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FREE!

A photograph of a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a blue and black patterned shirt, smiling and holding a large, dark, textured rock. The rock has a circular, lighter-colored area on its top surface that resembles a face. The background is a snowy landscape with bare trees under a blue sky.

a
familiar
face
pg. 36

AGAINST THE GRAIN
pg. 8

• BEFORE DELFOSSE, DEER ROCK
pg. 10

• AFTER KATRINA
pg. 18

■ Photos: Tommy Stafford
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artofglass



For a man who doesn't drink, sculptor/designer Bill Hess has a lot of empty Heineken and Riesling bottles at his Greenfield house.

"Recently, with developing this method of using these bottles, it is opening my eyes to looking at glass bottles in a new way."

Originally vessels for beer and wine, Bill is reclaiming the forgotten bottles, using them to add color, texture, even irony to his glass creations.

Consider this: to most beer drinkers, the bottom of a bottle is somewhat of a non-experience. It is the neck of the bottle, the beverage inside it -- and, to the lonely -- the label on the side of the bottle that gets the attention, if you can call it that. The bottom of the bottle is so insignificant -- yet at the same time so important to the object's function -- it gets ignored.

Except when the translucent disk appears on the forehead of Bill's glass face. It then becomes unmistakably ambiguous. An object of everyday life when repurposed, becomes hauntingly familiar. The glass face smiles at you and you smile back. Hum-drum goes

ha-ha.

Like tough, rusty rebar once used to brace a wall, now embraces a pillar of wax.

"I'll use discarded rebar to make candle holders."

Even abandoned car parts take on new forms.

"There's a piece at Black Rock Gallery that is made from an exhaust manifold. It sat in my studio for two or three years before I figured out what it could become."

Figuring out what an object *will* be rather than judging what it was presented a new challenge for the man who had made a career in orthopedic biomechanics.

"I worked on the instrumentation of artificial knees and hips for people with movement disorders and also people with arthritis."

Noble work that ultimately became limiting in a corporate setting.

"The medical stuff I



Much of the glass Bill Hess uses for his artwork comes from empty beer and wine bottles (above). He uses a kiln (opposite) to melt down the pieces of glass, then pours them into a sand mold. He then controls the cooling process by blow torching what was just poured in the sand mold. From there, he transfers the glass back into the kiln where it slowly cools over the next few days.



was doing felt so small and tiny with the problems I was working on. I needed to branch out and experience how I could use my design and work to be involved with bigger problems or challenges."

When Bill's mind outgrew lab work, he began designing products. When that wasn't enough, he and his wife, Wendy, a nutritionist, bought a house in Nelson County. He fashioned a studio in the back of the home, found a kiln, and started experimenting with sand casting. When his creativity needs recharging, he goes outside.

"Being out here with nature helps tie into my work. When I go out for a walk in the woods, it grounds me and I bring that in the art I am creating."

Bill envisions his pieces as potential custom design or architectural

elements. For instance, a room with natural light filtering through a wall of glass blocks could be accented with a whimsical glass face or flower, everyday icons used artistically in everyday spaces.

Though Bill sees himself doing a combination of commission work in glass and metal in addition to the occasional collaborative design project, his more immediate needs are quite simple.

"I'm really dying to find a source for yellow and red glass," he says laughing. "Green and blue and brown are great but any red bottles would be great!" ■

For more information, visit Bill Hess's web site: www.IdeasOnLegs.com

THE Nelson County REALTORS

234 The Hollow Lane



What a stunning setting! This custom home sits on 11.49 acres with lovely views and total privacy. There are fenced-in pastures with a bold stream and it's just minutes off of Route 29. The house itself has three bedrooms, two and a half baths, hardwood and tile floors, three gas fireplaces and a spacious rec room on the bottom level. The large front porch is perfect for entertaining or just relaxing and enjoying the vistas. With just a little over a half hour to Charlottesville and minutes to Lovingson and all its services, this is the best that Nelson County has to offer! \$599,000



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