

Keith Batten

Artist Bio

For Keith Batten, art and theatre have always coexisted in his creative career. His recent artworks have been exhibited in over forty galleries these past several years, including four solo shows. His latest paintings were most recent exhibited at McDaris Fine Art in Hudson, NY.

Keith was born in Montreal, Quebec. He first studied art on a highschool scholarship at THE ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO. Later he pursued his dual passion in Visual Art and Theater at Toronto's YORK UNIVERSITY, achieving an Honours Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.

An illustration contest in the New York Times for the Broadway production of BOSOMS AND NEGLECT, which he won, initially brought him to New York City in the early eighties. There he continued his search for style and technique at THE ART STUDENT'S LEAGUE and THE SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS.

Freelance design and illustration soon followed, including his first card design for ROCKSHOTS, a popular greeting card company of that period. This led to a series of portraits of iconic gay writers, including Tennessee Williams, Willa Cather and Herman Melville for the magazine MANDATE. His first book cover was MATLOVICH for Alyson Publishing.

At the same time, his love for theater continued. The festival BROOKLYN BRIDGES THE WORLD at THE BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC afforded him the opportunity of designing the sets and lobbies of all three theaters. Innovative and original poster designs for AMAS REPERTORY THEATER, THE AMERICAN SHAW FESTIVAL, and THE CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY quickly ensued. He even designed the famous top hat cake for A CHORUS LINE when it became the longest running show in Broadway history!

In the early nineties, he advanced to corporate illustration for DESIGN ETC. in the HASBRO Showroom at the NEW YORK TOY FAIR, drawing large scale portraits for leading toy exhibitors such as MAXIE, PLAYSKOOL, and DRESSING PRETTY. The success of these endeavors lead him to do life size drawings for PLAYSKOOL in The HASBRO showroom in London, England.

After a decade of intense theatre work as a director, mounting major productions all around the world, Keith began drawing again, this time with colored pencils on old wooden doors and the found objects. His series of DOORS marked his return to the art world, culminating in his one-man show in midtown Manhattan at The Narthex Gallery in 2013. After creating over 200 Doors, he has now advanced to large-scale painting on canvas, drawing upon the inspiration of the nature around him.