

## MERLYN TOWNLEY INDUSTRIAL DESIGN — PROJECT

Creative Discipline: Other Arts

Merlyn Townley has over 30 years experience in the cycling industry and has been a specialist in custom builds for the cycling industry since 1988. His passion is the art of hand-built wheels, which are dying as a craft. Merlyn is only one of eleven category one licensed bicycle race mechanics worldwide, and he offers custom artisan-built wheels to pro and amateur cyclists. His MakeWork Project grant will allow him to expand his business through purchasing new materials that were previously out of his budget range, creating and experimenting with innovative designs that have never been executed, and sustaining this art form.

His craft “marries an artistic eye with a more technical industry,” Merlyn says. Born to an abstract landscape artist and author, and a wood sculptor and Brown University Art professor, Merlyn grew up in a community that valued hand crafted art and volunteerism. After graduating from the Rhode Island School of Design, he began his career in cycling, working over 1,000 national and international races, representing top companies such as Campagnolo

and SRAM. He served as mechanic and team manager for more than 20 teams worldwide, including the Australian National Team, the U.S. National Team and the Japanese National Team. He has also been an American Red Cross Volunteer since 1988, providing disaster relief work for 9/11 at The World Trade Center, the Rhode Island Nightclub Fire, Hurricane Wilma, the Tornado and Flood Relief Effort in 2010, and others.

Chattanooga has a thriving cycling movement, highlighted each year through its celebration of National Bike Month in May, as well as National Bike-to-Work Week, yearly from May 16-20, and Bike-To-Work Day on Friday, May 20. Merlyn contributes to this culture through not only providing a unique craft, but through participating in MainX24 where he's developed Velo-Matic with Velo Coffee, a creative cycling event that promoted a unique selection of cycling-focused events to help promote the community festival.

Merlyn will continue to create one of kind wheels in Chattanooga that truly stand apart in the industry, not just because they are better performing and last longer than industry-made wheels, but because, as he says, "The ability to truly explore the art of hand-built wheels and to experiment with configurations that are not yet tested, provide a new artistic genre. It's where street art, meets gallery level art in a new and different way."



[Previous Artist](#)

[Next Artist](#)

## WORK SAMPLES



# MakeWork Needs Your Support

**DONATE NOW**



[About](#)

[Artists](#)

[10x10](#)

[Grants](#)

[Gallery](#)

[Blog](#)

[Contact](#)