with a price. You had to feel good about buying it, because the artist himself was just over there, smiling at his handiwork and seeming unconcerned about money.

In a hubed, too, that the paintings were painted cartons. Keene's drawings were the remainder of a strip once in the Village. Keene called One Man's Show. Keene called One Man's Show.

Watching him work, I admired the considerable facility he had developed for hand-drawn composition. The paintings displayed a pronounced hand, even if they weren't so offhand to be meaningful. And I envied Keene's energy, even if he

Moore's own academic dean, Wayne Moore, regarded the event as a scam, "a bad joke." He described Keene's work as "manipulated schlock."

Schlock, probably, but I didn't see any evidence that it was manipulated. Keene struck me as an energetic, earnest fellow who wanted to give everyone the experience of owning an original artwork — as if they had a reproduction from you.

It's his paintings were original, his assembly-line method wasn't. His pictures "old art." The kind sold at weekend "art fairs" in hotel ballrooms, to effect make his art history was "for sale."

Keene made more money from his art in seven weeks than many artists make in a year. The publicity appears to have caught the attention of Rice University in Texas, which is thinking of making a similar show.

What did the buyers get, besides the thrill of pretending to be collectors? Well, they got for them. How long will the artwork last, I wondered, and what will they do with them? Keene, hanging them in the bathroom? In the garage?

I was anxious to read a column from Sylvia Trent, curator of the Museum of American Art of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. You're supporting Keene for championing the idea that it's better to buy an original artwork than to go to the mall and buy a poster.

But I thought, originally by itself isn't an absolute value. Would you rather own a piece of original schlock or a poster by Matisse, even if the schlock were cheaper?



Stephen Keene works on one of about 1,700 paintings he produced for his show at Moore College of Art and Design.

had reduced painting to the level of making doughnuts or soft pretzels. He did work very hard for the money he made. Remember, this history was "for sale."

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Psychic Lines

Shari Lewis and pals strike an educational chord

PS from P! Harwitz, a pianist and music teacher, pushed her daughter to the piano — with a poppy seat propped on the bench and the child's feet on the pedals. In recent practice, in part because she was overwhelmed by her mother's skill.

It wasn't until she became a teacher and tried to make that fall in love with music. "I don't think I was wrong in what I did," Lewis said. "There's who are willing to learn. There's who are willing to learn. There's who are willing to learn."

With this in mind, the Charles Horne Music Plaza provides viewers with samples of many instruments, plus introductions to various musical styles and basic concepts, such as notes, pitch, harmony, composing, and rhythm.

"It's not just a music-appreciation class. Music Plaza encourages the music-making that once took place in households and schools. Now Lewis said, family singing usually takes place only in the car, and more than 85 percent of the music programs in elementary schools have been cut.

"You just don't get a good sense of self-esteem from watching someone else play music. You've got to do it yourself," Lewis said. "Little kids between 2 and 8 are perfect and ready for music, because kids are so unselfish. And it's the perfect time to introduce any kind of musical style, so long as it has a good groove. Kids are impressionable. You don't have to tell them it's classical music. You just on the Overtones: The Marriage of Figaro and Mozart get them up on their feet and dancing."

In addition to longtime puppet pals Charley Horse, Lamb Chop and Boon Puppy, Lewis has two new caddy partners: Figaro the strange-playing neoclassic and then Daleno who portrays Cookie the pizzeria chef. The cast also includes singing and dancing assistant manager Junior (played by Wesley Merritt) and an over-the-top, show-biz-style singing delivery boy named Tiki Fox (Charles Perry).

Lewis has developed a legion of fans since she won the Arthur Godfrey Award Show TV show in 1962. Five years later, she introduced Lamb Chop on Captain Kangaroo and has hosted four television series, created 30 music videos, and written 60 books.

"It's not often that a production takes an entire decade to make, but Shari's a no-hesitant, 415 million hit production, it is one of those things. Martin Shaw plays the character as but unscrupulous Cecil Rhodes, a racist who became a legendary diamond king and arch-imperialist, covering the whole of Africa for the British Empire.

moderately faced bloodshed as the Madras of the north sought their own independent state. Pakistan. Fourteen million people fled the country.

Then, one year after independence, Gandhi's Indian Indian considered the spiritual father of the country, was assassinated by Hindu extremists.

But he had nothing to bring his country into modern India, where he urged his followers to be nonviolent and being, and nonviolently with the United States. A widower, he also built a relationship — some say love affair — with Jawahar Nehru, who led India's independence.

Shari's daughter India married Farhan Gandhi (also returning to the Madras), but she lived with him only four years, relative to her father's death.

"This story begins when Rhodin (played by Shaw's son, Joel) is 17 and joins his father in southern Africa to work a small diamond claim. Driven by ambition, he will eventually create a monopoly by controlling hundreds of competing mines and taking on the fiercest rival."

France Barber plays Catherine, a young girl who falls in love with Rhodin. The background line: Nell Pearson plays Lander Starr Jameson, Rhodin's rival and nemesis; Ken Satt is Barney Barnato, a Cockney musical performer who became Rhodin's rival in the diamond trade.

In 1947, India, the subcontinent that the English called "the jewel in the crown of the empire, became an independent state. It is the world's most populous democracy, yet most Americans do not know its history or understand its problems.

PSB marks a half-century of the nation's independence with the 1947, a re-orientation of the British Empire. A half-century of the nation's independence with the 1947, a re-orientation of the British Empire.

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