

Sculpture NorthWest

May/June 2015

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ART WAITING TO HAPPEN
AT CAMP BROTHERHOOD

Sculpture NorthWest is published every two months by NWSSA, NorthWest Stone Sculptors Association, a Washington State Non-Profit Professional Organization.

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Membership.....\$45/yr.

Subscription (only).....\$30/yr.

Please Note: Only full memberships at \$45/yr. include voting privileges and discounted member rates at symposia and workshops.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the NWSSA's *Sculpture NorthWest Journal* is to promote, educate, and inform about stone sculpture, and to share experiences in the appreciation and execution of stone sculpture.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Did you get to Lakewold Gardens to see the large outside pieces and the smaller pieces on display in the mansion? It was an excellent showing of our members work in a very nice venue; rumor has it a piece or two may have sold. They have asked us to consider showing large pieces again next spring, possibly extending the outdoor display from April until September, so think about carving something big for next year. Speaking of something big, the Bellingham “Regional Sculptors, Regional Stone” show opens June 5th. Check out the write-up elsewhere in the journal and please come to see what has been assembled. It’s all stone and all NWSSA members.

Pat Barton has been successful (relentless) in working with the local Rock and Gem clubs in the Puget Sound region to display and sell our carving work. A big thanks to those members who displayed work at those shows. Pat’s work has resulted in NWSSA being invited to talk at their local meetings about stone carving and coming to Camp B and Suttle Lake symposiums. Last year we had 2 new attendees from rock and gem clubs.

Note that our August symposium had changed locations. It is now at Suttle Lake near Sisters, Oregon.

For me the winter and spring was filled with carving and travel (more to follow) so the NWSSA winter/spring party didn’t happen. The only consolation I can offer is a picnic in the park on June 20th. Thanks to Cyra Jane Hobson, we have a grassy area reserved at Volunteer Park in Seattle for a picnic, to display a piece or two, and to invite the public to chat and eat with us. Check out nwssa.org or Facebook for details and set aside June 20th as a day to socialize and enjoy time with your fellow carvers.

Until then, carve proud,

... Carl

FROM THE EDITORS...

Summer is here and the carving weather is back. Nice to be able to work without down-jackets, snow- suits and over-thick gloves.

But, if you feel like you’d like to put your feet up and relax for an hour with some art, here is what this issue has for you.

Somewhat relevant to our last issue regarding ownership of art, is the interesting article from NPR about the Venice Biennale Modern Art Show. You can make your own decision about Kenya’s Pavilion. Is it theirs or is it China’s?

In place of the spotlight section, we are introducing “Quick Look.” Our first look will be at Lloyd Whannell.

From the Touchstone website, Jill Snider Lum shares her love of the “Subtractive Art Form.” It’s a simple statement that we all can relate to.



What? There’s a new gallery in Bellingham?

And finally, our Centerfold belongs to Camp Brotherhood. Take a virtual walk through this year’s Workshops. We’re sure you’ll find something to interest you. We hope to see you there.

In the meantime, let’s go have a conversation with a nearby stone.

... Penelope and Lane

A NEW GALLERY IN BELLINGHAM



A new sculpture group called Sculpture Northwest, is opening a gallery in Bellingham. It will be a 1,050 sq. ft. space to showcase the work of emerging and established Northwest artists. Their mission is to make sculpture in the four northwestern Washington counties more accessible to the public. To get the whole thing started, they are giving NWSSA members the opening show from June 5 through August 16. Here is Wade Marlow to tell you about the show.

“Regional Stone, Regional Sculptors” opens as the inaugural show at Sculpture Northwest’s new gallery at 203 Prospect St. studio 101 Bellingham. The choice of offering this show to NWSSA was made simple by the knowledge of the very high level of artistry of the members. Not so simple was selecting the

work from a large body of submissions. The resulting show is of such a uniformly exceptional quality that the viewer will be amazed and leave the show with a much deeper understanding of the regional work being done and the aesthetics involved. While the work inevitably varies among the thirty two artists represented, there are still qualities that thread their way though the show. The most obvious quality is elegance. So much of the work has that timeless simplicity and high workmanship that is most pleasing to the eye. Sculpture Northwest is proud to present this remarkable show.

