I t is difficult to say when it really began because it pro-
bably began before he could speak, before anyone knew
the thoughts, the pictures that were appearing in the
brilliant and creative mind of David Kaiser. He did the
proverbial boy things in his youth—he built forts and raced
soap box derby cars—but he also wrote, drew, painted, and
sculpted works that received national recognition. He was
fascinated with his ability to make lines come to life as if he
was some sort of magician. His gift for creating pictures
became glaringly obvious when he won a scholarship to the
Disney School of Animation when he was just ten years old.
At 11 he was accepted to the Bosco Technological Institute
for Advanced Learning and at 17 he became the youngest
person ever to be accepted into the Art Center College
of Design in Hollywood. His future
in pictures was cast not so much by
choice, but by the opportunities that
showered him.

Today David Kaiser has his
own company in North Hollywood.
Kaiser Creative is an entertainment
advertising dynasty with over
2000 entertainment titles, over
250 awards, seven pieces in
the permanent collection of the
Library of Congress, and a client list
that includes Disney, Warner Bros.,
Universal, Lions Gate, Blockbuster, Havas Interactive, and
RHR International. More recently Kaiser has branched out into
other mediums, keeping his company fluid to meet the changes
in the entertainment world. But as he continues to move
forward in a technological world he also steps backwards—to
relish creating art with his hands.

He has traveled full circle, back to the joy he felt as
a small boy when he made dark lines on a clean white piece
of paper.

Last year his exhibit “Images of the Old West” was a
sell-out show. The compelling line drawings of cowboys and
Indians were an exquisite expression and representation of his
life in Montana when he was a teen.

Now he is creating larger paintings that allow him the
big gesture that reflects the intensity of
the man. He compares them to the movie
posters that he created because they both
rely on the ability to tell the story in a
single page. Just as he aspired to convey
the movie’s story in a poster, his goal
is to capture the story of his subject
in a 40” x 60” painting. Kaiser says,
“There is as much story in the line of
the painting as a script in a movie.”

The theme continues to be
western, allowing him to return to a
brief but indelible time in his life when

The man behind the movies.
he moved to Montana with his father to start a ranch. Life in this mountainous, four-season place appealed to the sensitive and eager youth because he could turn up the volume of his feelings and his senses to take in the beauty, the rawness, and purity of life there.

Perhaps his amplified senses contributed to his future success, allowing him to see and experience things with an open mind and spirit. When he returned to Los Angeles in the 1960s, his gift at illustration and his innovative and bold thinking propelled him into the dynamic and competitive entertainment world where he went to work for the Charles Martin Agency as an illustrator.

His rapid success was not typical during a period that was marked by gas strikes, oil embargos, and high unemployment. He began when the industry was still more sensory and hands-on. Movie posters and advertisements were created with pencil, pen, oils, and pastels and the most employable could do everything—illustrate, design, and write copy. They created thousands of sketches embodying a concept that often was distilled to one image that would bring a film to life. The single image of the movie poster had to tell the story and captivate the viewer. Kaiser says, “We had to reinvent over and over again…that meant being imaginative and innovative.”

In the 1970s the industry began a dramatic evolution with exploding technology and the changing appetite of the public. While many of his cohorts sat with their heads buried in the sand, Kaiser looked out at the building surf, jumped on the board of opportunity and rode the wave.

He ate up the technology and utilized it to elevate his work to new heights. Some of his ideas were break-through—such as the “Canne-Cans,” a preannoucement for a group of films, which took the form of a film reel can containing brochures, pop-ups and sound chips.

Kaiser Creative has produced more than 2000 Key Art campaigns.
The birth of videos expanded the home entertainment industry and gave the movie and television audience the option of viewing entertainment when and where they wanted. Kaiser helped pioneer the new market of packaging movie and television series videos that were offered to rent or own. Advertising campaigns were created for the movie and the subsequent video release. Kaiser notes, “It extended studio revenues by 10-fold.”

His clever and fresh approach won him an account with CBS and the platform for Kaiser Creative. The company he launched in a guest studio grew to a 10,500 square foot building and a 45-member staff. While competing companies handled 200 campaigns Kaiser Creative handled 2,000 key art campaigns. They included hit movies such as “Out of Africa,” “Jaws II,” and A.I., Steven Spielberg’s “Artificial Intelligence.” Jaws II catch phrase “One Bite Deserves Another” was just one example of Kaiser’s command of the language as well of the image.

In response to the advent of the video and home entertainment and the resulting sagging theater attendance, new technology of surround sound and higher optical screens created a unique viewing experience to entice movie-goers back to theaters. Kaiser said this presented an opportunity to invent and innovate. He met the challenge with exciting campaigns that created a buzz for the movie. His spectacular openings in large theaters for major motion pictures included giant ghost-buster blimps floating over the city for the “Ghostbusters” premier and the dressing of The Cinerama Dome with cut-outs of the stars and a beach scene for “Blue Lagoon.”

He continues to parallel the rapidly changing world of advertising and entertainment. His recent endeavors include webisodes, branding, and infomercials. He also directed the development of a new media division, a new home entertainment label, and a licensing arm.

He experienced the thrill and excitement of riding the front of the wave in his industry for three decades. He does not discredit this great time or the resulting success, but something inside of him said, “Time for a quiet walk on the beach.”

Now he makes a point of getting out of the hubbub he has created for a quiet journey back. It is time to harvest what he has planted and what he has grown.

He is traveling back to a time when he used his hand to create the pictures, relishing each stroke, each gesture that brought the image—and his soul—to life.