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STAFF PHOTO BY NICOLE MARTYR

Robert Hieronimus, right, of Owings Mills, and his wife Zohara, put the finishing touches on his 1983 Mercedes 300 that he is painting as a visual expression of his book, "Founding Fathers, Secret Societies." Hieronimus will debut his completed vehicle March 25 outside the American Visionary Arts Museum in Baltimore.

Auto vehicle for American symbols

Imagination, curiosity transform old Mercedes into graphic history lesson

BY SCOTT WEYBRIGHT

Owings Mills artist and author Robert Hieronimus is fascinated by symbols and American history.

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Hieronimus also wrote a book, "Founding Fathers, Secret Societies," about the importance of symbols in the early days of U.S. his-

that worked together to strengthen their way of life.

Hieronimus said leaders used the League of the Iroquois as a template for how to set up early

George Washington's signature.

He started designing the car last May and has been painting it for months. To paint the hood and top of the car, Hieronimus devised a flexible scaffold. He can disassemble it easily and move it around.

Hieronimus will debut his completed vehicle outside the American Visionary Arts Museum in Baltimore on March 25.

E-mail Scott Weybright at

From the pyramid with the floating eye on the dollar bill to the various flags the United States has used in its history, he wonders what they mean and where they come from.

So he decided to turn his 1983 Mercedes 300 into a piece of art depicting those symbols and a few more.

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"I want to tell the same story in symbols, not just words," he said.

The book talks about the connection between founding fathers such as Ben Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and George Washington and the League of the Iroquois, a collection of American Indian tribes

American government, specifically the need for the colonies to join together as a united group of states. The passenger side of Hieronimus' car displays various American flags below the names of the original five tribes that formed the league.

On the hood, Hieronimus shows a pine tree, the symbol of the Iroquois League, the names of the six tribes — another tribe joined later — and

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Symbols of early America hit road

BY SCOTT WEYBRIGHT

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With wife Zohara at the front of his 1983 Mercedes Benz, author Bob Hieronimus works on the back of the sedan adorned with symbols that can also be found in his book, "Founding Fathers."

American Visionary Arts Museum in Baltimore March 25.

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