For more information contact Wade Marlow at:

wademarlow50@gmail.com.



ARTIST'S RENDERING OF THE NEWLY REBUILT FRONT OF THE GALLERY

THE ATTRACTION OF SUBTRACTIVE ART

by Jill Snider Lum

For most of my life, when asked about my artistic abilities, I'd say, "Sorry; I'm artistically impaired."

And I thought I was speaking the truth. I can't draw to save my life; the light-and-shadow-play of painting and pastel-work eludes me; and while I'm proficient at thread-craft, I can't work without a pattern, so my thread-work is really an expression of someone else's artistry. Creating art by putting materials together – pencils, charcoal, pastels or paints onto paper, board or canvas – is just beyond me. Despite all my efforts, even with the helpful teaching of others, I can't do it; I've no instinct for it. Artistic ability? Feh. Not me.



The Tanuki Emerges

But not long ago I was with a group of friends on vacation by the lake, and one of them was carving a crouching cat out of soapstone. I was, to be honest, madly envious of her work. She'd started with a small, grey, rectangular block, and this beautiful little dark-green cat was emerging from it under her hands. It looked like so much fun; so tactile and creative; and in conception, almost miraculous.

But of course, I thought, I could never do that. I can't make anything artistic. Two-dimensional artwork is impossible for me. Three-dimensional art... I can't even conceive of it.

I voiced this to my friend as she worked. "You might not be right about that," she said. "Carving is a different kind of process. Drawing and painting are additive – you're putting lines and colours there that weren't there before. But carving is a subtractive art. You're removing the parts that don't belong."

That was something I'd never thought of. To my surprise, it struck a chord with me. When we got back to the city, I went with some other sculpting friends to a sculpture supply place, and bought myself a rock. Armed with a set of wood-chisels, a tack-hammer, some rifflers and a rasp – I hadn't yet been exposed to the point-chisel, much less the scutch – and with the support of my friends who loved carving, I began the process of subtraction.

I knew what I wanted to make – a Japanese mythological creature called a Tanuki. So I'd picked out my rock according to the shape that seemed most likely for it. I looked at pictures of Tanuki in books, at the cast-porcelain ones, the carved wooden ones... even a little Tanuki figurine I'd found, and was using as a guide to Tanuki anatomy.

As I began to work with the rock, discovering how to use my chisels and rasps, I discovered something

else, something remarkable. Three-dimensional subtractive art made sense to me, in a way two-dimensional additive art never had.

After a while, it no longer felt as though I were making a rock into a Tanuki. Instead, I realized the Tanuki was hiding in the rock, and I was getting rid of the bits of rock that weren't a Tanuki. I'd heard that cliché before, but never realized what it meant, what mental process it referred to.

The Tanuki in the rock wasn't standing in the way I'd thought he should be. He wasn't an upright, chipper Tanuki. He'd drunk a lot of sake, and he was bombed out of his skull, leaning against a wall and grinning pie-eyed at the world. His straw hat was crooked, distorted a bit because of the way he was leaning. Instead of the traditional fresh sake flask and promissory note that he was supposed

Continued on Page 8 ►

28TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL STONE CA

*We invite you to join us at the Treacy Levine Center at Camp Brotherhood f
enjoying the camaraderie of fellow stone enthusiasts. Bring yourself, your cr
have stone or tools, we have an entire tent set up for beginners with tools an*



**BOB
LEVERICH**

Shaping Form and Space

Bob works primarily with direct carving methods in granite and will assist those who want to think about and make works that might use a single stone or multiple stones to create a dialogue, between the viewer and stone, the space around them, and perhaps even the larger landscape the work inhabits.

rt.leverich@gmail.com

www.rtleverich.com



**MJ
ANDERSON**

Finding Your Voice in Marble

Carving stone since 1984, MJ brings sculptures to fruition in both her studios in Carrara, Italy and in Nehalem, a small town on the Oregon coast. She annually selects marble, travertine and onyx from quarries and stone yards of Carrara for her iconic figurative and abstract sculptures. Her workshops will focus on the concepts of figurative carving.

mjandersonsculpture.com



**RUTH
MUESELER**

Self-taught, Ruth's art runs the gamut from the tiny to monumental, from humor to eulogy. As an instructor, Ruth is thoughtful in her manner and respectful of those wanting to learn stone. She will teach you about the stone and the tools and how to use them. She comes highly recommended by her former students.

ruththesculptor@yahoo.com

CARVING SYMPOSIUM — JULY 11-19, 2015

For up to eight days of playing with stone, communing with nature, and creative energy, your humor, tools, and a favorite piece of stone. If you don't need instructors.



