

# EDWARD KINSELLA III

## DEVELOPING A PERSONAL STYLE

- **IT'S PERSONAL** - Every artist is different. You are your own person with your own ideas. This is about you and no one else. Stop comparing yourself to others and focus on you.
- **JOURNAL** - Dig deep to find out who you truly are as an artist. Write about everything...what you figured out with your work that day, your struggles, your hopes and dreams, future plans, etc. Early in my development I would often write a journal entry after completing each new piece of art. I would list things that I felt needed improvement and also things that were successful. I would write at length about what I desired most in my imagery and the difficulty in getting there.
- There's something about physically writing down your thoughts on development that solidifies them both in memory and practice. Before I started journaling I would often make the same mistakes piece after piece.
- **PLAY** - Play with all different types of materials, especially those that you don't have as much control over. Ask yourself, "How can I make this more fun?" Don't forget down the road how much you love to draw and create art. If you aren't enjoying the process...you're doing it wrong. Try collage, spray paint, splattering paint, drawing on the floor, etc. Look at your work and art making from a different perspective if you feel down about it. The fun in creation doesn't go away, sometimes you're just blinded by practicality or stuck in "The way I do it".
- Try something new, something difficult to control, or something not intended for what you are doing (a stick, tar, power tools, household items, etc.). Maybe it's a huge brush, or a squeegee, or a sea sponge. A tool that you don't have complete control over will surprise and delight you. It may drive you a bit crazy, but letting go is a big part of having fun in image making.

- **MEDIA** - Make a list of all the media that you like (movies, music, tv, books, etc.). Why do you gravitate towards certain songs, images, and genres and what types of imagery do they conjure up?
- **MATERIALS** - What feels right to you? Sometimes you work with a material or tool that feels natural the first time you use it, while others are clumsy and difficult to master. Find what feels the most “you”, whether it’s the final look of the piece or in the physical act of making it. Try everything and write about what you like and don’t like about each material. Your techniques and materials should be a collection of things you enjoy using.
- **ART** - What art do you gravitate towards the most? Who are your favorite artists? Not just the instant gratification sugary sweet ones, but the real stuff...the art that touches your soul. The art that has a soul. Look at that work. Surround yourself with that work...The art and artists who really speak to you. This type of work goes beyond the surface.
- **ENVIRONMENT** - Where you grew up, the surroundings, the places you explored as a child. What filled you with a sense of wonder and excitement? Your experiences as a child can directly relate to what types of things you like to draw and paint.
- **TRAVEL** - Nothing opens up your mind for exploration and self-reflection like travel does. Get out there. Go see the art, architecture, etc. that you’ve longed to see your whole life.
- **SKETCHBOOK** - Work from life in your sketchbook all the time. Sometimes it’s those quick decisions and simple materials that are the most “you” and the most enjoyable.
- **CREATE A “WHAT MAKES ME, ME?” LIST**

Here’s mine:

- Old photographs
- Classical music, electronic music, drone music

- Masks (especially Inuit)
  - Anything turn off the century
  - Antique furniture/lighting
  - Objects with history (patina, texture, dirt and grime)
  - Nature, the woods, trees
  - The Paranormal (ghosts, magic, cryptozoology, aliens, vampires, monsters, etc.)
  - Mummies, skeletons, graveyards, creepy stuff
  - The mysterious, the unknown
  - A sense of wonder about the world (still using my imagination)
  - Eastern philosophy
  - French turn of the century art, especially posters
  - German turn of the century illustration
  - Graphic solutions to represent realistic things
  - Printmaking
  - Old buildings/architecture
  - Manual labor, yard work, gardening
  - Winter, and how hushed and quiet it makes the world
  - The sound of church bells in the distance on a cold snowy day
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- **WHY?** - Most likely you're going down this path because art making makes you happy and it gives you fulfillment or a sense of purpose. If you're choosing this profession to be happy, finding your voice and the materials you like is important. The best case scenario is that you'll be doing this every day for the rest of your life, so you might as well be you, and enjoy the process.