

BOLD PRINTS

Artist Kevin Caron merges art and tech with 3D-printed sculptures.

By Teresa K. Traverse

Like many of his creations, Kevin Caron's (kevincaron.com) art career seems improbable. Caron, a former truck driver, would keep his brain sharp on the road by reverse engineering the vehicle in his mind. That dedication to understanding machine construction was ultimately what

led to his artistic career.

"I never realized it, but I was teaching myself how to sculpt," he says. "I was teaching myself how to take a finished product and take it all apart." Much of his work is inspired by traveling.

Caron is a pioneer in 3D printing, which he began roughly five years ago. In 2018, he won the Phoenix Mayor's Arts Visual Artist Award and recently served as a speaker at *CODASummit: The Intersection of Art, Technology and Place* in El Paso, Texas. His art is now displayed around the world.

Caron creates his vividly colored sculptures with the help of a custom built 8-foot-tall cylinder 3D printer, one of three he owns. He begins by designing in computer aided design (CAD), then feeds a PLA filament—essentially a plastic wire—through the printing machine, where it is heated and stacked on top of one another to create a complete, multilayered piece.

"Just like a paintbrush or a potter's wheel, 3D printing is simply another tool used to create art," he says. "It takes an artist with an interest in the technology to use the tool effectively."

He enjoys creating something from nothing and being creative with this relatively new technology.

"Run through the grassy field in your mind," he says. "Just don't be constrained. Don't look at it for what it is. Look at it for what it could be."

His work will be on display at the SculptureTucson Annual Festival Show & Sale (April 3 to 5, GA tickets free, VIP patrons' event \$50, sculpturetucson.org).

Clockwise from top left, PLA resin sculptures by Kevin Caron: "Mount Glacier"; "Morphosis"; "Plus Minus"; "Spirithole Sunset"; "Holy Cannoli."



"MOUNT GLACIER," "SPIRITHOLE SUNSET," AND "HOLY CANNOLI" PHOTOS BY NATASHA MISHANO; "MORPHOSIS" AND "PLUS MINUS" PHOTOS BY MARK LIPCZYNSKI. ALL COURTESY OF KEVIN CARON