

For Hauben at 60, art is still an exciting challenge

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Art has always been the forefront of Daniel Hauben's life.

When he was a kid, he found ways to have his mother keep him home from school. And when his father returned from work, Hauben would immediately throw all of his new drawings at him.

"I have been very fortunate because art sort of came naturally to me, it's like a default thing," he said. "If I was in a class where I was just tuning out, I would tune into my art."

These days, the Bronx native is a jack-of-all-trades. When he isn't working as an artist, Hauben teaches at Bronx Community College, the City College of New York, or at The Riverdale Y. And when he isn't teaching aspiring artists and architects, he's hosting "Art and About with Danny Hauben" on BronxNet.

A Press profile

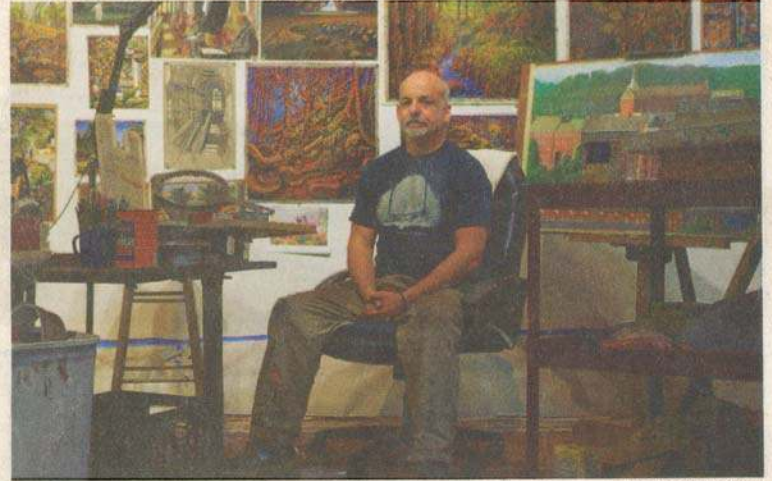
For Hauben, the balance between working and creating hasn't been a burden for him since he stopped working full-time more than 30 years ago.

"I don't feel like it's taking me away from my own work," he said. But "there are times when that does feel the case."

Hauben has made several marks on the local community with his work as an artist. Recently, he was commissioned to do 22 paintings inspired by the borough to surround Bronx Community College's north hall and library. He also helped create the Bronx Artist Documentary Project, an initiative focused on bringing awareness to visual artists who live in the Bronx, leading to a 272-page book featuring these creators.

On top of these things, Hauben's work is on exhibit at the Longwood Art Gallery at Hostos Community College, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, and the New York Historical Society.

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Julius Constantine Motal

Daniel Hauben is surrounded by works in progress in the Riverdale studio where he is as likely to create a rural landscape as a gritty Bronx scene.

Hauben enjoys arts' challenge

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Even as a self-proclaimed closet surrealist, Hauben said he doesn't like to label the kind of art he does because he doesn't want to pigeonhole himself.

He enjoys challenging himself in his work and letting it take its own direction.

Art's "always kind of an adventure," Hauben said. "And it should be. I'm not obviously someone who (has a) cookie-cutter approach to art where you find a formula and repeat it over and over again."

Even though Hauben has spent his adult life pursuing his passion, he

knows his work has never come easy for him.

"The challenge (as an artist) is life," he said. "The world is not set up to support artists. Our society, our culture is anti-arts. Artists are like a fly in the ointment. That's what's happening in the Bronx now."

"The art is the easy part as far as I'm concerned," he said. "If I take pride in anything, it's the challenge and that at age 60, my work is as challenging or it's more challenging than it's ever been."

"What I'm seeking to achieve is always a little bit further, just beyond (my) reach. (I'm) still reaching."