

NORTHWEST STONE SCULPTORS ASSOCIATION  
JULY/AUGUST 2018

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*By George Pratt*

WE DON'T MAKE MISTAKES  
*Inspired by Bob Ross*

A PICKUP FULL OF PEDESTALS  
*By NWSSA volunteers*

Sculpture Northwest



LARRY LAWLOR: "HANDS",  
ALABASTER,  
2015, 6" X 16" X 6"

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT...



Nothing from Carl for this issue

# A PICKUP FULL OF PEDESTALS



*The truck load of sculpture pedestals that were built by NWSSA volunteers in Pat Barton's spring workshop. Our thanks to those who came and saw and built.*

## FROM THE EDITORS...

**T**his is the season we've been waiting for. Pilgrim Firs, Suttle Lake... time to connect: refresh and renew.

Marching into summer, we have presented the centerfold ad for Peninsula's Camp Pilgrim Firs, and now we have for you the Central Oregon, Suttle Lake centerfold. Isn't it wonderful to have choices? And, of course, your choice may be to do both.

In this issue's Spotlight, we feature Larry Lawlor, from North Bend, Washington, a little town squeezed in between Interstate 90 and the base of 4,000 foot Mount Teneriffe. Though we have happily welcomed Larry at both the Oregon and the Washington symposiums, this is his first time to be featured in Sculpture NorthWest. Though relatively new to stone carving, he has, as you will see, been very busy with his hammer and chisel.

George Pratt shares with us another one of his elegant little granite carvings. This time it's banded neck ducks and a quartz crossed egg in a bronze cup. Amazing how he uses the markings of the stone to accent his carvings.

A popular painter by the name of Bob Ross, the man with big hair and a television show, gives us inspiration we can adapt for our work with stone.



And Pat Barton shares with us a picture showing the joy of getting together with friends to fill a pickup with lots of newly made wooden pedestals for sculpture display at NWSSA events.

Now get out and make the chips and dust fly!

Happy summer.

*... Penelope and Lane*



▲ ME; PICTURE TAKEN BY SOMEONE AT 2012 STONEFEST, MARENAKOS. SECOND YEAR OF CARVING, QUITE INTENSE

## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: LARRY LAWLOR

Looking for something to do, I found the world of stone at Marenakos' StoneFest 2011. I have done other artistic endeavors in my life but not sculpture and never stone as a medium. John Fisher was the carving instructor that year and those of you who know him can understand that I was hooked by the end of that week.

Now after seven years of carving, I have settled on a set of preferences that guide me. I like the feel of hand tools much more than machine tools. Because of this preference I stay in the

softer stones, limestone, alabaster, chlorite, marble. I am the most challenged by working in the figurative mode. It is the best of times for me when a piece of stone begins to tell a story, that moment when carving a hand or face is actually in proportion and becomes alive. It's not just a surface but the muscle and bone underneath. I must admit that abstract doesn't pull me in the same way.

Early on I stepped into relief carving as a way to talk about a story or recognizable moment. Themes of mother and child in either animal or human form and interesting people, moments or relationships, draw me the most. I have come to love the challenge of perspective, shadow and light, strong undercut edges, texture, movement, composition, all in a shallow carving with a frontal view.

I have a background in drawing, rendering and some painting, which probably explains the draw toward relief carving. It's all about light which is the strongest element of all in sculpture. Controlling how light reflects on the surfaces, gives you your highlights, middle values and darks.

I also work in a more three dimensional way, though, I still am carving in the figurative with front and back points of view. At first I stayed with limestone but hanging out with the NWSSA artists has broadened my understanding of different stones with their different characteristics. It's been wonderful to become aware of the translucent quality of alabaster, the deep blacks and grays of chlorite or high polish of marble.

I enjoy gardening and have produced a number of pieces for the garden. I carved a sculpture with two pieces in it that represent Nurturing and Protection which speaks to my own sense of my relationship to the garden. I owned two pieces of limestone that were three sided and 18 and 22 inches tall. I decided to put one face forward for Nurturing and two faces forward for Protection. I'm pleased with the results and they have been watching over my garden for the past three years. There are also some cheerful stone entities and motherly

spirits that watch over the garden.

