

# Silver screen

From A1

"It's just more interesting to me," he said. "There's more to that than a bowl of fruit."

His wife, Ashley Bzdawka, has grown accustomed to seeing Bzdawka immerse himself in one of his movie scene recreations.



Bzdawka

If the couple is watching a film at home and Bzdawka reaches for his sketch pad, Ashley knows he saw something he needs to draw. He sometimes spends 5 to 10 hours on a single drawing — twice that long if he decides to colorize it.

Other times, he works off cellphone pictures of movie scenes, or he pulls still photos from the internet. But all of his drawing is completely freehand pencil work that starts with a blank canvas.

When he gets in "the zone," his wife said, she knows it is time to just leave him alone.



SCOTT WILLIAMS PHOTOS, SCOTT.WILLIAMS@JOURNALTIMES.COM

A scene of Rick Moranis in "Little Shop of Horrors" comes to life under artist Brian Bzdawka's recreation, as the Racine County artist presents life-like movie star drawings.

"I think it's very cool," she said. "I'm glad he's found something that not only he enjoys, but that other people enjoy."

After graduating from Cardinal Stritch University in 2004 with a degree in fine arts, Bzdawka struggled to find a place where he could practice his craft.

He approached photog-

raphy studios with the idea of offering clients hand-drawn portraits along with their new pictures. He even thought about asking funeral homes if families might like sketches of their lost loved ones as part of the funeral packages.

While searching for the right opportunity in drawing, he worked bartender

jobs, tried standup comedy and spent several years in community theater.

He and his wife married in 2013 and resettled in Rochester, where they are raising three children.

Bzdawka, 40, finally decided that he had the most fun drawing pictures when he was drawing his favorite subject: movies.



A coffee mug is shown emblazoned with Robin Williams' famous "Mrs. Doubtfire" character, as recreated by Racine County artist Brian Bzdawka, who makes his drawings available on mugs, T-shirts and prints.

He has been a serious movie buff ever since working in a theater as a teenager in Cudahy. He realized that the faces, expressions and emotions that he wanted to bring to his artwork were right up there on the silver screen all along.

"I was just going to draw stuff I liked," he said.

Now working as a graphic artist professionally, he spends his spare time in his studio at home, recreating his favorite stars and scenes from movies he has enjoyed. From James Bond to Napoleon Dynamite, he has an inventory that is growing.

Since unveiling his web-

site two years ago, he has found a surprising demand for his products. At times, he is shipping 10 to 15 prints, T-shirts or coffee mugs every week.

He will also take requests and complete a new drawing based on a customer's own Big Screen favorite.

"I'd love to be doing more," he said. "I love doing it."

**QR CODE** **MORE:** To see dozens of pieces of Brian's work, point your smartphone camera at the QR code, then tap the link. **NEWSVU**