**Twins With Different Art Styles**

**The McKee twins** seemed to move naturally, each into their own style of art. I asked those who knew them what they remembered about them at the time that they both worked in San Francisco at Landphere Associates. The memories from several Landphere artists reported the McKee brothers were very close and a family member said that they even built a house together, which is a very different situation where conflicts can be common.

Both Don and Ron McKee sensed as early as the 3rd grade at the John T. Hartman grade school in Kansas City, Missouri, that they wanted to make "Art" their career. Later, after graduating from Southwest High in 1949, Don and Ron attended one year at The University of Kansas City and one year at the Kansas City Art Institute and then attended the American Academy of Art in Chicago. Both twins were drafted into the U.S. Army for two years. As the Korean War ended, after completing basic training, Don and Ron spent the rest of their two-year career in the Army designing and silk screening recruiting posters for the Sixth Army at The Presidio, located near the Golden Gate Bridge.

**Ron McKee**

Photo-A

After the military service, Ron was a top graduate of Art Center College in southern California. Working as an illustrator in Detroit, San Francisco, New York and Los Angeles, Ron has provided art for Ford, GM, Chrysler, Arco, 3M, Readers Digest, Universal Studios and Mattel Toys, among others. He produced paintings for the Irvine Company for the "Newport Coast Exhibit" picturing their luxury housing development.

During the few years that Ron worked at Landphere’s, Ron had this fresh and easy style when illustrating sleek automobiles.

Show: B and C

In contrast, this brochure for the new $21 million Crocker Plaza required Ron to accurately illustrate and dramatically emphasize the 38-story structure to be completed in 1968. (I am including all of the pages of the brochure to show that this was a very large building for a skyline so different from today’s. The brochure was meant to be turned, to view the pages horizontally and vertically. (I do not have the information to credit the agency and others involved in its production.)

Show D

Here are illustrations that were presented in various annual exhibitions:

Show E,F,G and G (2Gs)

In 1970 Ron McKee moved to work in the Los Angeles area. Now his paintings are marketed directly through numerous shows and select galleries.

Show: H,I,J and K

**Don McKee**

Show photo of Don --L

After the military service, Don was hired by Max Landphere Associates (then at 215 Kearny Street) as a graphic designer. He produced ads and brochures for advertising agencies and direct clients.

Here are just some examples from 1958, all eight were presented in San Francisco’s10th Annual Art Directors Exhibition:

Show: M N O P Q R S T

By 1960 while at Landphere Associates, Don had developed a new concept in greeting cards, called "Cube Cards" as you see below.

 Show: U and V

Don, for a time, had his own graphic studio at 901 Broadway and when Max Landphere retired, Don moved back to the Landphere location (then on Gold Street) and he named it: “Artworks”. By 1973 he employed as many as 40 artists.

In his many years as a successful graphic artist Don developed an "art path" uniquely his own and he empowered others to multiply their own artistic talents.

Don also created a selection of regular greeting cards and with a move of his office and studio to San Rafael, California: he renamed his company "Joy Crafters".

 (Note, for accuracy, I have “lifted” parts of paragaphs from the biographies of Ron and Don and these two photos of the twins were the only ones that I found.)

I’ve noticed that most siblings, who are close in age, compete. As children, the rivalry can be in many areas of accomplishments as they mature. When the challenge was drawing, my sister and I made a pact. I would not draw fashion and she would not draw cartoons. There was, then, no competition.

Ann Thompson