



Where They Create

TAKE A PEEK INTO THESE LOCAL ARTISTS' STUDIOS,
SPACES THAT NURTURE THE IMAGINATION AND INSPIRE INGENUITY.

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CATHERINE DREISS PRINTMAKER

The Fitch Building in the Western Gateway area was one of the first buildings printmaker Catherine Dreiss and her husband, painter Jeffrey Thompson, saw in 1995 when they moved to Des Moines. Its concrete floors (that she doesn't "worry about messing up") and its large, north-facing windows were both selling points. "Northern light tends to be more consistent throughout the day, with less shadows being cast," she says.

Dreiss spends three days a week in her 900-square-foot studio (she teaches at Drake University two days a week), although she'll spend nights and weekends there if she has a project to finish. The conceptual stage of her woodcut prints takes place on her iMac at home. But the rest of the creative process occurs in her studio, where she's commonly at a drafting table laying out woodcuts for carving.

Although the studio is a dedicated workspace, it strikes a balance of function and comfort. The couple keep their stereo system and Dreiss' extensive collection of vinyl records there. And they typically enjoy the company of two other family members: Frankie, a 14-year-old English setter, and Ruby, a 6-year-old French bulldog, who lounge on dog beds while their owners work and create.

