

Jay Koka Biography
Thirty Five Years of Automotive Art Excellence
(2024, authorized for reproduction)

"Although I'm a lifelong motorhead, my interest in automotive fine art is in the context in which the automobile exists rather than the depiction of the automobile itself. The interplay of the vehicle and its environment and its human operators is to me the most worthwhile pursuit of fine art..."

A well known and internationally respected artist, Jay Koka's skillful manipulation of color and mood plus considered composition... and an occasionally impressionist style... exemplify the artist who is never satisfied with the status quo and always brings a true element of surprise to the viewer at each new exhibition.

Initially known for a highly realistic style and a technical approach to his automotive-themed art, half way through his career, Koka replaced the small and tightly rendered gouache works with very large format canvases with a notable disregard for detail and an emphasis on explorations in texture, form and color. Always creatively restless and endlessly experimenting in the style of his work, Koka today alternates between these two style extremes realism and impressionism exist side by side in Koka's body of work.

Koka's original works are collected by private and public audiences worldwide. In a career filled with accomplishment, Koka is particularly proud of his selection by the CHRYSLER Corporation for the creation of "Metamorphosis", a major 80 square foot, 4-panel work for the corporation's World Headquarters in 1996. His Studio has published a large and popular body of over 150 limited print editions which have been distributed throughout the world. His original paintings as well as an online catalog of his prints and posters are featured in two extensive websites located at jaykokastudio.com and autoartprints.com. He is particularly well known for his large and widely disseminated body of work on Ferrari, in fact, his art has been used as a Christmas card by the Ferrari Club of Italy and in 1998, his work was selected for exhibition at the "CENTARIO FERRARI", the centenary celebrations held in Modena, Italy by Ferrari. In 2002, Koka was commissioned by PIRELLI North America to prepare a series of original paintings that were presented to the winners in the Ferrari Challenge Series. Each painting depicted the race winner and was presented as the "Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli". Koka was also commissioned by Nissan to produce artwork for the 35th anniversary of the "Z".

Koka has been featured artist and poster artist for many international automotive events including the famed Pebble Beach and Meadow Brook Concours, Bloomington Gold, Concours of the Eastern United States, Reading Ferrari Concours, Eyes on Design, Concorso at Meadow Brook, ten times for the Ferrari Club of America Annual Meets and for the six years, the Cavallino Ferrari Classic of Palm Beach. A member of the Automotive Fine Arts Society, his work has been extensively reproduced and he has received numerous awards including the prestigious Peter Helck Award, multiple Athena's at Pebble Beach (most recently a sixth), the Lincoln Awards at Pebble Beach, multiple Awards of Excellence and The Stanley Wanlass Awards twice at Meadow Brook, Best of Show at Philadelphia and numerous others for his work at

major exhibitions. In 2006, Koka was selected to produce the poster art for the prestigious Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance and won not only an "Award of Excellence" at Meadow Brook but also "The Lincoln Award" at Pebble Beach. In 2007, he achieved another double-header with another "Award of Excellence" at Meadow Brook followed by another "Athena Award" at Pebble Beach. In 2012, Koka was awarded the coveted "Peter Helck Award" at the annual AFAS premiere exhibition at Pebble Beach.

In 2007, Koka was featured in a three-and-a-half month long one man show... a retrospective spanning 20 years... titled "The Art of Jay Koka" at the National Automobile Museum in Reno Nevada (USA). Later that year, most of the exhibit's paintings moved on to the Petersen Museum in Los Angeles for a 5 month. In 2008, Koka produced his seventh poster for the Ferrari Club of America's International Meet in July and was commissioned to produce the inaugural poster art for the Louisville Concours d'Elegance held at the fabled Churchill Downs. Koka was commissioned to produce the featured art for the Barrett-Jackson Auction in Scottsdale Arizona (USA) in 2009. He was also asked to produce the poster art for the second annual Louisville Concours d'Elegance.

