



a natural state

Artist: Pearl Fryar

Video 1: Spotlight (The Interview)

Fryar: I'm Pearl Fryar from Bishopville, South Carolina. I live at 145 Broad Acre Road. And I'm considered a topiary artist.

Topiary is the art of shaping plants, that's all it is. It's the art of shaping plants. And...but there're so many different styles of topiary you can...geometric, animals. So I kind of enjoy doing more of abstract, which takes longer. But I enjoy it. And so people are constantly talking about the time that I spend in my...in my garden or in...or working on this.

I think it's more or less unique...something a little different. And because of that, it's being considered art. I've never really considered myself an artist—I consider myself more of a creative person that can take objects and, maybe, do something that's different...something that's unique. So I did the same thing with plants.

If I take a plant, it will all depend upon the size of it as to how long it would take me to do the piece. So it could take up to seven years. Some pieces could take up to ten years. And some pieces could take up to two years. So it just depends upon what I want at that time as to how long it would take me to do it.

So there's no difference in my creative ability than it would be someone that paints, someone that arranges flowers. So it's just being creative and using what you have.

I think the real fuss over my...what I do is it's unusual. No one else does it. You see what I mean? It's not that...personally; it's not that I think it's that great. It's just that it's different, and no one else came up with the idea. Now ten years from today, when you can walk around and see plenty of it, it won't be no big deal. I just happen to be, maybe, the first to do this style of topiary because topiary goes back thousands of years. My style is different, and mainly because I never really studied or watched what other topiary artists did years ago. Then I'd probably end up trying to copy their style. And, not knowing, I created my own style and technique. So that's what sets mine aside from what they do in England or what they do in Disney World or some of the other topiary gardens is that I'm just creating with what I have. And, and now, the fact that I've created my own style and technique, I don't have to try to copy what someone else has done because mine has been accepted.

It would be the same to me as playing golf or playing...going fishing. See what I mean? So to come out and spend a day in the garden would be the same as spending a day on the golf course or a day fishing. So it, it has the same effect on me.

So even though it's odd...but it's just something I enjoy doing. And I picked something I enjoy doing and turned it into an art form, they say. I don't know. But, anyway, that's, that's one of the reasons I get a lot of attention...because of the art form.