

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Lara Hughes • Marketing & Communications Supervisor
Media Hotline: 651-288-4321 • Media Email: media@mnstatefair.org • Media Twitter: @MSFmedia

Twin Cities Cartoonist and Illustrator Kevin Cannon to Create 2020 Minnesota State Fair Commemorative Art

Jan. 28, 2020

St. Paul, Minn. – Twin Cities cartoonist and illustrator Kevin Cannon has been selected to create the Official 2020 Minnesota State Fair Commemorative Art. His original interpretation of the Great Minnesota Get-Together will be unveiled at the State Fairgrounds in June.

A lover of large crowds, costumed llamas, and any deep-fried food on-a-stick, Cannon is thrilled to lend his hyper-detailed cartoon style to the 2020 State Fair Commemorative Art. “It’s a dream come true to create this artwork. The challenge, of course, will be finding a way to distill this explosion of sights, smells and sounds into one image, to create something that can hang on Minnesotans’ walls during the cold winter months and allow them to relive these 12 summer days again and again,” Cannon said. “My art style involves a lot of detail, a lot of color and, when appropriate, a lot of chaos, so I can’t think of a better subject than the Great Minnesota Get-Together. My hope is that people will get lost in my image, in the same way it’s fun to get lost at the fair itself, not exactly having a plan, just wandering, exploring and finding something new and exciting around every corner.”

Cannon is best known for his detailed cartoon maps in the Star Tribune as well as his humorous all-ages graphic novel, “The Cartoon Introduction to Philosophy.” Born and raised in St. Louis Park, his art career began at a very early age, drawing with Mr. Sketch markers on scraps of foam core from his uncle’s photography studio. He went on to study studio art at Grinnell College in Iowa and resettled in Minneapolis after short stints living in London and Manhattan. In 2004, Cannon co-founded Big Time Attic studio with Zander Cannon (no relation) and Shadi Petosky. The trio tackled a wide range of projects such as animating online games for Cartoon Network and designing the Eau Claire-based family fun center Action City before each artist went their separate way. Cannon focused his career on cartooning, writing and illustrating the arctic adventure graphic novels “Far Arden” and “Crater XV,” the former garnering an Eisner nomination (the comic world’s equivalent of an Oscar). The last decade has found him splitting his time between illustrating books - including the memoirs of local radio icons Dave Ryan and Dan “The Common Man” Cole - and creating illustrations for clients such as Apple, Harvard and the U.S. Naval Academy, and publications such as The Village Voice, Minnesota Monthly and Mpls.St.Paul Magazine. He lives in Mounds View with his wife, Maggie, their son, Ulysses, and cat, Cottleston Pie.

The commemorative poster, a limited number of signed prints and other merchandise featuring the art will be available for purchase after the June unveiling. Proceeds will support the Minnesota State Fair Foundation 501(c)(3) mission to preserve and improve State Fair buildings, fairgrounds and educational programs. The original art will be on display in the Fine Arts Center during the 12-day run of the 2020 State Fair. For more information about the fair’s commemorative art, visit mnstatefair.org/art.

The 2020 Minnesota State Fair Commemorative Art will be the 17th in a series of artwork created annually by Minnesota artists for the Great Minnesota Get-Together. In past years, artists have included: Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher (2004), Mary GrandPré (2005), Nancy Carlson (2006), Michael Birawer (2007), Edie Abnet (2008), Leo Stans (2009), Deborah Voyda Rogers (2010), Steve Thomas (2011), Joe Heffron (2012), Marie Olofsdotter (2013), Emily L. Taylor (2014), Adam Turman (2015), Michael Sweere (2016), Ta-coumba Aiken (2017), Kristi Abbott (2018) and R. J. Kern (2019).

The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world, attracting more than 2 million visitors annually. Showcasing Minnesota’s finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is always 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. Visit mnstatefair.org for more information. The 2020 Minnesota State Fair runs Aug. 27 - Labor Day, Sept. 7.