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Dennis Loren

Interviewed by

Kirkland Ellens

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Subjects

Brian Wilson
Classic Rock Posters
Concert Posters
Creem Magazine
Detroit
Edsel Ford High School
Graham, Bill
Grande Ballroom
Graphic Design
Griffin, Rick
Grimshaw, Gary
Loren, Dennis
McNamee, Roger
Moon Alice
O. L. Smith Junior High School
Poster Art
Posters
Psychedelic Posters
Rod Stewart
San Francisco
Shaw, Chris
Stone Soup
The Beach Boys
The Fillmore
The White Stripes
Wilson, Wes

Brief Biography

Born in 1948, Dennis Loren Kranich (Dennis Loren) is a graphic designer and poster artist. Beginning in the 1967, Mr. Kranich began creating psychedelic poster art in Detroit and San Francisco. He served was art director for the music

magazines Blitz!, Goldmine, R.P.M., Cream and Metal (1977 – 1992). He has also created designs for numerous record labels and recording artists ranging from Frank Zappa to Brian Wilson.

Interviewer

Kirkland Ellens

Abstract

In this interview, Dennis Loren Kranich, more commonly known as Dennis Loren, discusses his experiences in graphic design and psychedelic posters. He discusses his experiences working with artists including the Beach Boys, the White Stripes and Moon Alice. He also speaks about the influence of comics and cartoons, and other poster artists on his artistic style. He discusses the change in poster art and design as an industry over the course of his career.

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Transcript of interview conducted December 7, 2015 with:
Dennis Loren Kranich, Dearborn, MI
By: Kirkland Ellens

Ellens: This is Kirkland Ellens on December 7, 2015 and I am here with…

Loren: Dennis Loren

Ellens: Dennis Loren, can you tell us a little bit about what you do for a living?

Loren: Yeah! I'm what you call a "Graphic designer" and "illustrator" but I also do most of my work for the music industry and I have been since the 60s. I've been doing concert posters, advertising, merchandise, album covers, CD covers. All Kinds of packagings and things like that. I've also art directed music magazines. Well, first in the 70s I was working with a couple local guys who started a local magazine called Blitz and then I was hired by Goldmine, which was a record collectors magazine and then for a brief time I worked at Westbound Records and then I went to work for Creem Magazine. Then they eventually moved the company to Hollywood and after it was sold to another publisher I went freelance. Of course I had been doing freelance work while I worked for other companies. I've always been doing work on the side [laughing].

Ellens: So what year did you go completely freelance?

Loren: In the early 90s. We moved out to Hollywood in 87 and I was in Los Angeles until 2000. And then I moved up to San Francisco Bay area, but in that period of time between the time that Creem was sold, I went totally freelance working for record companies, other magazine companies, and still… kinda… well people would say, we'll put it like this, "oh wow you're so lucky you work for

yourself!" but in a way you have 10 bosses, you know? Because depending on how many people you're working for, there are deadlines and all that sort of things. So it has its advantages but it also its disadvantages because you could run into a situation where… well for instance, I did a logo for the Beach Boys 50th Anniversary with another friend of mine named Mark London, who works for Brian Wilson. And we'd worked on stuff for Brian in the past. And because I do vector work, which was something I never taught Mark [laughing], they needed to have this logo be presented in another different ways and they needed it vector because sometimes it would be stitched on baseball hats and stuff like that. So he brought me in on the project and sent me his pencil designs and I inked it and vectored it. And then he called me on a Thursday and said "could you have it by Friday?" I said, "Monday would be better" And so Monday I had sent it through email and we had a conference call with the art director of Capital Records Annal and each of the members of the Beach Boys by this time had a manager and somehow their wives were involved. I don't think the musicians themselves cared all that much. Or they were happy with it.

Ellens: Why did you think that? What gave you that impression? Just curious.

Loren: Well, they didn't say anything… So there's this conference call and they're all looking at this and one of the wives said, "Couldn't you look it more like neon tubing?" and I said, "Well you know that's the premise, but it's apples and oranges. You can't have a fuzzy line and vector, so we did this way." Which was what the Capital art director had asked for, because it was going to be used even as foil stamp on some things. And I guess Mark said that the art director kind of rolled his eyes, but… I guess what I'm trying to say there was a committee. You know, up for approval. Luckily I got through that by explaining to her that I really couldn't make it look like an air brush. It's fuzzy and this isn't going to be fuzzy [laughing].

Boy I really got off on a tangent there. What did you ask me originally? Oh freelancing about freelancing?

Ellens: Yes

Loren: Okay. Well, this has happened other times and more in the recent years. You get more than just the art director involved. So you could potentially have several layers of approval before you get a paycheck. And even that's not always all it's cracked up to be. People think "oh you do all this stuff for famous people" but it's a living. You know? There are gaps between those checks. But I'm not complaining because I have some clients that are really true blue. A Record company in Texas and a band in the Bay area called Moon Alice and their spinoff band called Doobie Decimal System, and they hire me frequently; monthly, as a matter of fact. So I keep it all rolling [laughing]. Anyways, next.

Ellens: So you mentioned Moon Alice, you said you had worked for Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys, Can you tell me about some of your other clients. Just the types you worked for.

Loren: Yeah. Okay. Sometimes you're working for the venue. It's a concert poster; you're not directly working for the group. And I should preface that with saying in the beginning things were used as advertising, so you're working for the promoter. But later, you start working for the bands. So I have done posters for everyone from Jimie Hendrix and B. B. King to the White Stripes and Frank Zappa. I've done a CD cover for Frank Zappa and I've done stuff for… oh the list is very long [laughing]. But that's a few names, and most recently the Jefferson Airplane and Hot Tuna and Quicksilver.

Over the years, of course, I have not only played music, but a lot of my friends are musicians. I lived for four years in the '60s in the Bay Area. So I knew many of the bands back then: Big Brother and Holding Company and [unknown]. Big Brother was Janice Joplin's band. They actually existed before they hired her to be the singer. Now days you look in a record store and it's all under Janice Joplin. But it used to be Big Brother and the Holding Company and she happened to be the singer. Just like Bernie Slick was Jefferson Airplane's singer. But these kinds of things over time kind of get skewed. And I guess, like Ken Drayson and Janice and a few others who die young, they got a lot of attention, and sometimes the other guys in the band didn't get so much attention.

