

What is It?

Who Made All This?

Tyree Guyton

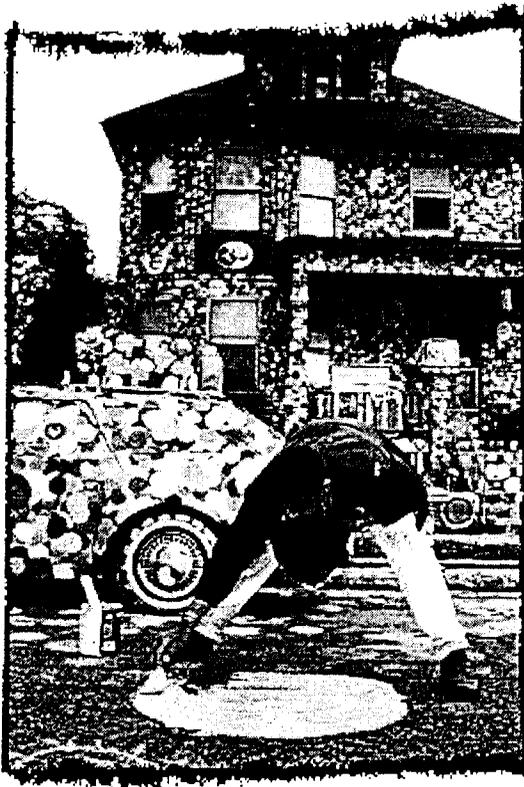


Photo: Donna Terek, Detroit News

Tyree Guyton Artist, 1955 -

“The real hope lies in changing the minds of people. People won't change their minds if they never face the truth.” Tyree Guyton

Tyree Guyton has been the driving force behind the Heidelberg Project since 1986. A world-renowned painter, sculptor, mixed media and urban environmental artist, he has chosen to focus his efforts on revitalizing and restoring the community where he was born and raised.

Through his art, Guyton has drawn attention to the plight of Detroit's forgotten neighborhoods and spurred discussion and action. He continues to live and work in the city, working with children on Heidelberg Street almost daily as he guides the Heidelberg Project forward with energy and inspiration.

Exhibits

Guyton's art has been exhibited around the world, including galleries in: Hungary, Brazil, France, Russia, Japan, Germany, Michigan, California and New York.

Guyton's work has been featured in art and academic institutions including:

Detroit Institute of Arts
Delaware Art Institute
Harvard University
University of Indiana
University of Michigan Museum of Art
Minnesota Museum of American Art
Art in Embassies Program Exhibition in American Embassy Quito, Ecuador

Awards include:

Spirit of Detroit Award, 1989
Michiganian of the Year Award, 1991 Governor's Arts Award, 1992
Humanity in the Arts Award, Wayne State University, 1992

Media coverage includes:

Newsweek, Time Magazine, People Magazine, The Oprah Winfrey Show, The Detroit News, The Detroit Free Press, The Boston Globe, The Chicago Tribune, The Los Angeles Times, Essence Magazine, USA Today, National Public Radio, Morning Edition, Reuters, Connoisseur Magazine, Good Morning America, NBC Nightly News

From: *Contemporary Black Biography - Volume 9*
by Alison Carb Sussman

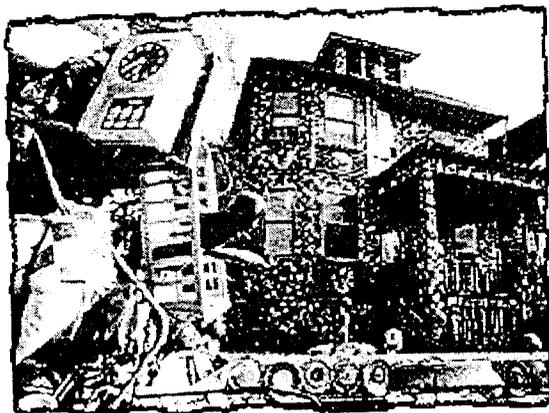
At a glance...

