

Transcript

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Going for broke Artist walks away from job to open studio in Norwood — *Transcript Staff*



NORWOOD - For 25 years Henry Eno Jr. has been sketching portraits for fun and a little spending money. But next week, Eno, who was manager of the Norwood Citgo on Broadway for the past 10 years, will fulfill a lifelong dream by opening his 850 Washington St. studio full time.

Starting Tuesday, Eno's studio will be open Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and by appointment.

"As far as I'm concerned, this is what I was put on the planet to do," said Eno, who opened the studio on a part-time basis six months ago.

Eno, a Walpole resident and Dedham native, said he never intended to quit his gas station job, but he has been encouraged by a growing number of clients and decided to give it a try. The decision was a scary one, said Eno, but it was also a long time coming.

"Over the years, people would constantly ask me why I didn't at least try to open a studio," said Eno. "Maybe I should have done it 20 years ago, who knows?"

Eno said his talents were inherited from his grandfather, whom Eno never met. His grandfather was an artist by trade, although more into technical drafting. Eno is more of a traditional artist.

"I'm not into abstract," said Eno. "I draw what I see."

Since the time Eno was old enough to know crayons were for drawing, not eating, he has been sketching. By the time he was at Dedham High School, Eno was spending so much time in the art room, his art teacher gave him a pad of bathroom passes so he could go to the room during lunch or study halls to draw.



Then and now, Eno mostly drew from his heart: sports figures. If Eno kept his old sketches and they were lined up chronologically, the scene would be worthy of a Boston sports museum, taking viewers from Carl Yastrzemski to Curt Schilling, Johnny Bucyk to Joe Thornton, and Steve Grogan to Tom Brady. Eno's collection could also be a history of NASCAR, as he has sketches of drivers from Harry Gant to his favorite, Rusty Wallace.

Although he doesn't sell his sports personality sketches, they are displayed prominently at his Washington Street studio and he said he gets customers in just to look at his memorabilia.

Eno specializes in portraits, and the subject matter varies widely from sketching family photos or memorial pictures to things like boats and cottages.

Recently, Eno was contracted to sketch a pair of boots for a woman whose husband died a few years ago. Eno said the husband's boots had remained in place in the woman's house and she wanted him to put it in a picture.

Eno said he gets a lot of portrait requests as memorials, which can be bittersweet.

"I've had a couple of people cry when they saw the portrait, which is about the highest compliment you can get," said Eno. "I get a picture, and my job is to do a sketch and try to bring that person to life."

The key to that, said Eno, is the eyes.

"The eyes are my favorite thing to draw," said Eno. "I would like to say the eyes are the windows to the soul, but somebody already said that."

Eno's eyes are glittering these days as he contemplates a full-time life doing what he loves. "It's overwhelming," said Eno. "I feel like I walk in here and all this weight gets lifted off my shoulders."

Maybe it's the relaxing atmosphere, and being surrounded by a lifetime of his drawings, or the classical music in the background. Or maybe, it's the peace that comes with knowing life's meandering path has delivered him his dream.

Either way, Eno feels like he's found a home.

