



Eugene Von Bruenchenhein

(1910–1983)

The second of Edward and Clara Von Bruenchenhein's (broon-chen-hine) three sons, Edward Eugene Von Bruenchenhein was born in Marinette, Wisconsin, in 1910. After graduating from high school, Eugene worked as a florist and later found employment at a commercial bakery, where he worked until the late 1950s. During the last forty years of his life, he **transformed** the home he shared with his wife, Marie, into an art environment.

He created work in many **media**, including photography, painting, and sculpture. In all of his work, he transformed everyday materials from his simple way of life into objects inspired by fantasy and royalty. For example, he built towers and chairs out of chicken bones and crowns out of clay.

Not many people visited his home during his lifetime. When he passed away and people saw his work, they wanted to save the work so others could see it. The Arts Center holds the largest collection of Eugene Von Bruenchenhein's artwork, which can be seen at the Art Preserve.

Transform

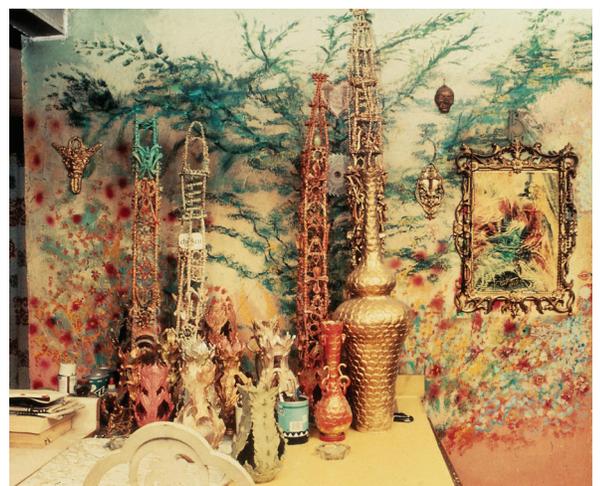
In art, to transform means to completely change the appearance of an object or place. Transformation in art may also change the meaning or function of the object or place.

Media/Art Medium

The substance or material artists use to create their work.



1



2

Current Events

After seeing an article in the *Milwaukee Journal* in 1954, Eugene Von Bruenchenhein created a series of paintings inspired by the hydrogen bomb. The article showed two images comparing the atomic bomb's reach of eight miles to the new hydrogen bomb's twenty-five-mile-high mushroom cloud. A mushroom cloud is the debris, smoke, and water vapor caused by a bomb, which looks similar to the shape of a mushroom.

His series of paintings were a way for Eugene to express how horrible he thought bombs are. Many of the paintings had a human face inside of the clouds to show that people are the dangerous source of these weapons.

Discuss together or write in a journal:

- What emotions do you feel when you watch or read the news?
- How can you use art to help think about your emotions?

Additional Activities

- Choose a current event from the newspaper or a magazine and create an artwork about it using any art medium you like. How can you express your feelings about the news story? What do you want other people to think about when they see your work?
- View more of Eugene Von Bruenchenhein's work at artpreserve.org/artists/eugene-von-bruenchenhein.



For K-12 Educators

Suggested National Standard Connection

Visual Arts Presenting 6.1

Anchor Standard

Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Enduring Understanding

Objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented either by artists, museums, or other venues communicate meaning and a record of social, cultural, and political experiences resulting in the cultivating of appreciation and understanding.

Essential Question

What is an art museum? How does the presenting and sharing of objects, artifacts, and artworks influence & shape ideas, beliefs, & experiences? How do objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented, cultivate appreciation and understanding?