Born August 24, 1955, in Detroit MI; son of George and Betty (Solomon) Guyton; married Karen Smith, July 19, 1987 (divorced, 1994); children: Tylisa, Tyree Jr., Towan, Omar.

Education: Studied art in the Franklin Adult Education program and at the Center for Creative Studies, Wayne County Community College, and Marygrove College; studied with Charles McGee and other artists. Painter, sculptor, and mixed media artist. Inspector, Ford Motor Company, Dearborn, MI, c. 1979-84; firefighter, Detroit fire department, c. 1979-84; instructor, master residence art program, Northern High School; Franklin Adult Education Program; and Marygrove College; president, Heidelberg Project (an artwork in progress) Detroit, 1989 - . Work shown at Detroit Artists Market; Michigan Gallery, Detroit; Le Minotaure, Ann Arbor; Cade Gallery, Detroit; Trobar Gallery, Detroit; Alexa Lee Gallery, Ann Arbor; Ledis Flam Gallery, New York City; and elsewhere; work featured on television shows, including Tom Brokaw's NBC Nightly News, Oprah Winfrey Show and Good Morning America; work shown and installed at Detroit Institute of Arts 1990; work shown at Liberal Arts Gallery, Detroit. Military service: U.S. Army, private, 1972. Selected Awards: David A. Harmond Memorial Scholarship, 1989; Spirit of Detroit Award, 1989; Michiganian of the Year Award, 1991; Governor's Arts Award, 1992; Humanity in the Arts Award, Wayne State University, 1992.

Tyree Guyton, primarily a painter and sculptor, has also been described as an urban environmental artist. He has waged a personal war on urban blight on Detroit's East Side, transforming first a street in his neighborhood, and then two city blocks into a living indoor/outdoor art gallery by using discarded objects he found - everything from old shoes to bicycles to baby dolls - to embellish abandoned houses, sidewalks and empty lots.

The work of art for which Guyton has gained the most attention, **The Heidelberg Project** - named after the neighborhood street on which it is located - was shown during a segment of NBC Nightly News and Guyton himself has appeared on the Oprah Winfrey show and ABC's Good Morning America. As news of his work spread beyond Detroit, visitors from New York City and Canada and as far away as Zimbabwe, Kenya and Japan, began coming to view the project. Though the artist has sold his bigger works for as much as \$10,000, he and Karen Smith, whom he married in 1987 and divorced in 1994, lived mostly off her earnings as a hairdresser.



In the mid 1980s Guyton, a working but as yet unrecognized artist, began The Heidelberg Project, which became a major work in progress and the driving force behind a nonprofit community arts project. In his neighborhood, with its abandoned, drug infested houses, he gathered discarded objects from the streets and used them to decorate the outsides of the houses, transforming them into urban art, or to make roadside sculptures. With the help of his grandfather, Sam Mackey, and Smith, Guyton painted the objects he attached to the exteriors of the houses and surrounded them with everything from tires to toilets to tombstones, depending on his theme for the house. He also filled empty lots with rows of old drinking fountains and old appliances.

Through his work, Guyton has challenged the boundaries between art and life, as did French artist Marcel Duchamp, who took ordinary objects and presented them as art, and American artist Robert

Rauschenberg, who combined painting and common objects in collages or "combines". Guyton's work falls outside what is commonly recognized as art. Part of a group of "outsider" artists - Western artists who draw inspiration from sources outside of traditional art - Guyton draws from the lives of the urban poor and makes their experiences and human spirit visible to people who have come from all over the world to see his work. He also shows how fragments of city life can be turned into art.



Guyton's paintings and sculptures have been shown solo at the Detroit Institute of Arts, which also acquired two of his works; in a group exhibit at the Detroit Artists Market; at art galleries in Michigan and New York City; and elsewhere. When Guyton's mixed media works were shown in the Fall of 1994 at the Alexa Lee Gallery in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Roger Green wrote in the *Ann Arbor News*, "Works in the current show also bring to mind paintings by Jean Dubuffet, inspired by the art of children and the insane. Yet despite these affinities, Guyton's art is his own. His creations are affable and gratifyingly accessible. Through them, he seems to be committed to saving the world...Guyton is a gifted, committed artist to whose probing, good natured truths attention should be paid."

