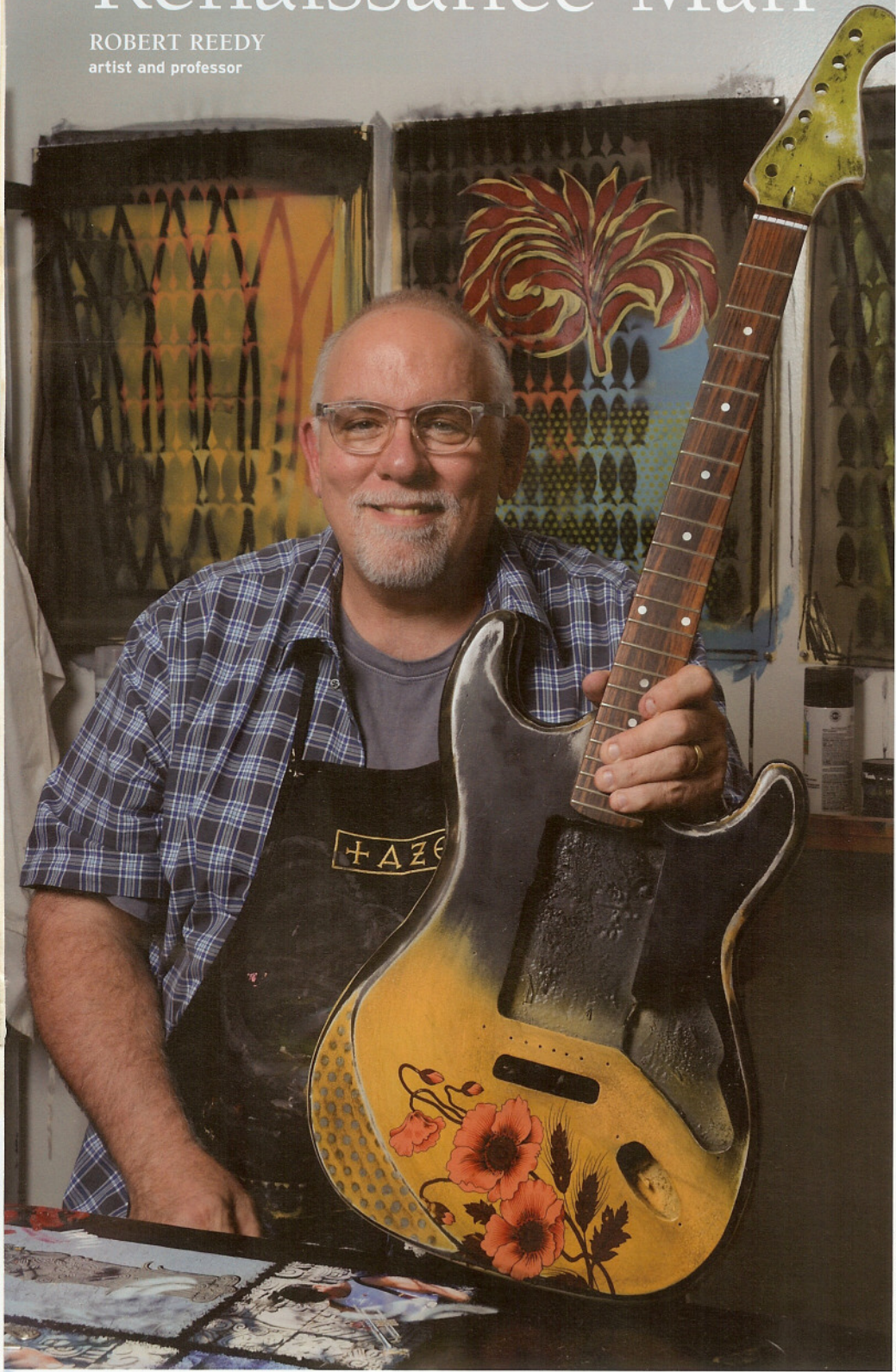


Renaissance Man

ROBERT REEDY
artist and professor



He's a master of ceramics, a musician and a songwriter. He's into mixed-media painting and drawing, and even makes guitars. Robert Reedy says his multiple talents are "old school," asserting that true artists were accomplished in many facets of creativity: Picasso fashioned exquisite pottery. Tiffany made lamps.

Somewhat renowned for his outlandish teapots, Reedy describes his work as non-representational—evident in the eclectic, colorful paintings that line his studio. His creativity is fueled by his childhood in rural Mississippi. Inspired by the art of storytelling, he integrates family, the earth and their connectivity to small-town life in his art. Even weather patterns leave a mark: Some of his multimedia pieces depict emerging funnel clouds.

Reedy's success as an artist is easily defined. His works have been featured in galleries worldwide—including the Museum of Art at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.—and have found homes with venerable private collectors, such as former Vice President Walter Mondale. But creating art is only half of Reedy's calling. The other is teaching it. His paint-stained apron and relaxed aura depict a person happy with his career, and someone excited about passing along knowledge to dream-laden students.

"I get to teach art, and I get paid for crazy paintings and teapots," says Reedy, an art professor at the University of Central Florida (UCF). "It could be the crappiest day, but in the end, it will be a great day because I love what I do."

He holds a Bachelor's and a Master's in Fine Arts from the University of Mississippi, and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Delaware. Reedy, 59, headed up the Fine Arts department at the Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota before coming to UCF as the Fine Arts chair in 1994. He stepped down from that position in 1998 to spend more time teaching and working in his studio at the Maitland Art Center (MAC).

Fresh off of an exhibit at MAC, Reedy is pursuing another love: music. The singer and blues guitarist started a band called The WynDells, which you just might catch at open-mic night at Tom & Jerry's.

—Kevin Fritz

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