

Tools, Parts Used To Make Great Art

Even though he worked at a “regular” job for 34 years, Keith Dorn found that his real joy in life came when he created metal artwork that made people smile and laugh. “I always loved Halloween and through my job, I learned how to use a plasma cutter,” Dorn says. “I started cutting up 20-lb. LP tanks to make jack-o-lantern faces and the next thing I knew, people asked if I could make this or that out of all types of scrap. My employer allowed me to go part-time for 2 years and work on my art the rest of the time. Before I knew it, the flood gates opened.”

Dorn is now 7 years into his new career and has thousands of followers on Facebook with customers all over the U.S. and even in Japan. He still builds out his own ideas, but a lot of his metal art is commissioned, often for memorials.

Some of his artwork focuses on insects, animals, flowers and clever wall sculptures. “There are tons of mosquitoes in Minnesota, so I’ve made super-size bugs that are 8 in. tall and nearly a foot long,” Dorn says. “The stingers are coil tines from old field cultivators, and I use bent rebar for legs and a small LP canister for the main body. They look like something from a monster movie, and people love them.”

He gets scrap material from friends or neighbors and at rummage or yard sales. His designs use worn brake rotors, bent springs, rusty clamps, busted gears, old brackets, drain grates, nails, bolts, and just about anything else that’s tossed in a junk pile. One of his characters is an always-friendly metal animal that continually nods its battery box head that’s welded to a 12-in. long coil spring neck. Its body is an old gas can and legs are crafted from angle iron. The friendly animal stands tall on a 14-in. dia. metal disk blade.

His roller chain worms with eye-hook antennae and long wire arms hold a small blue angle iron book. Over-sized dogs have large metal heads made of oil cans and “real life” floppy ears made from metal golf clubs. Other objects use metal paddles from manure spreaders, old gas tanks, saw blades, frying pans, and miscellaneous springs.

His wife Sandy helps manage the half dozen shows they attend. Their booth sign says “Crap From Scrap”.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup,



Dorn creates unique and fun metal art.



A goat, cat and dog made from junk metal are popular items that Dorn has made. No two of his designs are alike.

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FARM SHOW®



“Bug On A Bin” Turns Heads

Adam Ehlers has simple directions for anyone coming to his farm. He tells them to turn in at the farm with the VW Beetle on the bin.

“I live just off of Interstate 90 and would tell truckers and others to look for the bins by Exit 225. The only way the bins could be any closer to the exit is if they were on top of the interstate,” says Ehlers. “Then I’d watch them drive by and down the road to the next place. That’s no longer a problem since I hung the Beetle on the bin.”

The idea of displaying the car came to him gradually. Ehlers always looked forward to driving by the giant bull head and hammer at Porter’s Sculpture Park, Exit 374 (Vol. 31, No. 5).

“I’m not an artist, but I thought I could hang a VW Bug on a bin as a similar attention-getter,” says Ehlers.

His first thought was to cut the Bug in half and mount one half to the south side of the bin and one to the north. When he realized that would require additional reinforcement, he altered his plan.

“I removed the engine and transmission to make it as light as possible and had a friend help with his telehandler,” recalls Ehlers. “I attached two chains to the top wind ring on the bin. We lifted the car up with a third chain and hung it on the bin with all three.”

The Bug has stayed in place, although 60



Photo courtesy of Greg Hutcheson

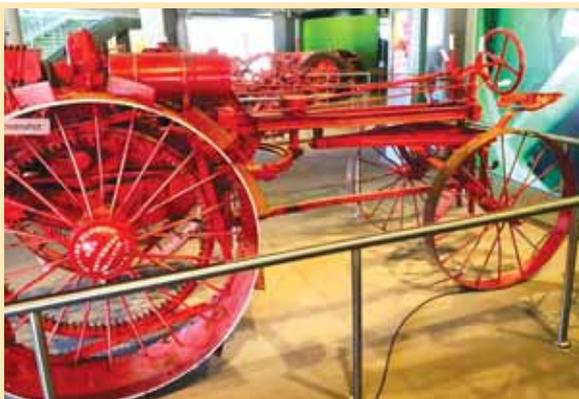
Ehlers hung a VW Beetle from his grain bin using chains attached to the wind ring.

to 79 mph winds did open the front hood. Ehlers decided to leave it that way.

“Maybe the wind will shut it sometime,” he says.

When meeting people away from the farm, he introduces himself by saying, “My place is the one with the Bug on the bin.”

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Collection includes the Moline Universal Model C. Built from 1917 to 1923, it featured an electric starter, lockable axle, and standard headlamp.

Parking Ramp Tractor Display

The parking ramp at Jack’s Urban Meeting Place (J.U.M.P.) in Boise, Idaho, has to be the world’s most unique tractor museum. Drive or walk through the floors of the ramp and you’ll see unique and very rare tractors behind display windows or fences. The ramp houses only part of J.R. Simplot’s farm equipment collection, much of which was purchased from the Oscar Cooke collection several years ago. Other tractors, steam engines, and equipment are

on display in and around the multi-purpose 57,000-sq. ft. building and grounds.

“J.R. bought around 110 tractors, steam engines, and stationary engines, more than 200 pieces altogether, at the Cooke sale and we have 51 of them on display at J.U.M.P.,” says Rob Bearden, J.U.M.P. “Three of them sold for more than \$100,000 each.”

Simplot had planned to build a \$100 million farm equipment museum in Boise but died before he could do it. The Simplot family

foundation worked with the city to create J.U.M.P. It integrates the collection with multiple maker and doer studios, meeting spaces, and an urban park. The building is designed around the parking ramp at its center, with a 5-story slide for those young-at-heart and eager to get to lower floors.

The collection includes the Moline Universal Model C. Built from 1917 to 1923, it featured an electric starter, lockable axle, and standard headlamp. It had a variety of rear attachments but was designed to pull horse-drawn equipment. Other unique tractors include Kerosene Annie, the first edition internal-combustion tractor built by Rumely in 1909. A fully restored four to six-horse 1920 Dowden potato digger, antique sleighs, hearses, stationary engines, and more round out the collection and exhibits.

“We have a Port Huron 32-100 traction steam engine, one of only three remaining,” says Bearden. “Our 1910 Olmstead 15-50 is one of a kind with its oscillating, articulating, and fully sprung design. Our Avery Track Runner is one of only two in the world.”

One of the most unique tractors in the collection is the original Ford Tractor Company tractor. Set up by a speculator to take advantage of Henry Ford’s reputation before he introduced a tractor, it forced him to call his the Fordson. Only 30 of the seriously



Tractors are on display throughout the parking ramp.

flawed machines were sold. The company folded, but the experience of one frustrated customer led to the establishment of the Nebraska Farm Tractor Tests.

Bearden reports that about 80 percent of the tractors in the collection turn over. That includes around 60 tractors off-site. Those that turn over have been lubed and worked with. Around eight that needed work have been fully restored with more to go.

Images of the tractors on display, as well as background information on the tractor and company, can be found on the J.U.M.P. website.

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