AKISD Journal Star pistar.com

IN TOUCH:

ASSISTANT MANAGING **EDITOR SALLY MCKEE 686-3157** smckee@pjstar.com ARTS REPORTER GARY PANETTA 686-3132 gpanetta @pjstar.com







FAR LEFT: Metal figures stand guard in the yard of Lori Daniels and Stephen White. LEFT: Not only is the Victorian farmhouse near Mapleton crammed with art, it is also home to a posse of dogs. This artwork by Daniels hangs in a themed room.

ILIVEITE BREATHEIT

Creating art isn't a job for Mapleton's Lori Daniels. It's her vocation



ome artists create their work in studios. Lori Daniels has a compound. The Mapleton artist known nationally for works

made out of salvaged tin ceilings from the late 1800s — lives in the country with Stephen White, her partner in business and life. Their Victo-

rian farmhouse is filled with art supplies, antiques from their decades spent as dealers, and a posse of dogs who scramble to sniff newcomers.

Some visitors may be overwhelmed by the clutter and the chaos. But to Daniels, a prolific artist, it serves as inspiration. Daniels says she creates art every day. She can't wait to get up in the morning and get at it.

It's not a job, it's a vocation — like taking the vow of a nun or a priest," she says. "I live it and breathe it every day."

Distracted by nature

Daniels, now in her 50s, was artistic from an early age. Growing up in Wisconsin, she used to get reprimanded for staring out classroom windows, admiring trees and leaves.

'I used to walk home and be fascinated by leaves on the ground and the moldy print they'd make on the sidewalk," said Daniels, who once got in trouble for eating crayons because she wanted to find out what color tasted like.

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ABOVE: Artist Lori Daniels lives outside of Mapleton on sprawling farmhouse with partner Stephen White. Several buildings, including this old barn, are jammed full of salvaged tin that will be used in future artwork.

She first attended the University of Wisconsin, studying art (and later studied sculpture at Bradley University). At age 32, she found herself married to a business executive and living in a gated community northwest of Rockford.

"I loved him deeply, but there was something in me that said there was so much more (to life)," she said. She left to pursue a career in antiques. She eventually met White, a folk art dealer, who was inhabiting the 1870 Victorian home after a divorce.

'I was living the low life before she came along," said White, a Princeton native who is happy to show visitors the barns and corn cribs on the seven-acre property, where tin gets recycled into treasure.

'Every piece speaks to me'

Daniels says an artist, no matter the medium, should work

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VIDEO REPORT: To see a video of Lori Daniels and Stephen White at their home in Mapleton, visit www.pjstar.com.

every day. She paints every morning -either outdoors in the backyard when the weather

is mild, or in her kitchen during the winter months, when a massive island becomes crowded with paint cans, dishes of beads, pieces of glass. Sometimes art supplies get mixed up with kitchen supplies; she once inadvertently poured urpentine on a stack of pancakes.

No two pieces of her rt are alike. The tin is alvaged from old buildngs around the country sometimes by White but ften by a crew, since it is dirty and dangerous job. 'hen White power washes oal residue from the tin, nen cuts the pieces. They ssemble them, and Daniels rimes and scrapes the tin. nen coats it many times ith a patented glaze that ves the tin a look similar pottery. The appearance pends on the tin pattern, hat paint colors she dedes to mix that day, what mperature it is when the aze is applied.

"Every piece speaks to e and tells me what to do th it," she said. While the pair has tin ockpiled in buildings, e material is running t. There was only so ich of it created in the e 19th century, before Industrial Revolution ought other materials o fashion.

246584 141523 1 163640 137636 40801 742 74 610 1066 142 131-431 143-637 30-800 221-024 8A1-1 251-829 178-738 162 254 287-091 1471 332 276 600 . 29 651 215 531 837 949 812 106 1 38 695 742 898 381 1849 309 808 670 80 297 18 23067 11 17 1448 931 1020 845 1/ 256 204 23 TN 45 T13 43 TE 17 4286 etlass 5c ABOVE: Stephen White stands in a garage full of antique license plates, which are often cut and painted as they're transformed into art by Lori Daniels. BELOW: Daniels applies clear enamel to a square of tin art to protect the underlying paint and glazes.

ADAM GERIK/JOURNAL STAR



Daniels has started transitioning into other styles. She creates automobile-themed collages, blinker lights, reflectors and springs. She also creates abstract collages out of hand-painted wooden

incorporating old license plates, keys, gas can caps,

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blocks and incorporates beads, antique pens, aluminum coffee cans and glass. She makes heart-themed works around Valentine's Day, her favorite holiday.

'This is my paradise'

Daniels surrounds herself with the work of other artists she admires: local ceramicist Jacob Grant; Iowa painter Louis Picek; metal sculptor Lincoln Smithy. The pieces have a home next to beloved antiques - an undated totem pole, antique bottles, beautifully worn furniture.

All these possessions inspire Daniels. But as time goes by, she takes more and more inspiration from nature: a leaf that skitters by in the wind, birds flapping to get their seeds at the feeder, richly textured bark salvaged from an old tree.

'I used to want everything in the world," she

WEB

To find where to purchase Daniels' art locally, visit http://antiquetine xpressions.net.

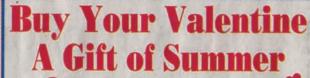
said. "I'd collect furs, vintage jewelry, cars. But as I've aged, the most special and important thing in life is my relationship with

nature and God. Being at the farm is where I relate most to those. This is my paradise.'

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