But I've met a whole lot of people over the years. It's an interesting mix of emotion because you can be a fan on one level, but also you have to be a professional and working so you can't go all gooey when you meet famous people. I've worked also for a number of record labels, from Warner Brothers to Rhino Records and Bump Records, and lots of independent labels here in Detroit in the 70s. It's been a real fun thing, but there is also a certain amount of pressure. I'm my own worst critic so before I ever show anybody anything, I've really already beat myself up several times and then I go on. I'm so pleased when somebody will say, send me an email, and say "I love it."

In the case of Moon Alice, one time I had sent the image to the Art Director, but Roger [McNamee] who is one of the members of the band, he emailed me and said, "You made my day. It was just Winnie the Pooh enough to ring my bells." What it was was an image of my brother feeding squirrels. That was the story behind it.

Often times I'll make a little story. You can make up your own story when you see the image, but there are elements that influence me. I was so pleased because most of the time, you know I told you about the Beach Boys situation, but most of the time people like what I do right away. In the case of that White Stripes poster, when I showed the art to Jack [White] and Meg [White], Jack immediately was laughing. He saw it first and said, "Meg look at this!" He got it right away. Those are really nice moments. Or in the case of Roger Dean, when I'm trying to do my best to make something look like another artist because of them having done album covers for the band or something like that. And we don't have the visual aids on the tape, maybe someday I can send over a few images that when people listen to this they can see something.

Ellens: So you said that you frequently try to tell stories in your art

Loren: Yes. I'll pick something from the lyrics. I'll often listen to the music of the group I'm working on visually and I'll try to convey something that the fans will like, especially now that posters have become more of a merchandise item. In the case of one White stripes poster that I did, the album had come out and I listened to it. There was a song on there called "Be Like the Squirrel Girl." In fact it wasn't

really even a song, well it was sort of a song, but they had a local news caster reading the lyrics, Warren Kramer or somebody like that.[1] And it was story about this squirrel gathering nuts and preparing for the future. I put the silhouette of a squirrel and then there was another song in the album called "dead leaves on the dirty ground" and I had these red leaves and I kind of made a border of the squirrels and leaves. I'll do things like that; of course the White Stripes had always used red black and white. That seemed to be their colors, so most of my posters those are the dominant colors.

Yeah, I give this stuff a lot of thought, even before I plunge in. Now I don't work the same way that some people do. I used to work with a guy in LA area named James Stagnitta, and he'd been the art director for a series of magazines. And at this particular time, we were working on a baseball magazine and he would sit over in his corner and sketch thumbnails, ideas, furiously. I would sit at my drawing board and look at the type, how long the story was, the photographs or illustrations that would be used in the story or that I could use. Often times there are more photos than you have room for, but you kind of use the photos to balance with the text and make a nice opening spread. I would just look at all these items and my layout board and a picture would come in my mind and I would go for it. But one day, James, who was originally from New York and was very… out spoken, should we say, said, "I'm not paying you to stare at the paper." "James, I'm not staring at the paper, I'm actually doing what you're doing, but I'm doing it all up here."

So you when you're working on a magazine you're much more deadline, well, all of this stuff is deadline oriented, but you might have a real tight deadline. So ultimately, I guess the gist of this story is any given day, I would turn out more pages than James would. I just have an ability to visualize. I often think that your best idea is your first idea. Everything after that is watered down or wishy washy. That probably goes all the way back to when I was having Print Shop classes at Edsel Ford High School here in Dearborn. The way I work is really informed by

[1] The song's name is Little Acorns, narrated by Mort Crim.

working on projects then. I've just had this ability ever since I was quite young. Sometimes it can backfire.

I remember doing a logo for a company in Toronto for a well-known musician named Randy Bachman. He had a group called The Guess Who and later the Bachman-Turner Overdrive. They wanted me to create a logo that could be used on t-shirts, and posters, and CDs and things. I right away got what they wanted, but I was asked to do a number of color variations and try different lettering. Ultimately I had done about a dozen combinations and I sent it off. They said "Could we see more?" I said "Yes, I could do this all day, but can you give me some idea what you want? Can you zero it down?" And I realized there were five or six people in a committee meeting and there were all these other ideas. People saying, "Well, maybe it will look better in blue." Maybe it would. Maybe it would look better in purple. I don't know. This could go on for quite a while. So it… I've lost the question again.

It's an interesting occupation. I've worked for companies and I've worked as an employee, as art director for a magazine for instance, and I've also been doing this as freelancer. I'm not, really. I'm like an independent contractor, although I rarely sign contracts [laughing]. I don't know if that answers your question, oh it was about stories. Yeah.

You know you can pick up something from a name, like Hot Tuna. You can put some tunas in there. A friend put them in that poster. A good example is different things I've picked up over the years from other artists who I also consider friends. Those circles that Victor Moscoso would do in his posters, I used. The idea for that comes from a Japanese graphics technique that represents water or waves. I put those kind of in the background, and the mermaids were the best way to frame the picture, but it was aquatic. The lettering I tried to make a little hot. For the most part, the band's name could suggest it, the music could suggest it. In the case of these three posters for Culture Factory, they're all three informed from the San Francisco posters; which I did some but I was very young then.

I was influenced very heavily by several of the artists that were doing posters at the time. One of them, a guy named Stanley Mouse, or Stanley Miller (his real last

name) is from Detroit, and he started doing T-Shirts with hotrods and monster cars. But he came out to San Francisco and started doing posters with another fella named Paul Kelly. There was another guy, named Rick Griffin, who was a fabulous at almost any medium that he pursued. From airbrush to pen and ink, he was fabulous. In a documentary, called American Artifact, about Rock Concert Posters, I call him the Michelangelo of this type of work. So there were others.

Wes Wilson really starts the whole Miguel. He does the first thing that would be termed psychedelic posters. He did the first 30 or so posters for both Family Dog, Avalon Ballroom, and the Fillmore, Bill Graham's Fillmore. And he sort of set the standards. He would use vibrating colors. These are just colors, they're not really day glow like some people think, but you take certain colors and put them next to each other and the retina of your eye cannot focus on one or the other so it causes what they call "flicker" or "eye fry." It looks like it's pulsing.

I've picked up stuff from so many. Victor Moscoso and others. Griffin, Wilson, Mouse, Kelly, and Moscoso were all known as the "Big Five" in San Francisco; and that's only because they had a group showing in an art gallery when suddenly the world kind of recognized this as art.

Ellens: Do you remember when that show was?

