

A salvaged house is architectural poetry. A poet edits, refines and synthesizes every word, choosing the fewest and most efficient to create imagery, emotions and thoughts that have never been expressed in this way before. This describes a salvaged house. Different elements from a variety of structures and places are blended uniquely to create a home that is totally unique. Nowhere in the world is there another exactly like it, and the builder, just as the poet, expresses his creative vision for what a home can be.

The ability to use the artistry of previous craftsmen has multiple advantages for me. There are elements of carpentry that would not be available unless I cull pieces from an older building. It requires me to think long and hard about what I really need, but also what is necessary to feed my soul. For example, I don't want a lot of tchotkys, but I will make a place for my books. These are cherished friends that I have read many times and will read again, so I will make space for them. It is fun to come up with a way to do that without eating up real estate. The architectural beauty that comes with leaded and stained glass, the old boards and railings, the patina that comes with worn metal cannot be mass manufactured. This also preserves a part of our history, and I feel comfort in owning a house that has incorporated another's creative endeavors.

I love the challenge of using every bit of space efficiently, and so I am constantly looking at how to pare down and simplify every square inch, so that nothing is wasted or extraneous. I abhor the needless waste that is inherent with new construction, the devastation of habitats it makes, and the soulless shells it erects. I believe in the concept of tiny houses, and think this is perfect for so many people, especially as a means of living well without incurring blood-sucking debt. Were that I had this sensibility when I was young! So I try to preach the gospel to a new generation, hoping I can contribute in that way.

It is also vital to me that the systems that run the house are as environmentally responsible as I can make them, and I spend a lot of time researching different technologies that will facilitate this. I firmly believe this movement is good for all of us, and I want to be a part of it.

This will be my home and a sanctuary. It may not be tiniest of tiny houses, but it will definitely reflect the ideals and values tiny homes represent. It will be a legacy as well, that I stayed with, fought for, and ultimately built a place that is a tangible statement of my values and ideals. For the first time in my life, when I finally get it built and moved in, I will be home.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Suzanne Metzgar