

Web Sounds

Kathy Canfield Combines Her Passions in Creating An Internet Design Studio Catering to Musicians

By Wendy Mbekelu
Special to New York Resident

Kathy Canfield's life is a tale of the fine-tuning of two creatively different skills. A classically trained French horn player, Canfield is also a Web designer, operating out of her home office in Chelsea.

"My idea was to help my fellow musicians promote themselves; there was a real need for that," Canfield said.

Deciding to widen her options, Canfield enrolled at the Pratt Institute in 1993 to earn a certificate program in Web design, html, and PhotoShop.

After working for Tumble Interactive and Pegasus Internet, both small concerns that specialized in nonprofit organizations, she was turned off by the idea of being part of a huge firm. When Pegasus merged with a larger company, she branched out on her own.

"I specialize in a very individualized creative approach to design," Canfield said.

This means when you desire a Web site designed by Canfield Design Studios, you get Kathy Canfield herself.

The instinct that made her create a niche for musicians requiring Web sites and providing them intimate attention has paid off. She has designed sites both large — for the New York Society for Ethical Culture, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and operainfo.org — and small (primarily for individual musicians).

On average, Canfield has between 5 and 10 clients in development, with 40 in maintenance mode. She gets most of her clients through word of mouth and from exhibiting at such shows as the annual Chamber Music America arts conference.

"The arts community is small and close knit. People will recommend you," she explained. "[Because] I am a musician and in the business already, that is attractive to my clients."

At the first meeting with a client, Canfield takes about half an hour to go through the whole design process, seeking to match the right design for the right person.

"A lot I get from just talking to them. My musicians will bring in a CD and I will listen to their music and I will get what I want from that. It depends on the individual client," she said.

Small individual sites with five pages or so take three to six weeks for Canfield to complete; prices start at \$1,500. Intense integrated sites that require in-depth programming can

cost up to \$100,000 and can take three months or more to design.

Balancing the running of her Web design company with playing the French horn stimulates Canfield.

"From week to week, my schedule changes a lot," said Canfield, who has performed in the orchestra for *Les Misérables* and the Metropolitan Opera as well as with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, the New York Pops, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's.

"I am not locked into only one thing; my mind is always working on this other stuff. It's a relief to go from a hectic day to going to a show and doing that for three hours," she said.

Before delving with the Web design,



Kaleidoscopic Canfield: Woman of many talents

Canfield confesses she had been in a rut with her music and had even thought of giving it up.

"When I started doing Web design, I realized I loved playing the horn. I do all these things and I do it very well, and I'm very organized. It is all integrated; one always influences the other," she said.

Canfield also paints watercolors, which are available at canfieldwatercolors.com. Another of her passions is avidly collecting kaleidoscopes. She shops for them at Nellie Bly in Arizona and, up until recently, at the Enchanted Forest toy store in SoHo, which closed in May.

All these creative pursuits and outlets keep Canfield from being stagnant or bored.

"I'm intrigued with creativity and how it manifests itself, and that is something I would like to explore as far as publishing," she said, "but that would be down the road." ■

Canfield Design Studios is located at 410 W. 24th St. (212-243-5295, canfielddesignstudios.com). E-mail responses to editor in chief Mark Rifkin at markr@resident.com.