

Handmade

Artist draws inspiration from life

Detroit artist Carl Wilson used to spend his breaks at Ford's Dearborn Stamping Plant, where he built doors for the F-150, writing poetry and drawing cartoons on scrap paper.

Then one day, at the "tender age of 50" when he sold his first painting, he got serious about his visual art work, and instead of constructing doors for pickups, he began building a career as an acrylic painter,

illustrator and relief printmaker.

"I had taken a buyout from Ford and needed something to fill my days," he recalls, "so I started painting. Acrylic was a good, inexpensive way to start.

"Some people would say I'm self-taught, but I don't believe anyone (artist) is self-taught," he adds. "My primary art education was received at Cass Tech. I skipped the secondary part. All artists learn from the work of others, from the classics hanging in museums and galleries (and) from masterpieces on the printed pages of



JOCELYNN BROWN

books."

He sharpened his skills as a printmaker about five years ago thanks to supportive words from a local gallery owner, which led him to books, the Internet and conversations with printmakers at art fairs as forms of research.

"Judy Sledge, the owner of ArtRages Gallery in Detroit, saw my first print efforts. She loved them and encouraged me to continue," he states. "(She) has been kind enough to treat me as a resident artist at ArtRages. I always have something hanging there."

He draws his inspiration from things in life, including music, beauty, pain and injustice. But his "number one source of inspiration" is his wife. "She is truly beautiful and my muse," he says.

His work is also sold at Sherwood Forest Art Gallery in Detroit and through his website, www.carlscoota.com. Prices range from "very inexpensive to a few thousand dollars." He'll have a solo showing at the Detroit Repertory Theater in January 2013.

Detroit News staffer Jocelynn Brown is a longtime Metro Detroit crafter. For more craft news and giveaways visit her blog at detroitnews.com/crafts.

Black and White Relief Printmaking

Level: Beginner

Estimated time: 1-3 hours, depending on design details

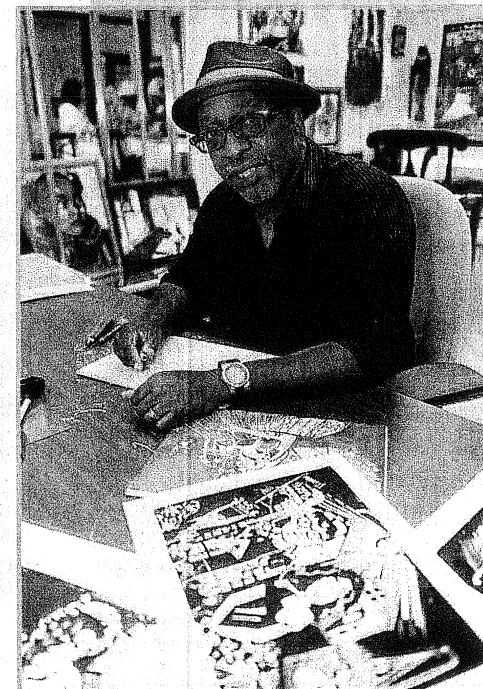
Tools: Linoleum cutters with handle; ink brayer/roller, large plate, wooden spoon, toothbrush

Supplies: light-weight white paper, soft lead pencil, water-soluble black printing ink, soft carving material – linoleum, foam or EZ Cut (best for beginners)

Instructions

1. Use pencil to sketch simple design on paper.
2. Place design face down on carving material. Use spoon to rub all over design, transferring sketch to carving material. (**Note:** Design will appear reversed, but will look like the sketch when printed.)
3. Use linoleum tools to cut material. (**Warning:** Keep hands away from blades while carving.) All carved away material will appear as white space; what remains will be black. Vary length/thickness of knife strokes to create texture. Use toothbrush to remove carved away material.
4. Once finished carving, put ink on plate and ink roller. (Practice to judge amount of ink to use.) Evenly roll ink on surface of carving material. Carefully place print paper on inked material.
5. Rub entire paper surface with back of spoon.

Contact: Carl Wilson at carl@carlscoota.com or visit his website at www.carlscoota.com.



Clarence Tabb Jr. / The Detroit News

6. Carefully remove paper. Let ink dry about an hour. (**Note:** Excess ink build-up with EZ Cut can be washed off with soap and water. Once dry, you're ready to print again. After you've made a few prints experiment with different carving materials, papers inks and added colors.)