Guyton's so called "junk art" on Heidelberg Street has been described by the press as being controversial, political, and public - in short, the art of a revolutionary. An *Art News* writer commented, "Guyton's compositions consist of the houses, the vacant lots, the streets, the trees, the telephone poles. The power of his imagery is what touches people - so much so they have composed music about it, held concerts in the works, and given money for new projects." His Heidelberg Project" has attracted so

much notice that some of the drug dealers and prostitutes using the vacant houses and lots in the area have been frightened off.

In an essay on Guyton for the Detroit Institute of Arts Ongoing Michigan Artists Program, Marion E. Jackson of the University of Michigan School of Art observed, "(Guyton" frequently combines polka-dots and stripes and uses unexpected color combinations to create a visual syncopation" similar to "the musical improvisations of jazz." Jackson also notes that the artist evoked the emotions of viewers by using dolls and random combinations of shapes and forms. However, in his essay in the book *Art in the Public Interest* Michael Hall observed, "A stroll down Heidelberg Street (despite the rawness of Detroit's East Side) recalls a stroll down the main street of Disneyland. Guyton, like Disney, delights, entertains, and beguiles with his fantasy facades."

Produced Controversy

Despite the honors he has won - including a David A. Harmond Memorial Scholarship and the Spirit of Detroit and Humanity in the Arts awards - Guyton's offbeat street works have generated considerable controversy in his home city of Detroit. Some neighborhood residents apparently viewed them as eyesores, and the artist has been ticketed for littering. In addition, reportedly after complaints by neighborhood residents reached the ears of Detroit's former mayor, Coleman Young, four of the abandoned houses that Guyton had decorated with objects were suddenly demolished by the city government in November of 1991. Guyton then sued the city for the destruction of his work, a suit which was later dropped in good faith under the new mayoral administration of Dennis Archer.

Guyton believed that at least one of these houses, *The Babydoll House*, which, through its use of broken, naked dolls, dealt directly with the issues of child abuse, abortion and prostitution, was demolished because its images were so powerful. The work stored in the fallen houses - estimated to be worth as much as \$250,000, based on what Guyton's work was selling for at the time - was scheduled to be part of an art tour sponsored by the Detroit Council for the Arts.

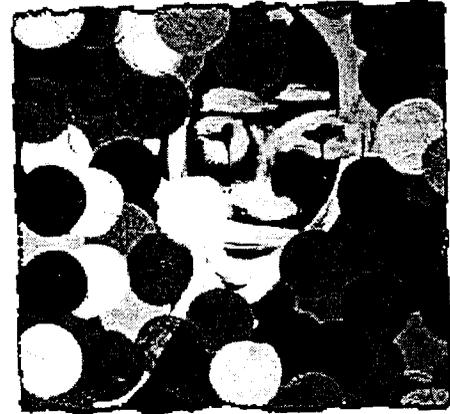
Guyton has responded to those who have questioned his motives in creating such controversial works. "This is my art," he maintained in *Newsweek*, "Most of the things used are things I didn't have coming up. We didn't have a phone, we didn't have toys to play with. So a lot of the stuff that I relate to is stuff that has played a part in my life - stuff that I didn't have, stuff that I wanted." But he noted that his art is driven by his need to

"talk about life here in the area...to talk about the craziness."

A Difficult Childhood

Tyree Guyton was born on August 24, 1955 in Detroit, Michigan to George Guyton and Betty Solomon Guyton. He has been painting since his difficult childhood, during which he was mistreated, ignored, and laughed at. An aunt apparently pronounced him stupid, while his mother believed artists were nuts. But his grandfather nurtured young Tyree's artistic inclinations. "Grandpa was a housepainter," Guyton told *People* magazine. "When I was eight years old, he stuck a paint brush in my hand. I felt as if I was holding a magic wand." This gave him the idea that he was an artist and could use paint to effect change.

