

Joshua Sines

Reclaimed Metal Artist

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Above: Josh rummages through his discarded parts collection for salvageable odds and ends for one of his creations.

Facing page: Josh Sines and one of his "Tin Men" made entirely of used car parts, with the exception of the saxophone.

Inset below: A replica of "The Thinker," one of Josh's creations, made from a timing chain and a piece of tail pipe.

When Joshua Sines is not managing My-O-Tire, the family automotive shop in Oakland, Maryland, he might be found constructing sculptures out of scrap metal.

Sines picked up the rudiments of welding and brazing from technicians in the garage and by teaching himself; he honed his metal working skills in a shop in LaVale where he needed to do this sort of work because no one else could. About the time he graduated from high school, he began making ashtrays and coat racks for practical use in the garage. (There were lots of smokers working there then, but they have all quit smoking in the last few years).



One day, he looked at a bucket full of discarded auto parts and decided he wasn't going to make another coat rack or ashtray. Instead, he made a four-foot tall figurine and called it Steve The Googly-Eyed Alien Exhaust Pipe Man. He made more of these figures, kept some in the garage, and gave some to friends. Customers in the shop would see them and encourage him to do more and to exhibit and sell his work.

In October 2013, Josh Gambetta, a customer, friend, and fellow artist, insisted that Sines join him in a gallery exhibit at Eye for Art, owned by Angie Sincell. The experience propelled Sines into taking his art more seriously. He named his effort Reclaimed Metal Art; he is interested in keeping reclaimed metal "identifiable as what it was" to bring attention to our overconsumption and to spark thinking about "what can be done with things that have outlived their intended purpose."

For a few years, Sines took part in craft shows as a way to promote and sell his sculptures. However, his work was so heavy that it took "a couple of trucks, three guys, and hours of



In these 3 photos, Josh works to complete a custom banister and rail filler for a new home. Made of various memorable farm parts supplied by the customer, the filler brings to life “touch and feel” memories of their past. The rail consists of stirrups, horse shoes, belts, buckles, small bells, and various other parts traditionally found in old barns and stables.

Below left is another “tin man” – Banjo Man.

work” to set up the displays at these shows. People were interested in his work, but few could easily buy a piece and transport it home.

Sines called on a high school hobby, photography, to take a different approach. He photographed his work and sold the prints.

The first Mountain Maker Fest at Garrett College in 2015 provided him with an opportunity to safely demonstrate the work he does. Visitors wore

welding helmets to protect their eyes while they watched him weld. This gave him some new ideas about ways to make his work accessible to others.

Since recordings of welding are safe to watch, he has made several videos that are available on YouTube; though he warns that he is “not a videographer,” these videos show him constructing his reclaimed metal art. He realized that at live shows like the Mountain Maker Fest, he could work behind a sight barrier and have a camera project what he is doing for viewing by the audience.

In recent years, Sines has found his metal sculpture changing in two ways. He



has introduced more abstraction, sometimes creating sculptures that convey an action or idea rather than a person or animal. He has also taken on more commissioned pieces, and these have expanded his repertoire beyond automotive parts. One customer supplied him with items like mountain bikes and golf clubs to craft a gift for someone who pursues those sports. Another asked him to use equipment related to horses—bits, stirrups, spurs, horse shoes, tie rings, tools—to make a stairway balustrade honoring the family background in farrier work.





Josh shows another of his creations, “The Brake Pad Man,” made up of various brake pads and parts.

While he is open to abstraction and working with all kinds of metal, Sines continues to make representational art from auto parts. A current collection is a set of life-sized sculptures of musicians that he calls Metal Band. So far this group includes people playing banjo, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and flute. Some of these figures and other pieces by Sines can be seen and purchased at the current Garrett Art Council’s Pop-up Gallery on Route 219 next to Archie’s Barbeque. Visitors are also welcome to see Sines’ sculptures at My-O-Tire on Weber Road in Oakland, Maryland, and to visit his website: joshuasines.com.

Sines’ day job is managing My-O-Tire, and he makes his wife Laura and son Perry his first priority because they are

the “greatest blessing” in his life. He says he doesn’t like to “look too closely” at the hours he spends creating metal sculptures, and he has cut back some since his sixteen-month-old son was born, but he admits to at least two hours a day, more when he is completing a large piece.

Sines still “can’t believe” that people like and want his art. He says he assembles these sculptures purely because it brings him pleasure. When asked about future plans, he says he has no idea except to “keep doing it as long as I enjoy it.” If his current enthusiasm is any indication, he’ll be creating art from reclaimed metal for years to come.