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Stunning Assemblages Made from Abandoned Houses

by [Moe Beitiks](#), 10/16/10

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It's no secret that [artists thrive in abandoned spaces](#). Spotted at the recent [Beyond/In Western NY Biennial](#) in Buffalo, New York, [one exhibit at the event](#) featured a number of artists who turned the act of exploring forgotten spaces, into incredible pieces of art. But these abandoned places aren't underground or hidden in an obscure passageway. The city of Buffalo is infested with deserted homes, left behind as local manufacturing jobs disappeared. But no longer – artist [Dennis Maher](#) has taken ownership of these places, and turned their contents into stunning sculptures.





Maher was first intrigued by these abandoned homes when he was working on demolition teams to supplement his income as an assistant architecture professor at the University of Buffalo. Now he owns two houses slated for demolition – he lives in one and has already begun uses the crumbings, stripping and bustings of both to create his monumental sculptures.

Buffalo is part of the [Rust Belt](#), an area in the northeast deeply affected by the collapse of steel and other domestic industries. Though gains have been made in some modern industries, like biotechnology and clean energy, the Belt is still littered with the remnants of communities past. In his work, collecting and redefining these lost places, Maher gives the scraps a kind of romance and dignity, that is infused with both a fear for things lost and hope for the future.

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