Loren: Yeah, it was probably in maybe 1967 in a place the Moore Gallery in San Francisco. There was a lot of press about it and articles in Newspapers and magazines. But I only use that as a preface, because there was a lot of other great people. For instance, Lee Conklin, who did the first album cover for Santana with a lion's face. It's just black and white, but it's very effective. And a lot of these guys, because in those days when a band would sign a record contract (especially with the San Francisco bands), they would say, "We don't just want our picture on the album cover. We want it to reflect the music scene and we'd like to have these poster artists do our album covers."

This really changed the whole course of album cover design. You would see illustration used in some jazz or classical stuff, but most pop records or rock-n-roll records would have a picture of Ricky Nelson or Elvis. In the case of somebody like

Chuck Berry or Otis Reading, where they were trying to sell to a young white teenage audience, they might not have their picture at all because these were black men. So they might have, in Chuck Berry's a bushel basket of strawberries, or they'd have a pretty model on the cover of Otis Reading or an older white group like the Ventures. They'd use different things like that to illustrate things. But most of those things were photographs.

This all kind of changes in the 60s, of course there are some exceptions. The Beatles Rubber Soul album had used Klaus Voormann's pen and ink drawings and a little collage work. Did I say Rubber Souls? I meant Revolver, excuse me; although Rubber Soul is a good example of the Beatles. Whoever did that album cover started using melting type the way that Wes Wilson would. So there was a San Francisco influence even on them, but more so later. And of course this changed things, because later on you had all kinds of crazy artwork on album covers. Yes and Asia would use Roger Dean and he would do a lot of British progressive groups the art work for. Then there were lots of other people like Frank Frazetta who used to do science fiction book covers, but suddenly doing heavy metal bands and southern rock bands.

Ellens: That's quite a jump.

Loren: Yes, yes. And still, it's that way that some people work. I do a lot of CD packaging so I can do something more fanciful or illustrative, but then others want a picture. I try to best work within the format. That's just other examples. It's funny that we were talking about Otis Reading. I actually did use his picture on a CD cover.

But yeah, something will trigger a response in me and I'll go for it. It may be a story in my head. I might make something up, or the band name. It's just a way of working. I just sort of… I don't know if you'd call it a form of meditation, but I would just think about the project in hand and start visualizing. Then very quickly ideas happen. Like I showed you the Kings of Leon one, and I was just reading about the background of the band and how they had a real religious upbringing. But now they were a, little bit fast and loose, rock-n-roll band [laughing]. I just kind of incorporated all these elements that I thought they would like.

In some cases the bands actually do approve the posters, and in a lot of other times, you're working for the venue or the promoter and so it's very hard to say. Next.

Ellens: I just wanted to go back a little bit. You had said that Otis Reading and other black artists, some designers would put something else in place of a photo to try to sell to white audiences. Did you ever have anything like that that you had to do?

Loren: No. No. In fact, Motown, of course, used photographs, but they never hid the color. All I can say about is this it, it's sort of backward thinking by some labels. In the case of Chess Records, who recorded blues artists like Muddy Waters, and Howlin' Wolf, Bo Diddly, they had a lot of photographs, but they thought those records were being sold to a black audience. Now things in the '60s… Especially during civil rights, Motown was very proud of its performers, so there was not a problem there.

But you got a company in the late '50s actually, Chuck Berry comes along. He doesn't sound particularly black if you listen to him, his music. But his records were being bought predominantly by white teenagers, not the black older people that would buy blues records.

There was also a generation gap, because older people in those days would buy blues records, and the younger people would buy soul records, which would be more like Motown groups, vocal groups. So, make a long story short, in the case of Otis Reading, he recorded for a company called Stacks, and they were in Memphis, Tennessee, but the label was owned a white brother and sister. They probably wanted to market to, again, this teenage audience, so they put a model, a white blonde model on the album cover. And in the case of Chess Records out of Chicago, they were marketing Chuck Berry to white teenagers also, so they put a basket of berries on the album cover.

I remember these things because I was always looking, from when I was little I would look at my dad's albums. I would want to see who did it and I would read the liner notes. Always was and inquisitive person. So I began very early on

thinking how things were marketed to people. Of course, marketing has something to do with design. In this case, I've seen all these changes. I'm old enough to have witnessed all these various changes, so that's kind of an interesting thing.

Now when I worked at Westbound, which was also predominantly recorded black artists from George Clinton and the Parliament Funkadelics, to a lot of gospel records. I did actually pretty close to a hundred different gospel record covers, and I used mostly photographs, occasionally illustration, a portrait. Sometimes I would work with other illustrators, like a young man named Glenn Barr who went on to work on his own comic books and paintings and illustrations and became very very famous.

I always look for that special something in a photograph. For instance, when I was working at Creem – and this is actually a funny story – Arnold Levitt had bought Creem from Connie Kramer after her husband had passed away. He was a New York business man. He was actually an accountant, and he had worked for a number from Marvel Comics to Larry Flint publications, but his main job was accounting. When his father died, he was given an inheritance and he bought several magazine companies. He had a line of sports magazines in New York and he had some other businesses in Los Angeles, and he bought Creem, which actually published not just Creem, the rock-n-roll magazine, but 3 or 4 other titles.

So in 87 he moved a bunch of us out to Los Angeles. We'd probably been working there about a year and he had on his office wall the last twelve issues. So this was a staff meeting between the art department and the editors. He said "okay now, that cover with David Lee Roth and that cover with the Beastie Boys, they were the best-selling issues out of those, and he said, "I want to know why." Now the other covers were like Pink Floyd and U2 and a lot of famous people.

I was the first one to jump into this discussion, because Arnold was kind of pacing and jingling. He had the habit of jingling the change in his pocket and he stuttered a bit. So all the other people are trying to figure this out and I didn't know how to put it articulately until I had thought about it a little bit more, but I blurted out, "they've got their mouths open." Everybody else started to laugh. But Arnold was

jingling his change faster and said, “No, he’s right.” Pink Floyd were… didn’t crack a smile. All these other people looked very serious, Fleetwood Mac, or whatever it was.

In the case of David Lee Roth, he was not only smiling, but he was gesturing. He had a magician’s hat and he was hamming it up. The Beastie Boys were all nahh. They had these big chains and they were all clowning around. Everybody else was looking very seriously, so after that we realized that when the rock stars were a little bit more animated, that magazine would sell more.

