

Contact

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Commissions

Commissions of historic and structures upon request.

Artist Statement

In the summer of 2013, I started making a series of architectural models using found and recycled objects. The basic "building block" for all these constructions is a sturdy 3-liter Block Red wine container that captured my imagination because of its proportions and solidness. Other materials frequently used for my structures are cardboard, paper, popsicle sticks, stir sticks, papier mache, gesso and paint.

Since I was in Chapel Hill when the idea to build these models first struck, the original constructions were inspired by vernacular architecture in Piedmont North Carolina and Virginia. Tobacco barns, an outhouse, a slave cabin/kitchen, a country store, a slave master's house and an antebellum cabin were my earliest constructions. Inspirations in Washington include the original Adas Israel Synagogue (present day Jewish Historical Society) and the Renwick Chapel at the Oak Hill Cemetery in Georgetown. Several projects were commissioned by the collector William Louis-Dreyfus, including a residence in Westchester, New York, and the "Cozy Cottage" where the artist James Castle worked in Boise, Idaho.

It is true that I sometimes make fantasy architectural constructions, but most often the constructions are based on real buildings. As a preservationist and historian, I have become increasingly drawn to dilapidated treasures that I "preserve" and hope to draw attention to by rendering them in their actual state. The Catsburg Country Store is an example of an abandoned structure with an uncertain future.

Stephen Costello

After many years in the bookselling and publishing business in New York and Washington, Costello has pursued his interest in architecture and architectural history as a freelance artist and writer. Other artistic endeavors have included specialty painting projects (faux finishes/murals), retail exhibition design and research and illustration of commemorative maps. A graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, he currently divides his time between Washington and North Carolina.

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