

On the corner of 200 South and 300 East in Salt Lake City, Utah is Peter Prier & Sons Violin shop. Peter Prier opened the shop in 1965. At that time the outer wall of the building facing 300 East was painted with a Coco Cola sign. In 1984 Peter commissioned a Utah born artist by the name of Blaine DeMille to draw a sketch for him; Peter wanted a possible mural painted over the Coco Cola sign. The sketch DeMille came up with was of legendary violin maker Antonio Stradivari and his apprentice making violins. Peter, a native born German, thought the sketch was perfect because he has a deep love of Italian instrument and Italian music.

DeMille applied stucco to the wall and painted an elderly Stradivari with white hair as the central figure, on his left is a figure who looks northern European rather than Italian, perhaps it is meant to be Peter working beside him. The clothing and head piece DeMille painted on Stradivari is very similar to the attire he is often seen wearing in other paintings of him, in particular *Antonio Stradivari, by Edgar Bundy in 1893*. Stradivari is in a white billowing under shirt with lots of pleats and ruffles at the neck line, and has a sort of kerchief tied on his head. It is possible that DeMille borrowed from Bundys romanticized version of Stradivari to create his own post modern version.

Some other similarity between the two pieces is the apprentice's position; in both paintings he is on Stradivari left and is in similar looking clothing in the two pictures, a dress shirt and vest. Both show violins in the making hanging on the wall in the back ground but DeMille shows other string instruments as well and the work table is covered with tools. However, Bundy's apprentice as dark hair and his face is in shadow, while DeMille gave the

apprentice blond hair, a thick beard and he is wearing a European looking hat, which is why I think it may have been meant to be Peter.

DeMille painted to Stradivari's right an empty chair that is angled out towards the side walk and it seems to invite the viewer to come take a seat and learn how to make violins also Stradivari gaze is directed out toward the side walk which adds to this feeling of a master encouraging the viewer to participate in the craft. While the apprentice is deep in concentration both men look very wise and serious.

The title DeMille gave the mural is *Olde Masters*. The overall color theme is warm and golden; the mural is painted around the building windows. He painted light hitting the window panes which open out toward the street or inside the room of the painting. The window on the right has vertical bars but still look like stain glass and the left window has a design like sun rays. When the sun is shining on the wall it feels like the room is lit by its own lighting, the walls are stone and the floor is wooden.

In 1998 DeMille restored the painting he adding detail to the floor which made it look like wood boards whereas before the added lines details the floor had the appearance of dirt. He also added a third figure in the far right corner making bows. The bow maker almost seems to be in his own room even though he is very much a part of the scene; he also looks slightly more modern. He has full apron rather than the lap apron as on the two earlier figures and his shoes and leggings are slightly different. The bow maker is smaller to make it look like he is in the background; the artist is using diminution and atmospheric perspective. When viewed up close the wood shavings have no outline they are different colors of paint applied next to each other. I

have seen this technique used with leaves. The hardest lines are the vertical and horizontal lines in the table and chairs, while the shadows under the table are soft.

The overall feeling of the mural is very warm and inviting, for many the building is a Salt Lake City landmark. When the mural was finished in 1984 the city council honored Peter Prier and Blaine DeMille with compliments about how they felt the mural was one of the most esthetically beautiful images in the down town area.

While reflecting on the mural I gained a greater appreciation for how influential art can be. The mural brings together German Italian and American culture with a warm invitation to come together and enjoy the beauty of instrument making, music and art. I have many questions about the layout of the painting and also of whom the other two figures other than Stradivari are really meant to be.

I feel the greatest benefit for me in understanding art and its history is the added confidence it gives me when viewing and talking about art. This assignment and my experience in this art history class has been an absolute delight. While in the course I discovered I am in love with the way art can be an expression of self, culture, politics, and awe inspiring beauty. Art can mean and be seen as anything the viewer and or artist can imagine, the choices and possibilities are infinite.