It was his mother, however, who influenced Guyton's graphic style. "We were poor," he told a *People* correspondent. "(My mother) had 10 kids and raised them by herself. Clothes, furniture, everything came from a secondhand store or was given to us. On the floor we had squares of linoleum. On the sofa were stripes. On a chair there were polka dots. Nothing matched, but my mother made it work. Today I paint with stripes and polka dots, and it works too." Perhaps the memory of the way his mother searched for things to make ends meet for the family later influenced Guyton's decision to collect abandoned objects in the city's streets.



As a teenager, Guyton attended Northern High School. To further his art education he took adult art classes at high schools and colleges in Detroit, including the Center for the Creative Studies, the Franklin Adult Education Program, and Marygrove College. He also received early encouragement from two Detroit artists named Charles and Ali McGee. After serving in the U.S. Army for two years in the early 1970's, Guyton supported himself by working as an inspector for Ford Motor Company in Dearborn, serving as a firefighter with the Detroit fire department, and teaching art at his old high school. However, he continued to think about making art, and with the encouragement of his grandfather, he decided to do just that.

Illustrated Urban Dilemmas

Guyton went on to create such works as *Fun House*, *The Polka-Dot Tree*, *The Babydoll House*, *Tire House*, and *Lost and Found House*, some of which were destroyed in 1991. Commenting on the topics in the artist's works and their impact on viewers, Jackson wrote, "The fragmentation, isolation, and juxtaposition of the familiar with the unfamiliar may even affect us subliminally," while "difficult themes such as abortion, child abuse, homelessness, and abandonment" become "jarring aspects of a complex and ever-changing mosaic."

Jackson added, "A dismembered doll reminds us of a crucifixion...a boat, of an aborted escape...a fragment of quilt, of a comforting childhood hug. In worn out shoes that seem to climb neighborhood trees there is a playful irony between the melancholy of discarded usefulness and the unexpected independence of the objects as they themselves take on a new life." Specifically, Jackson noted how the tree sculptures in *The Polka-Dot Tree* resembled "the 'bottle trees' of the Southeastern United States in which artists of African-American heritage adorn living trees with bottles, vessels, and other objects to invoke the dead and ask protection for the living."

Guyton's cityscape art gallery has changed the city blocks on which it is located and those nearby from deserted combat zones to places where people stop and stare. Part of the fascination surrounding Guyton's works, perhaps, is that they are forever changing due to weather or the environment, or through the artists' whims. And Guyton has linked his neighborhood to the rest of the city, the state of Michigan, the country, and the world.

"See that house over there?," Guyton pointing to one of his works, stated in *People*. "That was a crack house...After the first three police raids, it opened right up again. After the fourth raid we couldn't stand it

anymore. So we went over and painted the place. Pink, blue, yellow, white and purple dots and squared all over it. Up there on the roof we stuck a baby doll and that bright blue inner tube, and on the porch we put a doghouse with a watchdog inside...Now all day long people drive by and stop to stare at the place...Believe me, in front of an audience like that, nobody's going to sell crack out of that house anymore."

Sources

Books

Eckert, Kathryn Bishop, *Buildings of Michigan*, Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 106.

Raven, Arlene, editor, *Art in the Public Interest*, Da Capo Press, 1993, pp.329-33.

Periodicals

Ann Arbor News, July 29, 1994, p. A9; September 9, 1994.

Art News, October 1989, p.27; May 1992, pp. 19-20

Connoisseur, March 1989, pp. 124-27.

Crain's Detroit Business, October 10, 1994, p. 7.

Detroit Free Press, July 30, 1994, p. 7B

Detroit News, November 24, 1991, pp. 1A, 10A; March 18, 1992; November 29, 1994.

Guide to Cool Detroit, June 1994

Metro Times (Detroit), July 13-19, 1994, pp. 26-7; July 20-26, 1994; August 10-16, 1994, p. 4.

Michigan Chronicle, July 27-August 2, 1994

Michigan Journal, September 26, 1994, p. 7.

Newsweek, August 6, 1990, p. 64.

