

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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Country star
Trisha Yearwood on
the songs that filled
her Georgia home
M5



MANSION

'Creativity takes courage.'
—Henri Matisse

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Where Life Meets Art

Top artists' homes often boast high ceilings and lots of light. But selling a place with no living room can be a challenge.



DOROTHY HONG FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (5)

HOME SWEET HOME Will Cotton and his girlfriend, art researcher Rose Dergan, ripped out the walls in their New York loft and turned it into one large, open space with various corners devoted to painting, art-supply storage, dining and sleeping.



BY KATY MCLAUGHLIN

WHEN NEW YORK PAINTER AND SCULPTOR Will Cotton and his girlfriend, art researcher Rose Dergan, bought a 3,200-square-foot Tribeca loft in 2010, they spent about \$150,000 on renovations. They ripped out bedroom walls and tore off drywall to expose steel and wood ceiling beams. Then they devoted a chunk of the budget to installing a commercial grade vent fan on a chimney, to suck out fumes caused by oil paint, turpentine and varnishes.

"I wanted to empty it out and make it pretty much as it had been in the 19th century," said Mr. Cotton, 52, whose work is in museums including the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. Today, the couple lives in one large,

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MANSION

splatters paint on the concrete floors and tables, and a gallery-like space where he receives guests and hosts events. Upstairs, there is an office for his studio manager and her assistant, and a mezzanine from which he can look down on paintings in progress—"so I can see how they'll look when they're dry," Mr. Goode said.

Having his studio steps away from his home is useful because "if I get an idea at 11 o'clock at night, I can go work on it," he said.

Mr. Goode's perfect space came at a high personal cost. In 2005, he sensed something was wrong when his dog, an Australian Shepherd-Akita mix named Pollock, wouldn't stop barking in the middle of the night. Mr. Goode and his wife got up to discover his previous studio on fire. Mr. Goode lost 200 works of art and spent about \$250,000 to rebuild the studio in 2007.

The fire was caused when rags covered in linseed oil, used for oil painting, spontaneously combusted. Mr. Goode said. Because of the hazard, he switched to acrylic paint. He also distributes his work among various spaces today, so that he can never again lose everything in the event of a disaster, he said.

Mr. Goode's studio adds some value to the home, but not enough to cover the construction costs. Tami Pardee, founder of Halton Pardee + Partners, a Los Angeles brokerage, estimated the value of Mr. Goode's property at \$1.8 to \$1.9 million, saying the studio likely adds 5% to 7% to the value.

Mr. Cotton and Ms. Dergan's loft, which they purchased for \$2.14 million, according to public records, would likely sell today for roughly \$4.5 million to \$5 million, said Jim St. André, a Tribeca and downtown specialist at CORE. If it were made into a conventional home, with bedroom walls and top-of-the-line finishes that would appeal to the typical "financial guy" buyers in the area, it would sell closer to \$6.5 million, Mr. St. André said.

It is increasingly difficult to find studio space in some of the cities that have attracted artists for generations, including New York and



A WORK-LIVE SPACE Colin and Kristine Poole devoted most of their 2,700-square-foot-house in Santa Fe, N.M., to work space and gallery space. There is no living room—non-art space is limited to a small kitchen and bedroom.



San Francisco. Amid soaring real-estate values, artists also face competition from non-artists who have come to embrace loft living and industrial style—as long as it is renovated to provide traditional comforts.

"The conversion of industrial spaces to great residences has never been more popular," said Mr. St. André. In New York's Tribeca neighborhood, one building that for many years consisted mainly of commercial lofts used by artists,

photographers and architects is now mostly condos; a penthouse is currently on the market for \$45 million, Mr. St. André said. The loss of workspace in cities around the country has given rise to a number of activist groups, such as the Artist Studio Affordability Project in New York, that protest real-estate developments that compete with artists' needs.

In San Francisco, Sotheby's International Realty agent Wendy Storch is marketing a \$4.5 million,

4,800-square-foot house in the Mission District that has primarily been used as a live/workspace for artists since the 1960s. To prepare it for sale, the current owners added a driveway, roof deck and garage door to the studio space and staged it with lounge furniture and motorcycles.

The buyer "could have classic cars, motorcycles or a fantastic rumpus room, but with a rustic, industrial feel," Ms. Storch suggested.

GABRIELLA MARKS FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (3)

Colin and Kristine Poole, a married couple of sculptors in Santa Fe, dispensed with nearly every convention when renovating their 2,700-square-foot house. They devoted 700 square feet to a work studio, where they regularly receive nude models, work on life-size clay figures, create molds, pour wax and assemble bronze sculpture. Mr. Poole, 52, also paints. Another 1,200-square-foot area of the house serves as a gallery space, where they receive clients and host art-oriented events. Because they work seven days a week, often for 14 hours a day, they decided to forgo a living room. Instead, non-art space is limited to a small kitchen and bedroom.

Mr. Poole bought the house in 1997 for \$200,000 from a cousin who had inherited it from their grandmother Una Hanbury, also a well-known sculptor, Mr. Poole said. Ms. Poole, 47, moved in nine years ago and the couple spent more than \$200,000 renovating, doing most of the work themselves.

They prioritized features that would serve their work. They laid the studio with a floating hardwood floor, typically used for dance floors, so that standing on the surface for many hours a day wouldn't cause back pain. Four large skylights provide natural light; at night, tract lighting fitted with full spectrum bulbs from Germany imitates daylight, Mr. Poole said.

Living amid their output isn't stressful, the artists said; instead, Mr. Cotton, Mr. Goode and the Pooles said they don't want a clear line between life and art.

"If something is giving me a lot of trouble, I just turn it to face the wall," to get a break, said Mr. Cotton, who is known for his images of costumes and landscapes made of sweets. Still, it is surprisingly hard to escape his subject matter. Soon after moving in to his loft, he noticed a faint, hand-painted sign from the 19th century on the exterior of the building, reading "Almond Paste—H. Heide—Confectionery."

"How crazy is that? It turns out I live in a converted candy factory," Mr. Cotton said.

