

# Trotter: ‘My biggest influence was my grandmother’

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deck, featuring Portland, became a hit at the Portland Saturday Market.

He tried another set — a collection to celebrate Astoria’s bicentennial. That, too, was welcomed, and he’d found his niche.

“By my second year of selling cards, I had enough money to fund a trip to Paris,” said Trotter. “It was a combination visiting my French grandmother, long lost cousins, touring and sketching. The following year I pursued more long lost cousins in Stockholm and Russia, and from then on I knew I could work on my bucket list and visit all the places I wanted to go.”

Trotter’s colorful decks not only highlight famous cities, but also serve as miniature maps of the Oregon and Washington beer trails, Oregon wineries and secrets of Seattle. Trotter draws any place or subject that catches his interest.

“I’ve always wanted to be an artist,” said Trotter. “My biggest influence was my grandmother in Delaware. I was born back east and we moved west when I was small, but we went back to visit her farm there every summer. Grandmother was a potter and I was fascinated with the clay masks she’d made representing different people from all over the world. I yearned to go to those far away places and meet different people. She inspired and encouraged me to keep up with my art.”

Trotter has dedicated each deck to his grandmother. He sketches in ballpoint pen, composing quick impressions of locations while making detailed notes of colors, place names and any historical or interesting fact on the reverse side for indexing. The process generally takes about an hour.

Back in his studio, he embellishes the original sketches with ink,

cross-hatching and watercolor pencils. From there, he scans the sketches into a computer drawing tablet and can work with a stylus to digitally correct anything he needs for final edits before sending the set to his graphic designer.

Trotter is happy to be traveling again, recounting that the pandemic was “really hard.”

“Traveling and drawing

are what I love to do and I was rather at a loss,” he said. “I tried selling cards online or on Instagram and websites, but it was really challenging. I didn’t connect with my invisible audience. Setting up my booth at local markets and talking to people is what inspires me. I was limited to where I could go and I didn’t have any idea what subject or location I might do next.”

He was once again in his element this spring and summer, manning a booth at artisan markets in Portland and Astoria.

Newly motivated and ready to explore more, Trotter’s newest deck featuring the Long Beach Peninsula is now available. His cards can be found in Astoria at Hotel Elliott and RiverSea Gallery, or on his website, [illustratedplayingcards.com](http://illustratedplayingcards.com)

**RIGHT:** Trotter sketches his illustrations based on real scenes along the North Coast. **BELOW:** Trotter’s Astoria playing card deck was inspired by the popular scenes downtown and on the Columbia River.

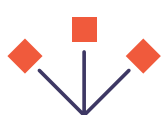


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