KNUT HÜNEKE

Hand Carving Basalt

Knut Hüneke, born 1962 in Darmstadt, Germany, served his apprenticeship as stonemason and sculptor in Freiburg. His work has been in various national and international projects and exhibitions, with a particular focus on volcanic rock. "To me, the synthesis of material and idea requires that you only take away as much as necessary to let the figure emerge. Leave as much as possible to the stone."

skulptur@knuthueneke.org

www.knuthueneke.org



TAMARA BUCHANAN

Beginning Stone Sculpture

Throughout the week, Ruth and Tamara will be hosting a beginners workshop focused on safe tool usage and introductory instruction. Tamara has been sculpting for over 25 years. Featured in many shows throughout the West, her work has won several awards. She loves sharing the process of carving and has been teaching at her studio on Lopez Island for over 10 years.

lopezsculptor@yahoo.com



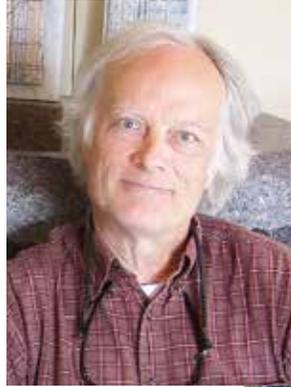
DEBORAH WILSON

Elegance in Jade

An acclaimed contemporary jade and granite sculptor, Deborah will be offering a workshop in jade. Her work reflects her love for organic forms and her ongoing interest in utilizing the characteristics that define this "stone of heaven." A good selection of precut Canadian and US jades will be for sale to create small scale sculpture and pendants. Class limit is 10 people, so register early and watch your registration confirmation for details.

deborahwilson.bc.ca

A QUICK LOOK AT LLOYD WHANNELL



fineartbuilders.com

I call this piece “Sun Catcher.” It is 93” tall and is made from a salvaged wire saw basalt offcut. I shaped the outer edge and added a metal band to create a circle for more definition. To give it a larger scale, I used a length of columnar basalt for the base.

This was one of two pieces chosen for Langley’s new outdoor sculpture program, and will be on display on Second Avenue until December 2015. There is a current call to artists for next year’s sculptures. Go to Langleywa.org for an application. The deadline for submissions is July 1, 2015.



‘SUN CATCHER’ ▶

SUBTRACTIVE ART *Continued from page 5*

to be carrying, he had a empty cup in one hand, and an open flask in the other, which he was thinking of pouring from if he could only manage the coordination. From the look on his face, he wasn’t quite sure.

I continued removing non-Tanuki layers of soapstone, and the more I subtracted, the more individual he became. And he looked, I realized, not like Tanuki statues I’d seen, but like my own subconscious

impression of a Tanuki: fun-loving, sake-loving, not terribly reliable but basically good-hearted, looking for the next party and not concerned with outward appearances – he could shape-shift if he wanted to, but this one couldn’t be bothered. He was having too good a time.

I’m still working on him. I need to remove some more stone that’s keeping me from seeing all of him, and then begin the process of sanding him smooth. He’ll be

shades of gold and beige and dark green, in a pattern that reminds me of the fur of wild raccoon-dog tanuki, the basis for the legendary Tanuki who inhabit Japanese lore.

It’s amazing how much pleasure I’m getting out of not being artistically impaired!

This is an excerpt from “Touchstones,” found on the website: sculptorstouch.com



AT THE 2015 VENICE BIENNALE ART SHOW

Why is the Kenya pavilion full of Chinese art?

In the last issue of Sculpture NorthWest, we showcased six of our members talking about what they thought made their art their own. That is, how much work must they do to sign their name to it?