Arnold believed that if someone was at a news stand and were moved enough to pick up the magazine, 75% of the time they would buy the issue. They would pick it up and start flipping through it. So it was really important to have those covers have more impact and as silly as that meeting was, it was true [laughing]. So from then on, I would the photographers that we hired to shoot photos for the covers and also for the inside of the magazine to get the people to be a little more animated.

It had later repercussions for me. I did one cover of Creem that had Rod Stewart on the cover and I asked the photographer to take a publicity photo and tear it in half, a publicity photo of Rod Stewart. Then have him the mouth over his mouth. He had a big album or song called “Every Picture Tells a Story” and this was an interview with him.[2] I thought that would be clever, you know? I put that in my portfolio. I remember the very first time I went to Rhino Records and was being interviewed by the art director, Don Brown. It was the first thing in the portfolio. He says, “Now how did you go about doing that?” From that, he realized we were speaking the same language. But, he actually closed the portfolio and I thought, “Oh my god, I’ve been rejected already.” He says, “I’m gonna call you in two weeks and I’ll have an album cover for you.” He didn’t even look at the rest of my portfolio. That cover of Creem Magazine was enough to get me work. So I described the thought behind it and the techniques I used to actually physically do it, and that’s all he needed to know.

[2] *Every Picture Tells a Story* was an album, released in 1971, featuring a track of the same name.

Another interview I had with a movie magazine as a potential job, the person that was interviewing me wasn't particularly a graphic artist, she was a personnel director. I showed her my portfolio, she said, "Well, all your magazines are about music and we're doing a movie magazine." I said "Ma'am, I don't mean to offend, but it's all words and pictures, and the same things apply." So, uh, I didn't get that job [laughing].

Ellens: Which Studio was it for?

Loren: Oh the movie magazine was probably just another publishing company. I freelanced with different companies, like Darkroom Photography and other publications, like that baseball magazine and things like that. So, I haven't strictly done music, but I would say 90 percent. I even did a political campaign one time, for a Los Angeles city councilwoman.

Ellens: Do you remember her name?

Loren: No, she didn't win [laughing]. So maybe I wasn't that effective in that area of endeavor, but somewhere I have things. But I've done advertising artwork and uh…

Some of this may sound disjointed because you haven't really asked me about my background or how I got into this.

Ellens: Well what can you tell me about that?

Loren: Okay, well I was born in 1946. In Detroit, and we lived on the East Side in the upper flat over my great grandfather. My mother was Dorothy and my father was Loren. My real last name is Kranich, but it's difficult to pronounce. My great grandfather had come over in the 1800s from Poland, but he was of German parentage. Kranich in English is crane. So if he'd just translated his name to English it would've been a lot easier, because as I was a kid growing up it was very much mispronounced. I'll get a little bit into that later. Anyway, my full name was Dennis Loren Kranich. Because of playing music in the '60s and '70s, I started just using Dennis Loren and it fell into the artwork that way. Of course, when I was a

kid “chronic-case” would be the way you were teased if they could pronounce it, but I would get “kranch,” “kranitch,” you know all kinds of things.

Ellens: So how do you spell Kranich?

Loren: K-R-A-N-I-C-H. Yes. But the translation is crane, the bird. I assume in English with a C, but maybe in another language it would be a K. In our case, it’s a K. Anyway, I can wander down several avenues, so I have to stay focused here.

My brother David came along. My mother, on my mother’s side of the family she was a Neely. They were Irish, and her people came from Tennessee. My grandparents were up here in the teens and ‘20s. They were working to buy more land for their farm in Tennessee. So my mother was actually born here, but raised in Tennessee. After she got out of high school she came back and got a job here, met my father.

I was born 1946. My brother, David, was born 1950, three months before my mother died of Hodgkin’s disease. So Dad, David, and I went to live with my grandparents, his parents, in the Spring Wells area, Junction and Vernor / Livernois area. Dad worked and Grandpa worked and Grandma was a housewife, and she kind of kept an eye on us boys. But she’s also my first art patron, because she would buy me art supplies and crayons and papers and books. I loved books. I was enamored with cartoons and the funny papers and my dad’s album covers and music. Always loved art and music almost equally.

Then my dad, later in the ‘50s, met a school teacher named Harriot Dickinson and they got married. And we, in the late ‘50s, moved here to Dearborn. In 1960, my brother came along, my little brother Jim. He now lives in Kankakee, Illinois near Chicago. Anyway, when I went to Edsel Ford High School, oh even before that, when I went to O. L. Smith Junior High School here in Dearborn, I was tutored by an art teacher who saw something in my work and he was encouraging me. So after school, I would have little lessons with him for about an hour. We would do things like sketch each other, and he would teach me things. I used to write to different artists, also, and sometimes I would get a letter back that would tell me things.

Ellens: Who did you write to?

Loren: Various people, in the case of one of the letters that did come back, his name was Carmine Cartano [Carmine Infantino] and he drew a character comic strip or a comic book called *The Flash*, and he told me what kinds of pens and brushes he used and different techniques. I started getting things like that. Probably, being a kid, I was probably thinking more along the lines of doing comic strips or a comic book, although I always loved magazine design and album covers too. Like I said, I would study this stuff from a very early age. Mr. Hashoian was my teacher in junior high, and he would tell me things like "If you're going to make a living at it, you've gotta get a lot faster." I'll never forget that. And that's probably why I didn't go into comic book illustration, because you have to draw page after page after page after page. For an album cover or a poster, you only have one flat something to work on or a book cover. So I went in that direction.

Also, by 1964, the British Invasion happened. Before that, I had been into folk and blues music, and all of a sudden music came to the fore. So my focus with the art went that way too. I was in bands with my brother David. In the early '70s I was in a band in San Francisco called Mercury Vapor, and then in the early '70s I had kind of had it with bands, so I just did a singer song writer thing in coffee houses. I made a couple of records. I'm on an album called *Stone Soup*, which is a compilation of eleven different singers, songwriters from the Detroit area.

Ellens: Do you remember who?

Loren: Yeah. Nobody too famous, but some very wonderful performers. Rick Rubarth was one of them. Rich DelGrosso and Leo Kretzner had a group called The Aging Children, but they recorded two individual songs on there, on the album. There was a woman named Cheryl Dottie, and Chase Steelstraw, and Mike Waddell, who used to run a coffeehouse over in Grosse Pointe area called the Hushpuppy where a lot of us played, and quite a few others but off the top of my head I can't remember everybody.