New York Times, July 2, 1990.

People, August 15, 1988, pp.58-60.

Wall Street Journal, November 29, 1991, section B, p. 1

Additional information for this profile was provided by Jenenne Whitfield, executive director of the Heidelberg Project in Detroit, MI and the brochure *20th Century Art, Tyree Guyton, June 30 through August 19, 1990*, Detroit Institute of Arts Ongoing Michigan Artists Program, pp. 3-9.

Address:

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(313) 537-8037

E-mail: info@heidelberg.org

More Information:

to purchase studio works by Tyree Guyton, contact [Batista Gallery](#)

[Artist's Resume](#)

[Tyree Guyton's Web Site](#)

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www.heidelberg.org

Tyree Guyton

Artist's Resume

1955 -

Lives and works in Detroit, Michigan, USA (Studio in Detroit, Michigan)

P.O. Box 19377 ~ Detroit, MI 48219 ~ (313) 537-8037

e-mail: info@heidelberg.org

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SOLO EXHIBITIONS

THE HEIDELBERG PROJECT, Detroit, MI. "Ongoing 2 City Block Outdoor Art Installation founded in 1986. Although partially destroyed by two Detroit Administrations, The Heidelberg Project continues rise from the ruin and today is recognized as one of the most powerful art environments in the world. (www.heidelberg.org)

2002

Gallery 4731, Detroit, MI, *City Business*, November 30, 2002 - January 31, 2003

2001

Creole Gallery, Lansing MI, *Are you Proud to be an American* Nov 3- Dec 24

2000

City Gallery, Detroit MI, *Smiles and Smiles to go*, Mar 9 - Apr 3

Delaware Art Institute, Delaware University, *From the collection of world renown Jazz Trumpeter, Donald Bryd, Tyree Guyton's Faces of Christ*, June 3-October 5

Three Rivers Art Festival, *Sculpture at the Point*, June 3 – 18, curated by Lonnie Holly

Cultural Institute of Romania (Europe), *Tyree Guyton, The Heidelberg Project*

Harvard University, Cambridge MA, *Imaging Futures*, Apr 1-30, curated by John Beardsley

Scarab Club, Detroit MI, *Hot Raw & Funky*, Feb 5-28

1999

Maniscalco Gallery, Detroit MI, *Kickin Ass and Takin Names*

1998

Madach 5 Galeria, Budapest, Hungary, *Tyree Guyton*, Oct. 14 – Nov. 30

C-Pop Gallery, Detroit MI, *Dreamin*, Aug. 15 – Sep. 30.

1997

International Art Multiple, Tokyo (Japan), *Tyree Guyton, The Heidelberg Project*

International Art Multiple, Moscow (Russia), *Tyree Guyton, The Heidelberg Project*

1996

Glaskasten Edition & Verlag GMBH, Leonberg, Germany, *Tyree Guyton, The Heidelberg Project*. October 28 - November 2

International Art Multiple, Dusseldorf, Germany, *Tyree Guyton, One Man Show*, Oct. 28 - Nov. 2

Soul People, a Shoe House, St. Paul, MN (community of Frogtown) an Outdoor Environment, curated by Todd Bockley in conjunction with the Minnesota Museum of American Art. August 14- October 14.

COME UNTO ME, University of Indiana, School of Fine Arts, Bloomington, IN, Oct.26 – Nov 30

1995

Alexa Lee Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI, "*New Editions*", Feb. 9 – Mar. 11.

1994

Alexa Lee Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI, "*Tyree Guyton: Past, Present, Future...*" Aug. 30 – Oct. 4.

1992

Arts Gallery, Detroit, MI "*Tyree Guyton*" Apr. 12 – Jun. 14.

1991

LedisFlam Gallery, New York, NY, "*Tyree Guyton*", May 10 – Aug. 12.

1990

The Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, MI, "*OMAP XI: Tyree Guyton, Installation*", Jun. 30–Aug. 19.

1988

The Front Room Gallery, Detroit, MI, "*Tyree Guyton*" Jun. – Aug.