In this issue, we are expanding the question to the international scene by covering what is happening at the 2015 Venice Biennale Art Show. Can it be called the Kenyan Pavilion when it is filled almost exclusively with Chinese art by Chinese artists?

The Venice Biennale is one of the oldest and most important exhibitions of contemporary art in the world.

This year Kenya is part of the exhibition. NPR's Gregory Warner reports that there is something odd about the artists who've been chosen to represent that countryalmost none of them are Kenyan.

Why Are Chinese Artists Representing Kenya At The Venice Biennale?

There's something sketchy at this year's Venice Biennale — the international art exhibition sometimes dubbed the Olympics of the contemporary art world.

When you come to the Kenyan pavilion, almost all of the artists will be ... Chinese.

The Biennale, one of the oldest and most important exhibitions of contemporary art in the world, takes place in Venice every two years. Thirty countries, including the U.S., have a permanent slot.

About 50 other countries have applied for their own exhibition space, called a pavilion. The East African country of Kenya hosted its first pavilion in 2013 and plans to host another this year, featuring mainly Chinese nationals. None of them have apparently ever been to Africa or reference it in their work.

The controversial roster has provoked outrage among Kenyan bloggers and artists. It's also provoked a sense of déjà vu — the same thing happened in 2013.



▲ 'DYNAMIC AFRICA' BY WANGECHI MUTU



▲ WANGECHI MUTU FROM KENYA

In Nairobi, where the Kenyan contemporary art scene is gaining traction with serious art buyers, the news is being felt not just as an artistic flop but as a colossal missed opportunity. "It's a kick in the stomach," says Sylvia Gichia, director of Kuona Trust, an artist's collective and residency program in Nairobi. Organizations like hers work hard to bring Nairobi's artistic renaissance to a global audience via art fairs and art auctions.

Needless to say she is dismayed that the 370,000 art lovers who visit the Biennale will see none of the work that's driving the contemporary Kenyan scene. "What," Gichia asks, "do the Chinese have to do with visual arts in Kenya?"

Nobody in Kenya's government will answer that question. Calls and texts to the personal cellphone of Nairobi's minister of

KENYA PAVILION *(continued)*



▲ FENG ZHENGGIE FROM BEIJING

culture, Hassan Wario, went unanswered. In most countries, the government either selects the artists or assigns that duty to a private gallery. In Kenya, the government apparently played no role other than to fob off the job to an Italian curator, Paola Poponi.

Poponi cannot say she has ever set foot in Kenya, but her official title is “commissioner” of the Kenyan pavilion, the same title she held in 2013. She defended the choice of artists in an email liberal with capitalizations, saying that the Kenyan pavilion ably expressed the international theme of this 56th Biennale, which is All The World’s Futures.

Poponi wrote, “Talking about art FROM ANOTHER PART OF THE WORLD during an art exhibition can be useful for KENYA, always more able to create its OWN IDENTITY.” She said that art should not be constrained by geography and explained in a follow-up email that “MEETING THE REST OF THE WORLD” would enable Kenyan artists to analyze their own experiences “more deeply.”

But if Poponi’s goal is to expand the vision of Kenyan artists and have them “meet” the rest of the world, what better way than to invite Kenyans to the Biennale exhibition?

Poponi wrote back to say that the pavilion does feature Kenyans. Two of them. The one ethnic Kenyan in this pavilion — Yvonne Amolo, who has won awards for her film about racism — lives in Switzerland and has no connection to the contemporary Kenyan art scene.

The other Kenyan citizen is a 72-year-old Italian-born painter, sculptor and real estate magnate who has lived in the Kenyan

coastal town of Malindi for nearly a half a century. Armando Tanzini sits at the heart of this controversy, because he’s the only artist whose work has appeared in both the 2013 and 2015 Kenyan pavilions.

I sat down with Tanzini last week in a cafe in Nairobi to understand how the pavilion had come to be. He explained that if not for his efforts, Kenya would not have any pavilion at all.

“The government of Kenya, they don’t know about this important exhibition, the Biennale,” he says. “I try several times to help them to understand.”

