

Stephanie Dwyer



Stephanie Dwyer's passion for nature began early in her life. Growing up in Washington state, the woods served as artistic inspiration as well as a safe haven from the pressures of her childhood. During her adventures among the trees, she often came across old-timey glass bottles left from years before. She began collecting them and they would later inspire her to create rustic masterpieces from decorative colored glass bottles and metal. Later in life she obtained a degree in welding. Her extensive knowledge of metal fabrication allowed her the artistic freedom to pick up where nature left off. She is perhaps best known for her bottle trees, but Stephanie also uses her skills to design and create chandeliers, birdbaths, fire pits and much more.

The origin of bottle trees dates back thousands of years. They were introduced to the South by African slaves and have since become a major part of the southern culture and landscape. The belief behind the

bottle trees is that the bottles, hung on tree limbs, attract evil spirits known as "haints" that bring bad luck, trap them inside the bottles overnight and are eventually extinguished by the sun's morning light.

Stephanie originally began making the bottle trees for the creative experience and as gifts for friends and family. However, as word spread, she began receiving requests for bottle trees and her other works of art from companies and individuals across the country including the B.B. King Museum in Indianola, Mississippi and select retail outlets in Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia, North Carolina and even for the Smithsonian Museum. Using a welder and a plasma cutter, she can make a standard bottle tree or add an extra touch of nature by adding leaves and other objects such as a bird perched in its nest.

After spending many years perfecting her craft in Washington and Mississippi, she just recently moved to Paris, Tennessee, where she feels inspired and free to create her art as well as take care of her rescue animals, another passion of hers. During her travels across the country showing her art, she has found that bottle trees create a bridge to bring diverse audiences together to celebrate a form of art with deep-rooted history and meaning in our country. Her bottle trees will be on display at Herb Day as well as Harvest Weekend at Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art.

