

# Artist's drawings find a place at Homespun Holiday sale

**Amanda Sieradzki**  
Council on Culture & Arts

Artist Dan Duggar rents studio space at the Jefferson Arts Gallery. While he's primarily worked in pencil drawings over the course of his 72 years, he now has his sights set on oil painting for 5 to 6 days a week. He subscribes to the belief that you must put 10,000 hours of practice into anything that you want to master.

Duggar has possessed a natural knack for drawing since he was a young boy. Although his life and work often put art on hold, he's looking forward to re-dedicating himself to becoming an artist and making an impact in Jefferson County. He wants to start with the "Homespun Holiday Ornament Show and Sale," a free event at the gallery happening now through Jan. 5.

"I always admire parents who put chil-

dren in art classes and provide them with what they need and support them through all of that," says Duggar. "My goal is to help the Jefferson Arts Gallery to become better known with hopefully some way to reach out to children. I think it's real important that children who have an innate talent have an outlet to develop it."

Duggar describes the house he was born in as a "two-room shack" with no running water in the coal fields of Kentucky. His parents were from the Depression era and believed in receiving a good education above all else. However, he said that didn't stop his mother from providing him with paper, pencil and her unwavering support.

## Art put on hold

While art was not at the top of his par-

ents' list of ideal professions, Duggar's drawing skills drew the attention of his teachers from the time he was in first grade. By the time he was 8 years old, Duggar was tuning to artist John Gnagy — "Television's Original Art Teacher" — to learn perspective, composition, and value. In high school, Duggar's art was published in two national magazines.

As Duggar readied himself to attend art school, the Vietnam War drafted him into the military in 1967.

"That knocked a dent in the art career for a while," remarks Duggar, who followed up his service with 30 years of rodeoing and contemporary cowboy work in Texas. "I decided 15 years ago that I was going to rededicate myself to art."

It was only natural that the subject matter that emerged on the paper would

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**"Courage and Dignity," by Dan Duggar**  
ROBERT COPPER

# Duggar

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reflect his surroundings in the cattle industry. Striving for photorealism, Duggar uses a variety of pencils, blending stumps and paper towels to achieve his highly detailed drawings.

## Capturing cowboy way of life

Cowboy art and western landscapes continue to capture his imagination. While timed rodeo events have become a patriotic sport, he also wants to preserve the methods of roping and handling cattle that a working cowboy knows and performs in the fields. Duggar is proud of his son, a cowboy in Montana, for carrying on these traditions, and starring in Western films as a stunt double for actors like Nicholas Cage.

“That way of life is vanishing,” says

Duggar. “I wanted to record as much of it as I could for that reason. The true cowboy is a vanishing way of life.”

Duggar usually draws from reference photographs that he either finds or takes himself. He is always looking for intriguing compositions and aesthetically pleasing subject matter that has a clear focal point. For his drawing “Ponder,” he snapped a photograph of a fellow cowboy working the field.

“That particular individual there was sitting on his horse and looking at 750 head of cattle,” remembers Duggar. “I rode up beside him, picked up the camera and asked him not to move. I had to seek a lot of balance in that drawing to get the negative space on the mane of the horse. I wanted someone to look at that and know what it feels like to sit on a horse like that.”

## Mission to bolster Jefferson Arts

Another drawing titled “Courage and

Dignity,” could be a photograph for the amount of detail included inside of it. Duggar captured the likeness of a Comanche chieftain by studying bone structure and focusing his pencil on shading the weathered look of his skin given its exposure to Texas’ near-constant sun and wind. Duggar says the drawing took over 300 hours to complete.

“I wanted to give him character that involved pride, some anger, and a little bit of everything,” says Duggar. “I like to get some emotion out of the viewer. If the art doesn’t touch anybody you might as well not even do it.”

For the “Homespun Holiday” show, he is proud to support his wife, Tamara, who is displaying and selling her handmade stockings. It was his wife that brought him from Texas to Monticello. Since arriving four years ago, Duggar has promised himself to fully immerse into art and find ways to fundraise and increase awareness for his new community.

“Whatever you dedicate yourself to

## If you go

**What:** Homespun Holiday Ornament Show and Sale

**When:** 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Wednesday to Saturday through Jan. 5

**Where:** Jefferson Arts Gallery, 575 West Washington St., Monticello

**Cost:** Free

**Contact:** For more information, call 850-997-3311 or visit [jeffersonartsgallery.com/](http://jeffersonartsgallery.com/).

and put in the hours for, you can accomplish,” says Duggar. “I’m looking forward to being a part of the Jefferson Arts Gallery and working with the community.”

*Amanda Sieradzki is the feature writer for the Council on Culture & Arts. COCA is the capital area’s umbrella agency for arts and culture ([www.tallahasseearts.org](http://www.tallahasseearts.org)).*