It's interesting because several years later I got involved with some fellas and we did a compilation of Detroit new wave bands. And the same premise. Those bands

were much more well known, like the Mutants, and Destroy all Monsters, and Cynacide, Fleur and the Reruns, and they were all quite popular in the late '70s, early 80s. But I got involved in that scene because I was doing picture sleeves for all these indie independent 45s. I did work for a band called the Ivories and Tremor Records.

These were all done during the time I was art directing Gold Mine Magazine, which was a record collector's magazine. It got very famous until I think eBay has now kind of taken over that world, because the advertising was mostly auctions. People would send in their lists of records that they would auction. We'd put that in one section and the rest of the magazine was interviews and stories about performers.

This is not to say I haven't had other jobs. I've been a postman, when my son was very small. I worked for an ad agency next. And then while I was at the ad agency, I was called by Brian Bukantis to work the full time at Gold Mine, or the Arena Magazine Company. That was really what the company was called. And everything just sort of led to another. One thing led to another. Now I pretty much survive not so much on promoting myself, but on word of mouth and referrals. Someone will see some of my work and contact me. I did a poster for a concert here in the Detroit area last week; it was, for a band called Iron Butterfly. The other two bands were friends of mine, Stoney and the Jagged Edge, and Victor Peraino's Kingdom Come. They're local guys with very interesting histories too. I was invited to sell the posters at the event, and I sold out. But there were two younger fellas that came up to me and said "we're in a band that we probably can't afford you, but would consider doing a poster for us?" and I said, "Sure." In other words, I always encourage young musicians and artists, and they should never be afraid to contact me. As long as I can still do what I do, I'm glad to work with someone. You don't have to be famous, in fact I have worked with people when nobody knew who they were and they got famous later.

Ellens: Like whom?

Loren: Well, the White Stripes. Good example. I met them when they were playing a club in Seattle. I happened to be up there helping another friend of mine

who was a guy named Tom Fletcher who was a graphic artist also from the Bay area, but he was living in L.A. He had leukemia, and was going to have a bone marrow transplant. So it was all done in Seattle. For four months I was his caregiver up there. I had been reading about what was going on at the time here in Detroit in the music press. I was also looking at the entertainment paper, and I saw that they were coming. So I contacted their venue and said, "Could I do a poster for this show?" So I did it. I went down to the concert and introduced myself, and I said, "Are there any more I could do for you?" and he gave me a list of upcoming gigs. Then put me in touch with their booking agent, who was in San Francisco at the time. But he was handling a lot of the Detroit acts that were just beginning to start touring, but they hadn't become famous yet. They were all just starting to record.

I remember when I first started doing them, I was working with Gary Grimshaw, whom I must talk about. I had come to work with him and his wife up in the Bay area in 2000. I left Los Angeles after being there for 15 years and went back to the Bay area. In this case, I started doing some posters for the White Stripes, and Gary and Laura were wondering. They hadn't heard of them and they weren't sure. One night they watched the David Letterman Show, and they were on David Letterman. The next morning, when I saw them, they said "oh, now we know what you're doing." But, like I said, I'm more enthusiastic about working with young people because it keeps me young [laughing].

I should mention Gary too, because before I ever got to San Francisco… okay, I didn't finish the rest of the background story. So, I graduated high school 1964, Edsel Ford High School here in Dearborn. Then I went to work full time at E. J. Corvettes during the day and at night I would go to art school at what they called the Society of Arts and Crafts down on Kirby, next to the DIA. Now it's the Center for Creative Study. It's much bigger compact campus. When I went there, it was one building. And I would go there for three hours after work. My parents, my stepmom was a teacher, but she didn't teach for a while after Jim was born, and my dad worked 44 years at Uniroyal Tire Company down on East Jefferson by Belle Isle, before it was torn down around the time he retired.

Anyways, in September of ’65, I was drafted. This was the time of the Vietnam War. Fortunately, I passed some test in basic training and they sent me to code school. So I wasn’t sent to Vietnam, I was sent to Turkey. I was in a little listening station in Sinop, Turkey, and we were monitoring the Kapustin Yar Missile Range in the Ukraine, right across the Black Seas about 150 miles as the crow flies. It was the Cold war, in those ways, and we wanted to make sure that they didn’t shoot anything at us, and that was our job.

I was sent, when I came back from Turkey, I was sent to San Francisco, Presidio San Francisco, to finish my time in the Service. But before that, I came back here and my brother took me to a place called the Grande Ballroom, and that’s where I first saw Gary Grimshaw’s poster artwork. I said “wow,” this was before I even saw the stuff in San Francisco.

I should say this; Gary had been in the Navy around the same time I had been in the Army. He got out to San Francisco also, and saw what was going on there in 66, and then he came back here to Detroit and he’d gone to high school with the guys in a band called the MC5 and he’s sitting in this lead singer’s living room or kitchen, when a phone call comes from Russ Gibb, who is the promoter at the Grande Ballroom. He says “do you know anybody that can do posters like they do out in San Francisco?” and he hands the phone to Gary and says “this phone call is for you.”

So Gary was also born in Detroit. Grew up in Lincoln Park, and his uncle owned a print shop here in Dearborn, Uncle Ivar and Crown Printing. They did all the posters for the Grande Ballroom. Russ had been a teacher here in Dearborn and he’d gone out for a summer vacations, and saw what was going on in San Francisco and decided to do it here. So in October ‘66, they were already starting concerts here with lightshows and posters.

So must have been around December, when I was home on leave before I went to Turkey, no, when I came back. I’d have to look at a timeline. But, somewhere along the line, I saw Gary’s work. No, it must have been when I came back from turkey, because I spent most of ‘66 in Turkey, so it was probably in there, like March or something like that. I had a month’s leave. When I came back from

Turkey, I picked up my car and drove out to San Francisco; my dad had been keeping it for me. I saw Gary's artwork and I was very impressed. I'd never seen anything quite like this.

There was a time period when Rock posters were what they'd call, in retrospect, "boxing style." You'd have a picture of the group and some big block letters. You might have a split fountain color in the background, but usually there were black and one other color. Some people collected them, but very few. There were posters back in the big band and jazz era, but there was something different about what I saw Gary doing. Then I realized who had influenced him when I got to San Francisco. Over the years, I met these people. I worked with Gary at the Detroit Sun in the early 70s, a newspaper. I, over the years, got to know Stanley Mouse and Moscoso and Rick Griffin and all these other people. What they say is water seeks its own level. I have these influences, cartoon guys, and these other guys. These guys come from a slightly different space, but you know some of them were influenced by cartoonists also.