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GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2001

Detroit Institute of Arts, *Artists Take on Detroit-Celebrating the 300th Birthday of the City of Detroit*, Oct.19, - Dec. 31

2000

Delaware Art Institute, Delaware University, From the collection of world renown Jazz Trumpeter, Dr. Donald Bryd, *Tyree Guyton's Faces of Christ*, June 3-October 5

1999

ART IN EMBASSIES PROGRAM, Exhibition in American Embassy Quito, Equador '99 Ambassador Clare (1999-2002)

Ricco/Maresca Gallery, NYC, NY, Aug. 15 – Sep. 9

1997

Bedford Gallery in the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek, CA, *The Shoe Show*, Sep. 15 – Oct. 30.

Fotouhi Cramer Gallery, New York City, Apr. 12- May 17, Narrative

1996

Minnesota Museum of Art, St. Paul, MN, "*Outsider Art in the Midwest*" (7 Group Show) Aug. 11 – Oct. 20, Curated by Todd Bockley.

Cranbrook Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI, "*Cranbrook Auto Show*", (20 group show), Jun. 1 – Sep. 1, curated by Gregg Wittkopp

The University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, MI, "*Folk and Outsider Art*". An Ann Arbor collection (Group Show) Mar. 29 – Jun. 16. 1995

Alexa Lee Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI, "*Look with Care...*" (six group show) Jul. 28 – Sep. 2

Center Galleries, Detroit, MI, "*Polemical Prints and Multiples*", (4 group show) Mar. 3 – Apr. 7, Curated by Dennis Nawrocki

1994

Urban Institute of Contemporary Art, Grand Rapids, MI "*Visionaries*", Nov. 11 – Dec. 23, Curated by Donna Westra.

Site de la Creation Franche, Begles, France, "*Enveloppes Peintes ou Diversment Illustrees*", Jul. 2 – Aug. 30, Curated by Sophie Gaury.

1989

Cade Gallery, Detroit, MI (group show). Le Minotaure Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI, "*Two Detroit Artists: Tyree Guyton and Francine Rouleau*", May 19 – Jun. 29.

1988

Detroit Festival of the Arts, Detroit, MI, "*Art on the Move*", (installation).

Detroit Artist Market, Detroit, MI, "*Group Show*".

Trobar Gallery, Detroit, MI, "*Group Show*".

Michigan Gallery, Detroit, MI, "*Midwest Figurative*".

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COLLECTIONS

Detroit Institute of Arts

University of San Francisco, Quito Ecuador

Numerous national private collections

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SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Articles, Publications, Reviews, etc.)

2001

Restoring Charm To a Derelict Park, Lynne Ames, *New York Times-Arts & Entertainment*, Pg 8 Aug., 5, 2001

"Into his own," Joy Colby, *Detroit News*, Feature Page March 9, 2001

"Ghetto Art," Susan Walker, *Toronto Star*, May 5, 2001

2000

"Driving art home," Mary Thomas, *Pittsburgh Post Gazette Weekend Mag*, June 2, 2000

"Tyree Guyton's touring show gets high marks at Harvard," Joy Hakanson Colby, *Detroit News*, Apr. 12, 2000

"The shoe fits at Guyton's Scarab Club double showing," Joy Hakanson Colby, *Detroit News*, Feb 4, 2000

1999

"Eyesore or Art," John Beardsley, *Harvard Design Magazine*, Cambridge, MA, Winter /Spring 1999

Numerous other major publications for 2000 and 1999 include *Entertainment Weekly*, *TV Guide*, *Detroit News/Free Press*, *Pittsburgh Gazette*, *Raw Vision*, *Boston Globe*, *USA Today*, etc.

1998

"A Brush with Greatness and Critics, Detroit sees one man's art as a two block eyesore" Jon Hall, *Boston Globe*, September 7, 1998

Detroit's Heidelberg Project wins temporary reprieve" Todd Nissen, *Reuters*, September 24, 1998.

