

Towson Tigers face fourth-seeded Cornell Big Red Saturday in NCAA tournament opening round

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Talk Back: Call the Arts desk at 410 704-5137 or e-mail arts@thetowerlight.com

ARTS

Bob's art car reads like a book



Patrick Smith/The Towerlight

Bob Hieronimus poses with his car, which he painted, to tell the story of his book "Founding Fathers, Secret Societies."

Baltimorean, TU alum Hieronimus is author, host & artist, paints cars

Amanda Doran
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Towson alum and Baltimore native Bob Hieronimus has made his name as an author, radio host and artist.

He was recently asked to join the prestigious National Arts Club, giving him widespread recognition and access to exclusive venues of art across the nation and world.

Currently, Hieronimus' research on topics such as symbolism in the Dollar Bill, American history, and the Kabbalah has earned him television spots on the History Channel, the Discovery Channel and the National Geographic Channel, all of which, according to Hieronimus, are frequently repeated.

Despite his impressive list of nationally acknowledged activities and accomplishments, Baltimoreans would most likely recognize Hieronimus alongside his art cars because of their frequent appearances at local festivals.

Hieronimus and his most recent art car have been educating Baltimoreans about the story displayed on the car and the biodiesel fuel in it, since he finished painting it in 2006.

He appeared at the EcoFestival in Druid Hill Park in Baltimore last weekend to inform visitors about the first biodiesel art car in Maryland.

According to Hieronimus, his 1968 Woodstock bus influenced all art cars that came after it. The newest car, initially a white 1983 Mercedes, was a gift from Hieronimus' mother-in-law, Lynn Meyerhoff.

"It was a regular turbo diesel Mercedes and being white, it was the perfect canvas," Hieronimus said.

Hieronimus painted the car following the release of his book *Founding Fathers, Secret Societies*, which discusses the Iroquois Nation and its role in the formation of early American government. The car tells the same story.

"Most people don't read and I wanted to paint these ideas. I wanted to tell the story in this car. The car is to say symbolically what I have said in books. It tells a story I would have hoped would have been known," Hieronimus said.

The car, which took nine months to design, has over 60 paint colors decorating its hood, doors, wheels, roof, and sides.

"I went through all kinds of designs," Hieronimus said. "You have to work with the shape of the car, and that's not an easy thing, but I love sculpture and that's why I love the shapes of cars."

The passenger side of the car bears the history of American flags, rooting back to the Union Jack. Each of the flags has the name of a member of the League of the Iroquois above or below it.

Hieronimus has had offers from people to buy the car and some have even asked him to paint their cars. He is hesitant because of the immense cost of painting a car, the time it consumes, and the fact that he strictly believes in art that has meaning.

"I don't want to paint cars unless there's a story in them, plus it would take three months to paint. Being an artist, I like my freedom," Hieronimus said.

He also stressed the essentiality of including meaning in art.

"[On the car] there are whole dictionaries of symbols. There isn't that kind of meaning in art anymore," Hieronimus said.

Hieronimus said, "People say to me, 'This is a beautiful, psychedelic car.' And I'd say 'No, this car tells a story.'"