Anyways, in high school…

I'm not doing this in A, B, C. I tend to wonder down the trail as it were, and get distracted by different nuisances and things.

But in high school I had Mr. Stopol who was the print shop teacher. I had art classes there too, but…. In fact, in high school those printing and photography classes were really important because I actually learned a lot about graphic design on that level. When I was going to art school before I was drafted, I was mostly doing illustration from models and things. Not so much graphic design. But, I actually got hands on, because we'd do our high school newspaper and I knew how to handle type and pictures and illustrations, a combination of things. I still credit my time in print shop at Edsel Ford as probably learning more about what I would eventually do in life. Mr. Stopol, like Mr. Hashoian, was very helpful, and I thank both of those for helping me find a direction in life; because at some point, the art took over from the music, but it took a shape in the music business. I know other musicians who were graphic artists. There was a surf group called Jan and Deane, and Dean Torrence had a company also doing album covers in Los

Angeles, called Kiddyhawk Graphics, and did many of the Beach Boys album covers.

I've worked with a number of artists over the years. I mentioned Mark London. He was a young artist that I was encouraging, and he kind of considers me a mentor, but he went to work for Brian Wilson as an in-house artist. He would call me in on projects, so we worked together on the Smile album cover in 2003 or 2004.

I've been fortunate. That's not to say I haven't had some tough times. When I was living in San Francisco, I got married and my son was born out there in 1968. His mom and I, it didn't work out. We got divorced eventually, but I had custody of him. In the early '70s I came back to Detroit. Ben thinks of himself as a Detroiter, but he was actually born in San Francisco.

I can remember working for the Post Office and working these different jobs. When he was very little, I had to take him to the babysitter sometimes. It was not always easy, I had to get up at 5:00 in the morning, bundle him up in his jammies and take a little suitcase to the babysitter. Drop him off and go to work and sort mail. Then go walk around the neighborhood. So there have been times between various jobs also, but I have always been very focused on what I wanted to do.

Eventually Ben got, very early into computers. He was about 13 and I asked him one summer what he wanted to do for the summer. He would go to Tennessee to the farm, like I would with David when we were going up to my maternal grandparents. This particular year, they were a little older, several of my aunts down there said they were really getting too old to take care of a teenager. Of course, Ben would have helped them, but for some reason they thought teenager meant wild or something. He probably would have been out there picking vegetables with them and taking care of the cows and horses.

But I said we'll go down and visit, but I can't send you down to stay for a month or two. What would you like to do instead?" he said, "I'd like a computer." Now this was the '80s, and to me computers were punch cards and IBM big things. I didn't know there were these little things people could have in their houses. We went

out and got him a Timex[3] from RadioShack, then pretty soon he had an Atari and later a Commodore. He started teaching himself. I said "Kid, I don't know how to help you with this." But very early on, a teacher of his said "If you can learn to read, you can teach yourself anything." And I remembered this, so I said "I don't know the first thing about computers, but I will buy any book you need." He taught himself several computer languages very early on Quartrend [sp?], and COMAL, and DOS, and a number of others that I can't quite remember.

When he was about 15, one of his programs was printed in a computer magazine called *Run*, which I think was a Commodore magazine. Around the time he was finishing school, my job at Creem moved me out at '87 to Hollywood. He was still involved with computers. I used to tell people his bedroom was like the Star Wars robot factory, because more machines by now. Little did I think this would affect me, but he started to work for companies in Hollywood called Digital Angel. They were one of the very first, once the internet got started, to make websites for the movie industry, He used to do the chat. He'd come home and I'd say, "Well, what did you do today?" Then he'd say, "I did the chat for the Apollo 13 site with Tom Hanks." Or he did Water World, with Kevin Costner. This is where people would ask questions and they would sit with them and show them how to respond. This was the early days, and even before that, he was in touch people over phone modems before there was an internet. I know this because I used to get horrendous phone bills [laughing].

Anyway, overlay upon overlay upon overlay, but since I'm almost 70, there's a lot to talk about, so if I wander off the trail…

Ellens: You said little did you think your son's computers would affect you?

Loren: Yeah.

Ellens: So now you do a lot of work on computers, right?

Loren: Yeah I do. I apply the things I did before computers. I still draw. I still incorporate those drawings into my designs.

[3] Timex Sinclair was a joint venture between Timex and Sinclair to produce personal computers.

It was a wakeup call. When I was still at Creem, I worked with Pam Krankhouser, and her husband, Bill, and her actually got an Apple computer very early, towards the end of our time working on the magazine, maybe the early '90s. After Creem was sold, she went to work for an ad agency and she used to hire me as freelancer. So she said "I need you to learn the computer, but what we really need somebody to do Adobe Illustrator. We had people doing Quark and Photoshop, but we really need somebody that can do Illustrator." So I did.

I would go out to their house. By this time my son was in his 20s, so he was still at home, but I would go out to Pam and Bill's and stay overnight. I didn't have to worry about Ben, he was already a big guy. I would go out there and learn. And sure enough, I remember distinctly going to meet with a record company art director who was late to the appointment, but I was told to go ahead into the office and that she would be along shortly. I couldn't help noticing on her desk there was what they call a rainbow print that had 5 complete designs for CDs printed on one sheet. I was coming to the meeting with my illustrations board ideas, what we call marker comps. These would be ideas or sketches, and the one I like best would be the most complete. But I would always be required to give them three ideas. Anyway, I'm here sitting in her office with my 3 marker comps, looking at these five finished album covers that leave nothing to the imagination. They're done. All they have to do is pick one. I said, "Oh boy. I'm going to have to change course or be out of business very shortly." It was a real wakeup call. Publications started using then Quark before InDesign. Apple had a program called Page Maker, but Quark was winning the war then. Now I think InDesign probably blew Quark out of the water. I don't know anybody that uses Quark anymore. My old Apple has it, but I rarely used it. I mostly work in Illustrator and Photoshop now, but the same things apply that I learned in design and illustration. I've just adapted them.

I was at a party with my son, Ben, and his wife Cindy and they had a lot of their friends over. They would invite me over to these things because, well I don't know. But, all their friends like me. I'm an interesting person, I guess. I always bring stuff and show them things. One day, Ben blurted out that I had the vision to get him into computers, and I said, "Well not really. You asked for a computer,

and I just got it for you." Little did any of us think that he would have a career in computers, and I would be using a computer in my work.