"Artist makes loud statement but Detroit's not listening" by Carrie Hedges, *USA Today*, September 21, 1998

"Detroit's Art Controversy" aired August 27, 1998, *National Public Radio, Morning Edition*

"The Heidelberg Project Tyree Guyton's neighborhood art" *Muse Magazine*, June 1998 Vol. 2, No.3

1997

"Tyree Guyton, art for the people", *Essence Magazine*, May 1997 issue

"City Targets Heidelberg Art", *The Detroit News*, Thurs. Dec. 18, 1997

"Welcome to Heidelberg, A walk through Detroit's Art Ghetto", *Juxtapoz*, Fall 1997

"Portrait of the Artist as Polka Dotter", *Time Magazine*, Aug 25, 1997 1996

"Urban Cobbler", *Detroit Free Press*, August 16, Sec. E cover & p. 2E

"An Artist's Sole Purpose", *Star Tribune*, August 15, Section B cover and P. B11

"Outsider art comes 'in' in St. Paul", *Star Tribune*, August 9, p. E4

"What's Doing in Detroit," *New York Times*, May 26,

"The Best of Detroit," *Metro Times*, March 20-26, p.22

"A Day With The Polka Dot Man," *Ann Arbor News*, February 23, front page & p. A12

1995

"A World Gone Mad," *Los Angeles Times* (Life and Style), May 5, sec., cover and p. E6

"Beauty and the Beast," *The Windsor Star/Express*, Windsor, Canada, cover & pp.12-14 (sec. c)

1994

"Tyree Guyton", *Contemporary Black Biography*, Vol. 9. Alison Carb Sussman

"Beating the Bulldozer," *Metro Times*, Detroit, MI, July 13-19 cover & pp.26-27

1992

"The 100 Most Powerful People In Metro Detroit," *Detroit Monthly*, p.53

"Destroyed," *Raw Vision*, Summer, NYC, pp.32-33 Black Swan Press, April

1991

Heartline The Chicago Surrealist Group, November "Art everybody took pride in...it's gone," *Detroit News & Free Press*, November 24

1990

Who's Who Among Black Americans *Contemporanea* No. 23, December, pp.21-30

"Exhibitions," *Detroit Monthly, DIA Section*, Detroit, MI, June, p.4A

"Tyree Guyton - Listenin' to his Art," Catalog written by Dr. Marion Jackson for the Detroit Institute of Arts

"Come On-a My House," *Newsweek*, NYC, August 6, p.64

1989

Artnews, October, p.27 *Chicago Tribune*, August 27, p.13

Newsweek July 17, p.6

Connoisseur, March, pp.124-127

People Magazine, August 15, p.58

Detroit News, City Arts Quarterly

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TELEVISION and FILMS

1995-99

"*Come Unto Me: The Faces of Tyree Guyton*" (30-min Emmy Award-Winning documentary) Written and Produced by Nicole Cattell (Naked Eye Productions, NYC, NY). Licensed to HBO for one year-Premiere date May 20, 1999

1993

"*Road Scholar*" (documentary), produced by Roger Weisberg, New York, NY

1991

Oprah Winfrey," ABC TV, Chicago, IL, September

1989

"Nightly News," Tom Brokaw, NBC TV, New York, NY Good Morning America," ABC TV, New York, NY

Jerry Stanecki Special," TV Channel 2, Detroit, MI The Baby Doll House," Award winning commentary by Bill Bonds, TV Channel 7, Detroit, MI

1988

"How Much for the World?" (Documentary), East Production, Japan

"Voo Doo Man of Heidelberg Street," (documentary), TV Channel 4 & 56, Detroit, MI

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BOOKS

2001

Thoughts on the Heidelberg Project, Jenenne Whitfield, Outsider Architectures: Laboratories of the Imaginary, Southern Quarterly

Detroit 300 (years) Almanac

2000

"Motor City Memoirs", A collaborative of Interviews of Detroit's finest, FourWay Press, Birmingham, MI

1997

"Shoes" Margery G. Nichelason, Carolrhoda Books, Inc., Mnpls, MN

1996

"Gardens of Revelation," John Beardsley, Abbeville Press, New York, NY

1993

"AfterCulture Detroit and the Humiliation of History," Jerry Herron, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, MI
"Building of Michigan," Kathryn Bishop Eckert, Oxford University Press, New York, NY

