Wendell Castle and Nancy Jurs with their dog Wiley.

A vintage Porsche and a black Suburban sit parked on the circular drive in front of a 1905 house in Scottsville, N.Y., a proverbial one-stoplight town near Rochester. It's home to two singular artists who have been married 37 years and produced one daughter-Alison-and two distinctive careers.

On a late summer day on the property's 25 acres of lawns, gardens and ponds, the Suburban driver rides a Gator, a small tractor, delighting the couple's 2-year-old granddaughter, Arabella, who lives in Paris and punctuates her sentences with "oui, or is it "whee"?

The owner of the Porsche is said to be drawn outdoors only for a tennis game or classic-car show.

This has been home for Nancy Jurs and Wendell Castle since New Year's Eve 1978. Nancy, 67, is a ceramist known for her expressive, large-scale figures, often with feminist themes, but she's also an accomplished potter. And the Gator-riding Suburban driver.

At 76, Castle is the dean of studio furniture, but also a sculptor, adept at blurring the lines between the two. Not to mention an avid tennis player who took up the game at 50.

Jurs and Castle met in 1963 at the School for American Crafts at Rochester Institute of Technology, where she was an undergraduate student (she received her BFA that year) and he headed the furniture department. He claims he got the job in 1962 "by default" when the dean, Harold Brennan, wanted a sculptural furniture maker. "I fit the bill perfectly because I'm probably the only sculptor he could come up with who'd been making furniture," Castle confesses.

Jurs recounts that she found this "lanky guy from Kansas with his pants tucked into his cowboy boots "weird." They knew each other casually, but finally clicked in 1967 when she mentioned that she was doing raku firings, using sawdust, something Castle had plenty of.
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