Even though I was a little resistant at first, I actually have come to love it, because now I can work from anywhere. I can be here in Dearborn and do the work for this man in Paris. I sent that poster art, all 480 megabytes of it, through a drop box to Paris. I find that amazing. I find that truly amazing.

Like I said when I was showing the computer, I still don't know how the darn thing works. I understand the theory, but how it does what it does. It doesn't do anything unless you drive it. Here's the better analogy, I can drive the car, but I might not be able to get under the hood. I used to have my son's help when I'd have a SNAFU, but now that I'm here, I have to call somebody. I guess it's kind of interesting because the back side of all of this is that computers have allowed people who would never have gone into graphic design careers to do that. So there's a lot more competition than when you had to do it, we don't like to call it "old fashioned" but "conventional."

Ellens: You mentioned something before that I thought was kind of interesting. I was wondering if you might be able to discuss a little bit for me. You mentioned that when you started in graphic design, the posters were about promotion, and now it's something different.

Loren: Yeah. The best way I can describe this is this book right here. In 2011, I was hired by a company in England, called Elephant Books to collaborate on this book called *Classic Rock Posters* with an English writer named Mick Farren. He's since passed away since the book was done.

To give you an example, posters have been around a long time. They've been circus posters and magicians around the turn of the century. Some of them were very artful, and even during the jazz and big band era, there were wonderful posters. But, in the 50s, things went into a style that I can only call pop-boxing posters. They would be like this. A couple colors, maybe. Just straight type, photographs. There's some design elements, but nothing too exciting. There's an Elvis Presley poster and they misspell his name. This one, with two S's. They

weren't like the psychedelic posters, and that really changed things. You see things slowly changing. This book involves American stuff, and British and a few other countries too. That's pretty boxing style but it's very designey, for The Who. These are not exciting, but when you get into this area [psychedelic posters], you start to see things change and imagery become more…

There's that first Charlatans poster in 1965 that I did the 50th anniversary for, so you can see the influence. And that's all pen and ink. It's just during the '60s, things changed.

One thing I don't like about the book, even though I'm credited as a co-author, is they put the English stuff in front of the San Francisco, and Detroit, and Texas stuff, and there were psychedelic posters in Austin, Texas, Detroit, and San Francisco before the British stuff.

This, this is Gary Grimshaw's work, and this was some of the stuff I saw. This poster in particular is what I saw in the Grande Ballroom.

Ellens: That's the Famous MC5.

Loren: Yes, and my understanding is that the Chosen Few didn't actually play the gig. The Chosen Few had members that would become part of Iggy and the Stooges.

But this book describes all through time: the punk and new wave period, and the rap stuff, and this resurgence of stuff in the '80s, 9'0s and more recent times. Crazy stuff. Chris Shaw is a very good artist, he has done a lot of Fillmore posters, but he's the art director for Moon Alice, and these are some of his things.

Amongst the younger artists, some things are a little throw back to that time, but they might also be a little more cartoony. Mark Grominski and Gary Grimshaw and there's a guy named Ron Donovan.

Ellens: You kind of hinted before that they shifted and became more collectibles.

Loren: Yeah. Now days, if you get a, if you can find one first of all, let's say a Rick Griffin Jimi Hendrix poster, both Rick and Jimi are passed away, it would probably

cost you thousands of dollars if you can find one in what they call mint condition. You might be able to find one that's got pinholes or is a little bit worn for cheaper. Here's a good example; a number of years ago there were some auctions of Gary Grimshaw and Carl Lungrin, who's another artist that worked for the Grande Ballroom. Gary's Seagull poster went for maybe $10,000. Carl's Vanessa Redgrave poster went for $13,000. Now in San Francisco, after Bill Graham and Chet Helms realized that this stuff was beginning to be collected, there would be second and third printings. There were no second or third printings in Detroit until later. But Gary had reprinted some of his posters before he passed away. Most collectors want an original, or what they call a first-state. They don't want a second or third printing. They want one that was printed before the concert and used for advertising. Now the reason those things became collectable was because if you went to a concert then, when you left they would hand you a poster for the next week's events. Later on they slimmed it down to postcards, but there was always a poster. They would print the poster and maybe six postcards on the side. There are far more postcards of posters out there than there are the posters. Even Bill Graham would make the tickets little posters, baseball card size. So people started collecting them, decorating their dorm room or their house. This raised the consciousness.

Promoters started using advertising on the radio, newspapers, metro times ad or something like that, and during the early 80s, posters were down to only... only a handful of places did it. I was trying to find an analogy, but there were only a handful of venues that did it. Posters almost died. Some neighborhoods, you'd still see an occasional boxing style poster for some events, but overall posters needed a shot in the arm. There was a guy in Austin Texas named Frank Kozic, who was somehow working for a couple of local venues. And he decided to do more than just say a handbill or a flyer, and he came up with an idea. I'll do the artwork and take care of the printing. I will give the venue and the band some, but this gives me the right to sell them afterwards, and this is how I'll make my money. This worked, because he could provide artwork for poster that… some of those bands were not very famous at the time. He eventually did stuff for, say,

Pearl Jam and a lot of those Seattle bands when nobody knew who they were. When they were just playing local clubs, and they hadn't filled stadiums yet.

But Rolling Stone magazine wrote about Frank's work and a couple of the other people that were working with him, A guy named Len C. Coon. This sort of started taking off again. There was a guy in Seattle named Art Chantry, there was a guy in San Francisco named Chuck Sperry and Ron Donovan and others, Allen Forbes and Chris Shaw. The Fillmore, ironically, was still making posters well into the early 90s. In fact, they still do. The difference is now that Live Nation owns it, they only make a poster for a sold out show, which is sort of not the reason posters were. They become a souvenir, but only if the show sold out. So, I've done posters for them and the show is not sold out, and it's cancelled. I get what they call a "kill fee." I don't get $500; I make a couple hundred dollars because I did the work. But almost more often than not, that artwork becomes another poster, because all I have to do is change the band name.

I hope they don't hear this [laughing].

One good example is a Blondie poster for their Parallel Lines tour. I used parallel lines; I took images hanging on the telephone, dragon fly, heart of glass, all these items that were from their songs. It never happened. I got a $300 kill fee.