Finally, in 2013, with the government’s approval, he paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to get Kenya a pavilion and organize the show. This year he says it wasn’t solely his money. He had other private sponsors. But again, no funding was forthcoming from Kenya’s government. “Unfortunately, if I want to bring Africa, or Kenya, I must compromise in some way,” he said. “Compromise because we have not the money.”

Tanzini wouldn’t elaborate on what this compromise was, or where the additional money had come from.



▲ ZHENGGIE’S PORTRAIT WORK

A petition circulating on Change.org, titled Renounce Kenya’s fraudulent Representation at 56 Venice Biennial 2015, proclaims that “a group of well connected persons, who lack neither the intellectual nor creative capacity to represent Kenya’s contemporary art to the international arena, are posturing to the world as the Kenyan Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennial in Italy.”



▲ PATRICK KINUTHIA FROM KENYA

The Biennale would not respond to requests for comment. When the exhibition opens on May 9, participants will have to contend with Kenyan protesters who say they'd rather have no pavilion at all than one that doesn't represent their country. Novelist Binyavanga Wainaina told me that [the] issue is not with the Biennale nor with Tanzini but with Kenya's Ministry of Culture — and it's dismissive attitude toward the arts.



▲ KINUTHIA'S PORTRAIT WORK

"That this parody could happen two years ago was already far from excusable," Wainaina said. That it would happen a second time, without government comment, he says, is "farcical."

Excerpted from the full text of All Things Considered, March 30, 2015 by Gregory Warner



EXCERPT FROM THE PAST

January 1995

NWSSA Journal

**Who Were Those Masked People?
"Hello" from a new stone carver**

Here we are, not even at the six month mark between Symposia, and I wonder how I will make it until next July. The last Symposium was like the proverbial shot in the arm, but a lot more fun. For me, a person who is new to stone carving, and who lives in a relatively isolated area, (and as far south as possible and still be in the Northwest - if I sneeze in my living room in Oregon, they say "bless you" on my front porch in California). I found last year's Symposium to be a combination of a) several really great on-going classes, b) an unlimited chance to play with stone, and c) getting together with a bunch of old friends (for the first time).

I had heard about the NWSSA Symposium from various people at various times, but it wasn't until last year that I loaded up my air-hose and headed north. When I walked into Fisher Lodge on the Monday of the second week, it was the middle of breakfast

and I experienced "that" feeling you get when you walk into a room full of people, all of whom seem to have known each other since birth, and you know no one.

That feeling lasted about one and a half minutes. As soon as I walked up to the registration desk I was greeted like an old friend who hadn't been seen in months. No sooner had I signed in, when Joyce Taylor (a friend I truly hadn't seen in months) came up to me and said, 'Have you had breakfast yet? Get a plate and come and sit down with us.' (Us being the other 60- some people in the room.) I sat down and was in time for the 'meeting' part of breakfast ("Hello, Brian"), and by the time we left for the field, I was beginning to feel measurably more comfortable.

Down on the field, I realized that I had seriously under-packed. No work table (what was I thinking, I would hold the stone on my lap?), no shelter (and the temp. was on its way to the high eighties), and really no sense of what I was going to do (not that unusual). Within minutes Joyce

had moved her stand to accommodate me under her shelter, (as well as Sandy Falcone who had a good excuse for not bringing a tent as she flew in from Minnesota), Vic had volunteered a work table and before I knew it, I had a "space" to work.

The whole week was filled with similar acts of generosity. The NWSSA has to be one of the most generous group of people that I've ever had the good fortune to come across. Generous with equipment, with time, with knowledge and support. Never, of the hundreds of questions that I must have asked during that week, did I get anything but a willing answer. Never was anyone too busy to help.

And so here I am, too far south to attend meetings (thank goodness for the newsletter), but not too far to say hello and thanks again. See you next year!

Penelope Crittenden





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2015 CARVING CALENDAR

Camp Brotherhood

Mt. Vernon, WA

July 11th through 19th, 2015

Suttle Lake

Sisters, Oregon

August 23rd through 30th, 2015

From our friend Peter Becker, who brings us the monthly on-line Stone-Ideas.com, comes this list of stone symposia around the world:

<http://www.stone-ideas.com/2013/04/12/art-hightimes-for-hammer-and-chisel-3/>
