



Professional drywall Peter Levijoki made a whole new career turning drywall compound into art on walls and ceilings.



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By Dee Goerge, Contributing Editor

“Wall Sculptor” Turns Drywall Into Art

Professional drywall Peter Levijoki also likes to draw and carve. So, when a homeowner he was working for asked for something artistic on one wall, he came up with his first “wall sculpture”.

That was way back in 1984 and marked the beginning of a whole new career turning drywall compound into art on walls and ceilings. Levijoki's pieces cover the gamut of nature scenes and he'll do custom scenes like a musher and his sled dog team, a little girl with her horse, or a custom farm scene.

The wall sculptures look like they were pushed out from the other side of the wall.

“I do a lot of vaulted walls and ceilings where pictures don't look good,” Levijoki

says. “Some homes have walls made just for my sculptures.”

He mixes ordinary drywall compounds to get the right consistency that won't crack. Most sculptures are only raised about an inch, but he can go up to 2 in. thick. Levijoki sculpts with knives, paint brushes and whisk brooms to get the design and texture he wants. He outlines and makes fine details with a cake decorator bag.

The sculptures are painted the same color as the wall. Lights can help bring them to life.

Levijoki recalls a request to make a zebra and wondered how he could make it so it didn't look like a horse. He contoured lines for the stripes, and a light cast shadows that

made it look black and white.

Another client requested an oak tree wrapped around an archway with birds in the limbs. To the customer's delight, Levijoki hid extra birds, squirrels and even a frog for her to find among the leaves and branches.

Besides covering big sections of wall, he often does smaller accent pieces such as ivy winding around a pantry. He also makes panels that can be hung on a wall like a painting.

Levijoki's favorite thing to do is make wall sculptures that tie into his personalized ceiling stamps. He's patented 36 designs to make each room unique – everything from cedar branches and dainty flowers to island

palms and old-fashioned tin press designs.

He charges \$1/sq. ft. for his ceiling prints and is working on franchising the stamps.

Wall sculptures are priced on an individual basis, and Levijoki is willing to travel. He notes that he doesn't do portraits or copyrighted designs. He works with clients' designs, or he has more than 200 drawings to choose from.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Peter Levijoki, Texture Art, 19772 295th Ave., Detroit Lakes, Minn. 56501 (ph 605 880-8833; www.texture-art.com).

Bib Overall Fashion Show A Big Hit In South Dakota

Trygve Trooien's fashion shows may not make it to New York, but they sure are popular around Astoria, S. Dak. When his girls hit the runway at senior centers, banquets, threshing bees and town celebrations, they have a similar – yet different look. All are wearing bib overalls from Trooien's one-of-a-kind collection.

As a packrat with plenty of room in his 18-room farm house, Trooien didn't even realize he had a unique collection until about 12 years ago. He had saved overalls his mother had patched as well as brands he had tried to see if they were better than his favorite brand, which is Lee. A friend suggested he put on a fashion show, and the 1,000-acre rancher who raises beef cattle and milks 30 purebred Holsteins added fashion shows to his resume.

He has taken the show on the road as far as Atwater, Minn., and Oacoma and Brandon, S. Dak. – often pairing up with Used Cotton, a country/bluegrass band out of Brookings.

“We maintain a ‘have fun’ atmosphere throughout the show, which takes about 1 1/2 hours,” Trooien says. It takes that long to show 80 different overalls (42 brands, including some of Trooien's “gently worn” overalls), modeled by two of Trooien's models and 15 local high school and college age girls. Trooien provides the loudspeaker system, background music and the commentary, including information off the tags he has saved from the overalls when they were new. For example, Finck's claimed that their overalls “wear like a pig's nose”. An Australian brand, King Gee, sports a crown logo.

For non-profit groups, Trooien charges \$350 plus \$1/mile/one way.

At 60, the Norwegian bachelor continues to add to his 200-piece collection. Nowadays he only buys overalls that are made in the U.S.,



When the girls hit the runway at Trygve Trooien's fashion shows, they're wearing bib overalls from his one-of-a-kind collection.

but there are very few of those companies left.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Trygve Trooien, Oak Lake Farms, 19775 484th Ave., Astoria, S. Dak., 57213 (ph 605 832-4401).



It takes about 1 1/2 hours to put on a fashion show, with up to 80 different overalls modeled.

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