Koka was commissioned to produce the art for the iconic Daytona 500 and Ferrari Club of America Annual Meet (New Jersey) in 2010. In 2011, Koka was commissioned to produce a huge 100x67" single canvas for the lobby of a boutique hotel in Bahrain, plus the event art for the Rolex 24 at Daytona, a 9th poster for the Ferrari Club of America Annual Meet (Savannah), the inaugural poster art for the St John's Concours d'Elegance (previously Meadow Brook Concours) and a third poster for the Louisville Concours. In 2012, Koka was been commissioned to produce his second poster art for the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. In addition, he produced the art for "One Lap of North America", the Ferrari Club of America's 50th Anniversary project.

In 2013, Koka was commissioned to produce the 50th Anniversary FCA event poster, his tenth for the Ferrari Club of America and in 2019, produced his 16th for the group. After creating the inaugural Cobble Beach Concours d'Elegance, (Ontario) in 2015, he has now produced the poster art for each subsequent event to 2019. In 2014, Koka produced the feature art for the inaugural Stan Hywet Concours d'Elegance (Akron, Ohio) where he was also awarded "Best of Show" at the invitational art exhibition. In 2015, Koka returned as featured and poster artist at the St John's Concours. (He was poster artist in 1992, 2010 and 2019.)

Koka's extensive, exotic worldwide travel has inspired a series of popular and critically acclaimed major works. Based on exotic locations, paintings like "*Old Propaganda Posters*" sited in Hanoi, Vietnam "*Seven Tuks in Bangkok*" and "*Calao*" in Lima Peru capture both the look, mood and feel of their settings with exceptional sensitivity. "*At the Darwaza Gate*" and "*Pres de Champ de Mars*" follow with scenes as varied as the Taj Mahal and Paris and even Phuket, Thailand in "*Welcome to Patong Beach*". In addition, he has produced a popular suite of works centered on iconic Paris France locations. The travel themed work is presented on the studio website in a popular section called "The Art of Travel".

A major, hardcover book was published in 2016 to mark the 30th anniversary of the Studio. Titled "**30:30**" it is an extensive profile of the artist and his work. Also in 2016, Koka returned for a second "Eyes On Design" poster. He was awarded another "Athena Award of Excellence" for his body of work at the AFAS Premiere Show at

Pebble Beach.

Koka's unique style was commissioned to create the event and poster art for NAIAS 2017, more commonly known as "The Detroit Auto Show". And he returned to Ferrari for the event and poster art for the Ferrari Club of America's 2017 meet at Daytona, the 2018 event at Watkins Glen and 2019 in Scottsdale, AZ.

In 2018 he became a member of the "ArtistAuto" group in Europe and participates in their annual exhibit at the Retromobile show in Paris, France. A 30 year member of the Automotive Fine Arts Society, he served for many years on the board and as Sec/Treasurer. Two major works were produced for the 2018 and 2019 Canadian International AutoShow events, Canada's largest annual automotive event.

The sold out first edition of 30:30 was expanded to cover 35 years and reprinted in a 2nd Edition, released in the fall of 2021. 2022 will see the return of many events after a lengthy pause imposed by the COVID outbreak. For example, Koka's 15th poster for the Ferrari Club of America and his Cobble Beach Concours work will feature a major painting presenting all 7 annual Best of Show winners.

Following a lifelong interest in wooden boats, the studio launched a new section in 2022 featuring Marine Themed Art.

Koka enjoyed a successful corporate career in marketing prior to the formation of his Studio in 1985. He is a computer "geek" and an internet "pioneer" being one of the first artists to fully embrace the concept of a virtual gallery. Koka is also an avid superbike rider...his last ride a Ducati 999... and a lifelong automotive enthusiast with recent drives including a Porsche 987 Cayman S and a Mercedes-Benz CLS63 AMG. He has two sons, Michael, a graduate in art and design and James, a telecommunications director who is also his partner in WEBVUES, a successful web development company. He also publishes the online art magazine *autoartreview.com* | *autoartgallery.com* | *afasJournal.com* through his publishing company Knightbridge. Koka has his home and Studio in Kitchener (near Toronto) with his wife Catherine.

Jay Koka accepts a small number of private and corporate commissions for original art each year. Jay Koka Studio **EDITIONS** are published and distributed by Headlight Productions Inc and Knightbridge Publishing Incorporated which is an affiliated company.

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