A couple weeks later, Chris Shaw calls me and says "would you like to start doing Moon Alice posters?" I said, "Sure!" I'll tell you a little more about them later. Anyways, to make a long story short, I used that art for Moon Alice posters. I just did new lettering. I've now done 32 Moon Alice posters and 5 posters for a spinoff band they have called the Doobie Decibel System.

I should mention Moon Alice because they're a very interest band. Most the instrumentalists, who plays bass, keyboards, and guitar, and sings, a guy named Pete Sears. He was in a group called Jefferson Starship, so you'll have heard of them, and many other groups over the years. The drummer is a guy named John Molo, and he's from a group called Goose Hornsby and the Range. But he's also played with a number of people. And Barry Sless, the lead guitar player has played with Hill Lesh, King Fish, and a lot of Greatful Dead related bands. And Roger

McNamee has been the real, I shouldn't say leader. He comes from the computer world, and the hi-tech world, but he's got a passion for music. They love posters, so they produce posters and give them away at all their concerts to the fans that go. Later on they're sold on a website, and they share. They give us royalty. So every once in a while I'll get a check in the mail, usually once every quarter. And whatever my part is, it's a nice surprise to get a little bonus. Moon Alice is very nice to us.

They use Wes Wilson, Stanley Mouse, Lee Conklin, a lot of these artists that I've mentioned, David Singer, Ron Donovan, Chris Shaw, and Alexander Fischer and Carolyn Ferris, and Karen Brenner, and a host of others. They sort of rotate through us. Depending on how many concerts they have, I'll probably get about 7 posters a year from them. And now that they have this other band with a guy named Jason Crosby, there are a lot of posters during the year for that. And they actually pay better than the Fillmore. What you get at the Fillmore is $500, fifty copies of the poster, and two free tickets to the show. Moon Alice, we can go to any of their shows, we get one-hundred posters and $600. So, I have boxes of Moon Alice posters. Before you leave, I'll give you some.

They're very nice folks. They flew us to New York twice to do art shows in conjunction with their poster. They have a poster display with their concert, kind of a travelling show sometimes, not always. They put us all on a private jet and flew us to New York the first time. The next time, we went on a regular airplane, but we were first class. The second time, we were in New York for Hurricane Sandy. Now I'm really straying far field, but here you had all these artists and we were in one hotel, and then there was a crane they were afraid was going to fall from a construction site. They moved us from that hotel to another hotel. So here were, there might have been 25 of us, and we're holding our suitcases and dragging our [unknown] windy and rainy from one hotel to the other, about five blocks away.

Only thing on the street was police and fire. Chris Shaw and Chuck Sperry were by a bus stop when a piece of stone fell off a building and shattered near them. Luckily they took cover in the bus stop, they weren't hurt. But it was windy and

rainy and nobody was on the stop, except like I say, us, the firemen, and the police. It was quite an experience.

We stayed a number of days and got flights out, because all the airports were closed. That was an adventure, but we had Robin Gaskin, who works with Roger at elevation, who was kind of our den mother. She got us into the new hotel and everything was taken care of. So these are great people.

They had an event in April every year that launches their new touring season. They, even though I moved back here, they flew me out last April. I was able to spend time with my son and daughter-in-law. I look forward to these events.

Probably the upshot of this story, well when we were in New York, Roger had a meeting with all of us and said the idea started as a poster museum in San Francisco, but it was called "Project X" many years. Now it has a name, called Hayes Street Art Center. Hates Street and Laguna, there was part of University of San Francisco's old campus, wasn't used anymore. The city wanted to use the property for something. They wanted to put senior citizen housing and several other things, but they needed some cultural elements to it, because two corner buildings were historical landmarks and couldn't be torn down. Roger finagled a 75 year lease, and they are now retrofitting this building to open up what will be called the Hates Street Art Center, which will be a combination workshop, printing shop, artist studios, gallery, a venture which will also have mobile shows that will go out around the country about posters. It's apropos that it's in San Francisco because even through Detroit and Austin have reputations for interesting concert posters beginning in the '60s, San Francisco was really the place, the zero-point where it all started. It will be kind of great.

One nice thing about Moon Alice is they use the older guys and a lot of younger artists too. We Wilson's son, Jason, has just done a poster for them, and a young gal named Shanae Barrett. She used to work with Stanley Mouse as kind of an understudy. It's quite fun because they're so kind to us.

I was telling you about the problems that could arise when you're working for a committee or larger company; I've never had a design rejected. At best, they

might fix a typo, but I haven't been asked to change anything other than if I've made a mistake. It's fun because they react so interestingly to it. I know all these artists put a lot of love into this stuff. They go over the edge, I think, and give it a lot of juice, as it were. That's the up side, and it's funny that Moon Alice is attached to all designs and trying to keep that tradition alive, that could easily be lost.

Now days it's like I've gone from vinyl, vinyl's back all of a sudden, but I've gone from vinyl and picture sleeves to CD's and now you have the downloads, which could have been really disastrous for people like me, if packaging went away. So Lindsey Coon has an interesting theory that posters have made a comeback because CDs got so small and later downloads happened, but he says, "you still gotta have something to hang on you bedroom wall."

Ellens: Do you agree with that?

Loren: Yes, I do. I think in some ways, yes. But I'm glad to see vinyl back. I don't mind CDs so much. I mostly play CDs, because that's what I have to play them on now. I don't have an MP3 player, except on my computer. I don't have a little iPod, I guess. But, I have done some graphics that are images that show up on something called "Soundcloud." They're not really album covers, but they sort of look like that. So, even with the newer technology, we're not totally out of business [laughing]. I was really glad to see vinyl come back.

Ellens: It was great talking with you, thank you so much

Loren: Oh you're welcome. I could talk all day, as you could probably tell, because it's a long career and a lot of twists and turns. I'm really grateful that you and Wayne State, and Kresge and Walter Ruether Library and all that stuff is documenting this with a kind of oral thing. It may sound a little convoluted for people to listen to it, but if you go on the website, take a look at what I do, you'll get it. You'll get an idea. My son has a little site for me called, real simple, www.dennisloren.com. But I'm on Facebook, I have two pages, Dennis Loren and Dennis Loren Art, which Moon Alice helped us do; although, Moon Alice has their

Facebook Pages, but they also this art page. I'm easily reachable. I only have a cellphone these days, and it's a San Francisco area code, anyways I'm reachable.