jennie curé

portrait

petal to the metal

Text by Catherine Johnston • Photography by Elliot Lincis

Where do dented mufflers and rusted pipes go when no one wants them? Why, they go to the garden of Eden. Well, Eden West, that is. As the home and art studio of landscape architect Jennie Curé, it is a place of new beginnings for scrap metal, and the birthplace of uniquely whimsical artistic designs.

"It's a lifetime of experiences being expressed through my art," describes Curé. A native of New Hampshire, she grew up surrounded by gardens and always enjoyed the outdoors. When years of college studies seemed mentally overwhelming, factory metalwork and floral arranging helped the budding horticulturist relax and pass the winter days. Now, these seemingly unrelated experiences are welded together in Curé's metal planters, wreaths, floral arrangements, fountains and characters.

Her first project was a silo trellis and playhouse; next came a three-dimensional wall-hanging to go outside a window. But while these projects planted the seed for sculpting, Curé's passion became rooted with "Emily."

"I was driving through the desert and saw a muffler on the roadside. I brought it home, and it sat in my studio for months," recalls the artist. "Later, I found two bent pipes, and after staring at the three pieces together, I saw what I could make. After a little bit of welding, the pipe 'legs' were attached to the muffler 'body' and Emily was born. She is still in my garden today."

Curé's *Arizona Tin Man* series features cowboys, children and women that are anything but rusted in place. As a landscape architect and horticulturist, Curé takes an analytical look at a garden space before designing a sculpture for it, so that the piece accents, enhances and creates movement in its environment.

Curé has displayed her talents at Arizona's CHAIRity fund-raiser, to which she donated *Healing Embrace*, a scrap-metal chair in the form of a mother hugging her children. Eden West also has been a part of the Hidden in the Hills and Art Detour events. From scraps to sculptures, Curé is changing how people look at rusted metal.

See Resource Guide.