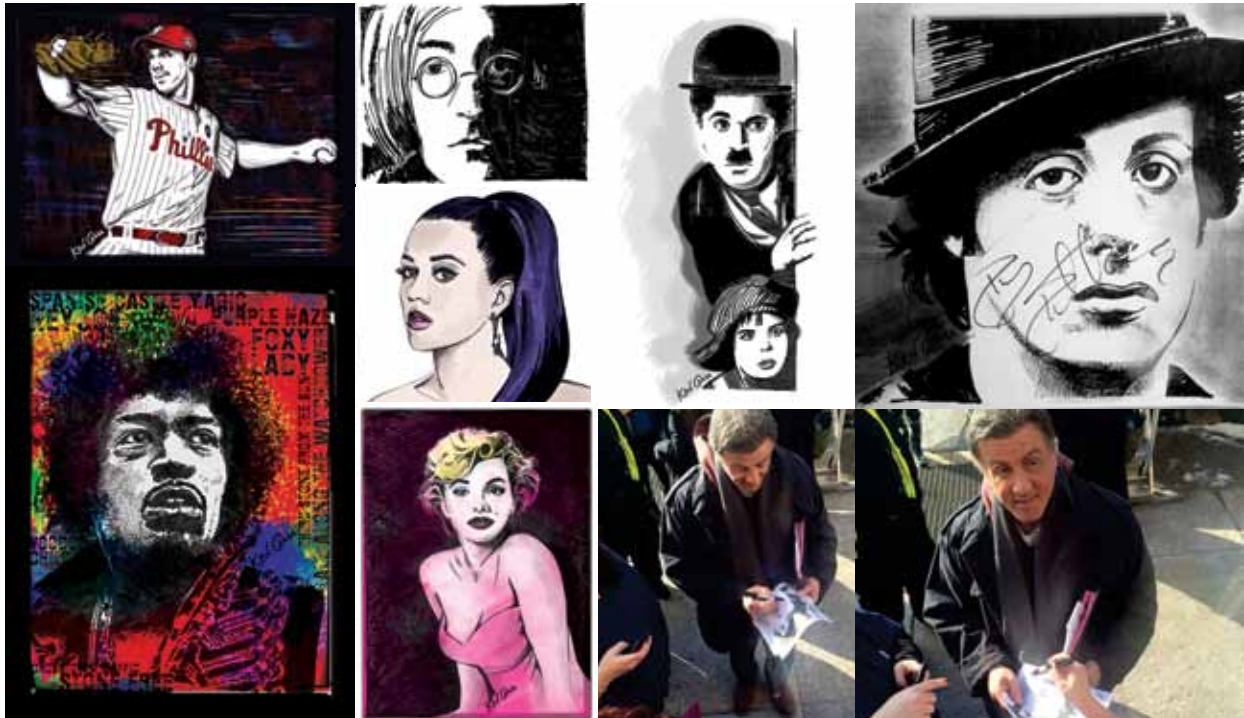




Artwork by Ken Cahill

Artist Spotlight: Ken Cahill

HE IS READY TO GO THE DISTANCE

by **Kiera Missanelli**

“Go to the distance.” A quote made famous by the *Rocky* movie series has come to life in South Philadelphia’s own, Ken Cahill.

With the seventh installation, *Creed*, currently in production in our city’s streets and hitting theaters this year, Sylvester Stallone has been caught roaming the streets on various occasions. Sometimes even stopping to greet his fans and take selfies on the art museum steps that he made iconic.

Hearing this news, artist Ken Cahill drew an illustration of Stallone using a mix of pencil, marker and high resolution digital scanning as his infamous character Rocky Balboa and took to the streets.

Cahill’s daughter got word that the recent production was happening right outside her workplace and showed up on set with a couple copies of her dad’s illustration in her hands. They caught Stallone’s eye.

Not only did he sign a copy for her to take back to her father, he asked to take a copy for himself.

Even though Cahill did not meet Stallone personally, it brings him immense joy to know Stallone has a copy of his artwork in his possession.

“I do it for the love of the art and for the smile on people’s faces,” Cahill says.

Growing up in South Philadelphia, Cahill never thought art could be a career. He just assumed he would go on to be a cop like his father. However, each Sunday when his family got together for dinner, Cahill watched his cousin draw comics out of the newspaper, studying her hand to paper motions and taking notice of the artistry.

However, when he started at Neumann High School, his relationship with art changed. Jim Stella, his art teacher, took notice of his skill and encouraged him to pursue art as a career. So, with that bit of encouragement, Cahill

pursued his passion attending *Community College* for two years before transferring to *Philadelphia College of Art* on a partial scholarship.

Just like Rocky, Cahill went against the norm to see out his dream.

Out of college, Cahill became a graphic designer for a company where he remained for 24 years. He also spent a lot of time creating illustrations for friends and family for birthdays and special occasions on the side.

Also like Rocky, Cahill’s humility kept him from charging anyone a dime until he was persuaded to turn his passion into a business.

“I’m an introvert when it comes to [my artwork],” Cahill says.

He has since tried to reach out to Stallone via social media and has yet to hear back. But Cahill says he is definitely “goin’ the distance.”

Cahill sells his artwork mainly through referrals and word of mouth. You can find him at tentotwocs.com.