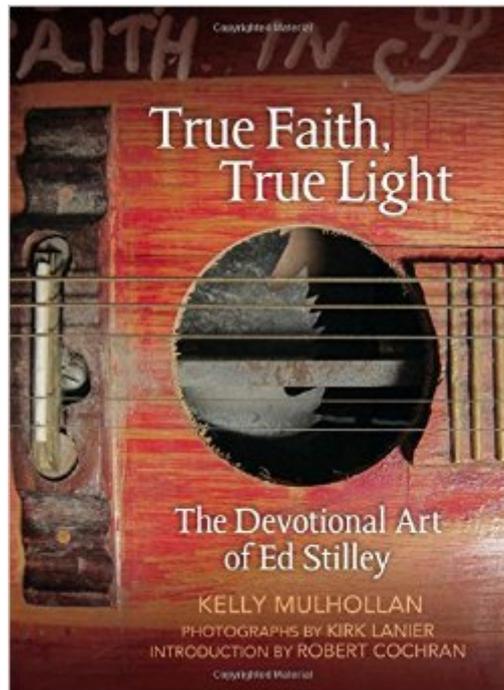


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# True Faith, True Light: The Devotional Art Of Ed Stilley



## Synopsis

In 1979, Ed Stilley was leading a simple life as a farmer and singer of religious hymns in Hogscald Hollow, a tiny Ozark community south of Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Life was filled with hard work and making do for Ed, his wife Eliza, and their five children, who lived in many ways as if the second half of the twentieth century had never happened. But one day Ed's life was permanently altered. While plowing his field, he became convinced he was having a heart attack. Ed stopped his work and lay down on the ground. Staring at the sky, he saw himself as a large tortoise struggling to swim across a river. On his back were five small tortoises—his children—clinging to him for survival. And then, as he lay there in the freshly plowed dirt, Ed received a vision from God, telling him that he would be restored to health if he would agree to do one thing: make musical instruments and give them to children. And so he did. Beginning with a few simple hand tools, Ed worked tirelessly for twenty-five years to create over two hundred instruments, each a crazy quilt of heavy, rough-sawn wood scraps joined with found objects. A rusty door hinge, a steak bone, a stack of dimes, springs, saw blades, pot lids, metal pipes, glass bottles, aerosol cans—Ed used anything he could to build a working guitar, fiddle, or dulcimer. On each instrument Ed inscribed "True Faith, True Light, Have Faith in God." • True Faith, True Light: The Devotional Art of Ed Stilley documents Ed Stilley's life and work, giving us a glimpse into a singular life of austere devotion.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A totally amazing and inspirational book, for the curious and creative type person. Or, possibly our

history folks. This man's journey, by God's loving hand, shows what is possible, with inventiveness, hard work, inspiration from God, and talent. Wonderful !

If you or someone you know loves instruments or music, loves folk art, loves the Ozarks, loves a good/quirky/bizarre story, loves handmade objects, or loves God, you have found a book that will fascinate and entertain. Ed Stilley is one of the last of the true folk artists... disengaged from modern American life, he responded to a vision and began to make instruments out of trees and scrap wood with primitive tools in his workshop. Kelly Mulhollan has spent twenty years befriending Ed and his family and unraveling the story of Ed's amazing journey, making hundreds of instruments for friends, family, and the children of Hogscald Holler deep in the Ozark mountains. This book is his labor of love and his homage to Ed's art-- which Ed would not even categorize as such. This is an amazing tale, beautifully told and eloquently photographed. Give it as a gift, or buy one for yourself and then come back buying more for your likeminded friends. I've never seen anything like it. Tip: Once you're hooked, don't forget to check out Kelly's website and google Ed's name. There's more to see there.

This book about the life of Arkansas Living Treasure, Ed Stilley, is written with love, care, and humor by Kelly Mulhollan, who along with his talented wife and band partner, Donna, took the time to get to know Mr. Stilley and preserve a part of Arkansas culture and history that is slipping away. Great story with wonderful photos.

ed is my neighbor. kelly did a great job.

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