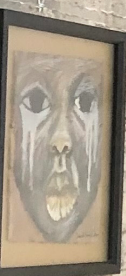


# Beauty in paint



Below: Stephen Diamond and his paintings  
Inset: A sign he made for a Carrier Academy

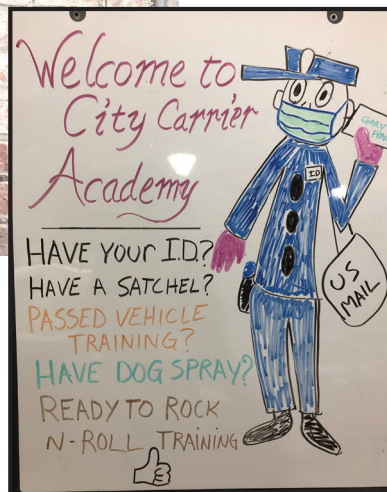


One of Diamond's favorite pieces is a large painting—3 feet by 4 feet—of a colorful peacock that he says would look good in a foyer. He calls the painting "Standing Guard." "It seems to engulf you," he said. "Looming over."

Diamond is also an advanced student of Jeet Kune Do, the martial arts method created by Bruce Lee, and a fan of martial arts-themed shows like the television show "Kung Fu," which aired from 1972-1975.

Diamond recalled a line by one of the characters in "Kung Fu" as an explanation of his desire to express himself with his art: "Is not painting, the joyful reaching out of a man so filled with beauty that there is not enough room in him to contain it?"

As with painting, working for the Postal Service is a family affair for Diamond. His father was a clerk,



his mother a postmaster, and several other family members worked for the Post Office. Diamond also is a master trainer for the Carrier Academy and a driver safety instructor. His artistic talent has made its way into his postal work as well—he once designed a cover for the USPS philately magazine, and he often greets new students at the Carrier Academy with a custom-drawn sign.

Diamond hopes his love for art will carry on in his family as well. "It's trickled down to my [six] grandchildren," he said. "I'm really happy about that." **PR**

**E**veryone has something to express, and when he isn't delivering the mail in Kansas City, MO, **Stephen Diamond** expresses himself through painting.

Diamond, a Branch 30 member since 1996, had painted on and off for most of his adult life, but only recently embraced his talent on canvas. "The last four years, I've started to really do it seriously," the carrier said.

"The talent itself came from my father," he added. "I picked it up from him." Diamond grew up seeing his father paint mostly with pastels and oils. "He had some fantastic pieces."

Now that Diamond has gotten serious about the hobby, Jones Gallery in Kansas City regularly displays his art. In May, he sold a piece depicting a flower on a black background for about \$200. "I call it 'It's Spring'—inspired by the emergence of the season," he said.

Located in the city's Crossroads

Arts District, Jones Gallery considers as many as five paintings from a given artist for display on a monthly basis.

"It's not a stuffy gallery," Diamond said. "It's a really neat, open, fun gallery."

Diamond has created about 20 paintings so far. Most of his subjects have been natural objects such as flowers or animals, but lately he has broadened his reach to abstract paintings.

He likes to paint in bright colors with a dark background, saying: "I really like painting on black canvas. The color really pops and comes out."

Though it was a thrill to sell a painting, Diamond said, it isn't necessarily easy for him to part with his work. "A lot of the pieces are personal," he said, adding that it was "hard to let...go" of the one he sold.