

ENTERTAINMENT

Abstract painter pushes the envelope to create art no one's ever seen before

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Detroit artist Tim Yanke strives to create art no one has ever seen before. And he needs noise to do it.

"Your brain thinks with words, but your soul thinks with music and art," he said, noting that for him, working in a quiet room lacks creativity.

"When you get that music going, it generates from your soul, from your head, to your hands, to the canvas or whatever it is you're painting. And that is ideal. I can't imagine painting in silence."

Yanke enjoys a wide variety of music.

"Anything that gets me going. From reggae to Duke Ellington to Bob Marley," he said.

Yanke began drawing as a child. In elementary school, students were required to sit alphabetically, placing him in the back of the room. He took the isolating opportunity to practice drawing and continued through middle school and high school. He drew everything and received encouraging compliments from his peers.

Yanke's father would also make comments about his work.

"You've got a great imagination or you're very creative," Yankee recalls his father saying.

Yanke believed his father's comments gave him confidence.

When Yanke reached high school, he geared his classes toward becoming a graphic artist, but always knew he wanted to be a painter.

After completing high school, Yanke continued his studies at the University of North Texas in Denton and graduated with a bachelor's degree in fine arts.

"The pivotal point came during an art history course back in college," Yankee said. "I didn't know it then, but my career changed during a certain class. I look back at it now like that's when I wanted to become an artist. It's when I started to learn about the impressionists."

Yanke was drawn to the impressionist art era because it "departed from mainstream art," he said. Yanke, an abstract painter, believes impressionism changed the world.

When creating his paintings, Yanke uses "anything that makes a mark or leaves a color," he said.

"From sidewalk chalk to spray paint to tar. Acrylic to graphite to charcoal," Yanke said. "Anything to add dimension or cast a shadow."



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He also uses staples, sand and a variety of textures, but never oils. Yanke said he doesn't have the patience to wait for it to dry.

Yanke has been painting in his 1,200-square-foot studio in Birmingham since 2007, but he started painting in the mid-1980s.

He began his art career by painting for Park West Gallery in Southfield. In the mid-'80s he sent 35 mm art slides to the gallery. At the time, Yanke was working at Ameritech, now AT&T, as a graphic artist. Eight months passed before he received a call to sign an exclusive contract with the gallery.

Four years ago Yanke was asked to be the full-time abstract artist for Park West. He agreed after conversing with his wife about the opportunity.

"My work cubical never looked the same again," he said. "There are a lot of people who would like to be where I am. I'm very fortunate."

Yanke's artwork is on display at Park West and is often sold to cruise ships and hotels around the world. His art sells for anywhere from \$850 to \$15,000.

Yanke and his wife, Nicky, love the West and frequently travel to Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Lake Tahoe. He collects Native American items to add to his studio for inspiration.

"The sky out there is different," Yanke said. "I try to translate it into my paintings."

Yanke plans to continue creating art the world has never seen.

"You wanna push your own envelope," Yanke said. "My last painting is always my favorite because I keep pushing those boundaries."

If YOU GO

As a Park West Gallery artist, Tim Yanke's artwork is continuously on display, at 29469 Northwestern Hwy. in Southfield. Park West is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and closed Sunday. For more information call 248-354-2343 or visit <http://www.parkwestgallery.com>.

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