"Art in the Public Interest," Michael Hall, DeCapo Press, New York, NY

1990

"Struggles and Celebration - Voices From The City," The Northern High School Community Writing Project, National, Reproductions Corporation, Ann Arbor, MI

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AWARDS

1995

"Volunteer Community Service Award," Youth Volunteer Corps, Ann Arbor, MI, Summer

"House of Representatives Resolution No. 117," State of Michigan, April

1992

"Humanity in the Arts Award", Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

"Michigan Artist of the Year", Governor John Engler, State of Michigan

1991

"Michiganian of the Year Award," State of Michigan

1990

"Testimonial Resolution Award," Wayne County, Lansing, MI

1989

"Summer Youth Assistance Program Award," Detroit, MI, August

Spirit of Detroit Award," Detroit City Council, Detroit, MI, July

"David A. Harmond Award," City of Detroit, MI

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EDUCATION AND TEACHING

2001

University of San Francisco, Quito Ecuador

2000

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

New School, New York, NY

Intuit Art Center, Chicago, IL

National Artists & Artists Org. (NAAO), Brooklyn NY

1999

Hennesey/Cognac Fireside Chat, Detroit, MI

Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, MI

Sundance Film Festival, Park City , UT

Home Box Office (HBO), New York, NY

1998

Cranbrook Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI

1996

Art Residency Program, Burns Park Elementary School, Ann Arbor, MI

Art Residency Program, Syracuse University School of Fine Art, Syracuse, NY

1991

Art Residency Program, Mary Grove College, Detroit, MI

1988

Art Residency Program, City of Detroit, MI

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What is It?

Who Made All This?

Jenenne Whitfield



Jenenne Whitfield serves as the Executive Director of the Heidelberg Project.

Prior to her involvement with the Heidelberg Project, she had a successful career in banking. Then, in 1993, she took a wrong turn and drove down a polka-dotted street - through a colorful chaos of paint and people - and asked a paint-spattered man "what is all this?". The

man was artist Tyree Guyton and what he told her sparked an obsession that changed her life forever. She could never have imagined giving up her fourteen-year career to work in a non-profit arts-related venture, but she recognized this seemingly wrong turn as a higher calling. With a leap of faith, she embarked on the challenge of a lifetime.

Under Ms. Whitfield's direction, The Heidelberg Project has expanded its goals to include acquisition and restoration of property in the Heidelberg area, development of an artist-in-residence program and implementation of community art and education programs. Her leadership and commitment have enabled the project to extend its reach by participating in joint projects with museums, universities and other educational organizations. Her relentless enthusiasm and tireless efforts have won increasing support and respect for this often-controversial endeavor. Her persistence has been rewarded by a growing worldwide interest in the

Achievements:

Highlights of her first 9 years as Executive Director include:

- Creating art programs for neighborhood children which will serve as models for programs in other cities
- Inspiring dialog and promoting tolerance and understanding of other cultures through tours, lectures, cooperative projects, events and exhibitions.
- Developing important relationships with business, political, community, religious and educational organizations which will enable the project to sustain growth and develop additional programs
- Sharing the Heidelberg Project's message of "healing communities through art" with people around the world through lectures and workshops
- Serving as Production Coordinator on the Emmy Award-winning documentary entitled, *Come Unto Me, the faces of Tyree Guyton*
- Contributing a chapter on the Heidelberg Project in a book entitled, *Outsider Architectures: Laboratories of the Imaginary*

message she embraced on that summer afternoon when she asked "what is all this?" and felt the answer resonate inside her.

Current Projects:

In addition to her duties as director, she is available for lectures and workshops. Ms. Whitfield is currently working on a book and film project on the life of the renowned artist and social activist Tyree Guyton. Currently, she is heading up The Heidelberg Project in Detroit in an exciting new phase - the renovation of a project-owned property scheduled to be underway in the spring of 2003.



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