



Welding Woman - Marilyn Tabatznik

This is a very brief story of a woman that has created all forms of art and ended up welding amazing sculptures. Marilyn's 'studio' is basic. A big lean-to shed and a sea container! Lots of steel, tools and pieces of art in all stages of completion. It's like a large bower bird's shed.

"From an early age I was active in the fight against apartheid and knew at some stage I would have to leave South Africa. I wanted to be an artist but chose the field of study that would sustain me and hopefully have some positive influence. My results got me into Cambridge, England, which I did not accept as it felt way too stuffy for me. For three years I studied and lectured in world religions in Manchester until I realised I wasn't going to change the world. I changed my world instead. I went to London and immersed myself in art. I did a lot of night courses, built a kiln in the back yard, broke all the rules and had lots of explosions. While I worked in clay, I had a strong desire to create in steel. I don't know what it was, just a sub conscious thing, though it did not come to fruition till 15 years later .

I moved to Australia when I was 39. England fed my head but not my spirit and I found the north west coast of Australia, especially the Kimberley, felt like home. The TAFE college in Broome was across the road from where I lived, so I immersed myself in the metal work class, learning as much as I could.

With welding you can build strong, large forms quickly. I like to combine materials, like wood and clay, using all the skills that I have gathered over the years. I have made jewellery, so there are fine little details in some of the pieces that people might not even notice. When I walk into my workshop I don't have an idea of what I am going to do. There are so many elements around me to work with. When creating a commission piece, then I have a deadline, otherwise I might be working several pieces at one time. Sometimes when I walk past one of my sculptures all of a sudden I can see what that piece needs - everything is a work in progress. Its like being a chef. I've got the ingredients, lots of ingredients, what I do is like whipping up the most amazing meal. I don't know what it is going to be, I just get a feel for it and know where it is going.

Every day is a sense of adventure. The work is not glamorous, though I love it! My workshop is really a shelter, open to nature. I keep thinking I will build a shed but I get busy and it never seems to happen!"

Marilyn can be contacted on 9192 6026 or 0417 663 229 mtabatznik@yahoo.com.au