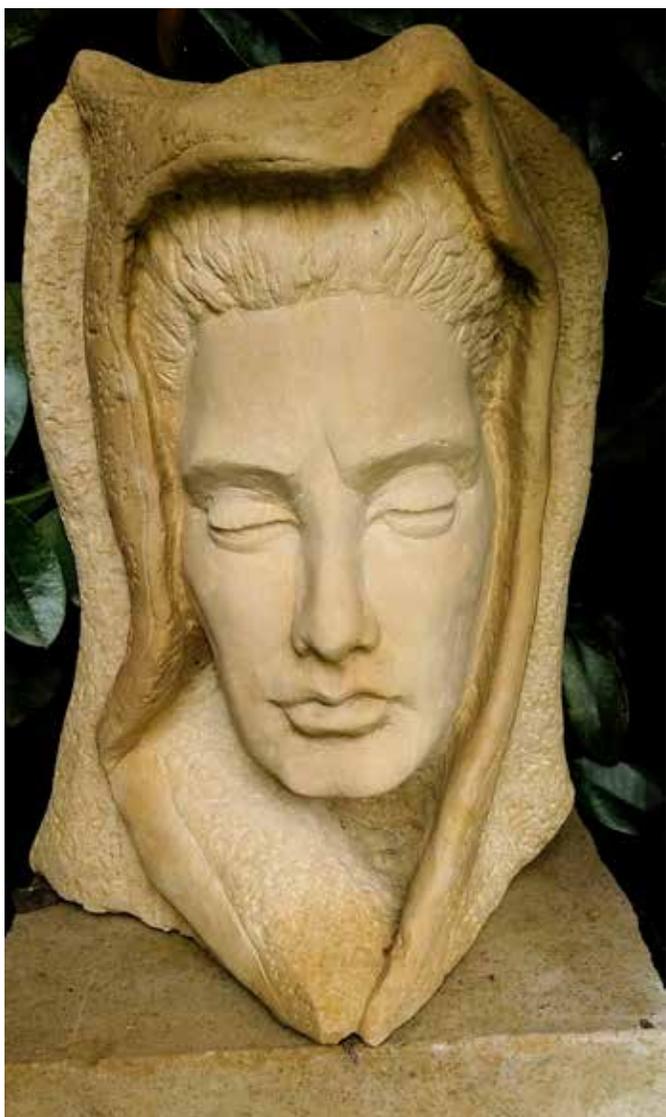
Another area of carving that I've become aware of is that of "Free Carving" versus "Modeling." My preference is free carving where one has an idea in mind or has a stone that says what you might find inside and you start removing stone. The finished piece might not be what you first envisioned but the trip along the way has been open, immediate and creative at every step, but not safe. You could end up with a pile of chips as a finished product.



▲ 'SLEEPING DOG', LIMESTONE, 2011, 24" X 7" X 9"  
*This is one of my earliest carvings, my first attempt at a horizontal three dimensional piece. It is based on a typical pose of our Dalmatian, Batia.*

In modeling you do your exploration usually in clay to find the finished product. Starting with a strong idea of what you want, you can add, remove, smooth and draw in the clay until you have found the sculpture you are after. You can work in a smaller scale as well. The carving process then becomes a copying and enlarging of your model into stone. Each method is not easier or harder than the other, just different in experience. In both cases you still have to pay attention to the needs of the stone. In free carving, you are free to explore and find the finished piece and in modeling you are challenged to reproduce your model faithfully.

I have used modeling or a "maquette" for three sculptures so far and I would like to describe the one which was my major exploration for the modeling process. I had previously purchased a 400 lb. equal-sided block of limestone. It came to me that a child squatting looking for something in the grass would fit into this stone. I attended a summer class in clay figure modeling which got me started in handling clay; took pictures of a neighbors' child; did a bunch of drawings; found a picture of a child bending over in overalls on line that I really liked; bought 10 pounds of modeling clay; made an armature from copper wire and, after some days of fiddling, I produced a model I liked in a half scale to the possible finished piece. I also fitted a wire frame around the model that gave me the outer edges of the block. I could



▲ 'MOTHER SPIRIT', LIMESTONE,  
2013, 9" X 16" X 8"  
*She watches over the garden.*

then measure the model itself and from the outer edges of the block to the model - times two. After a few months of carving, changing a few things as I went along, I had a stone carving that was very close to the clay model. I look at this piece now, a few years later, and wonder if it was worth it to create a lawn figure. The object the child is looking at in the grass is a frog.

Over the last few years, I have had a number of commissions and all have turned out well. It is a new learning experience and a challenge to carve for someone else. It is one thing to carve for yourself with all the general fears one carries about a successful carving, but to add the idea of satisfying someone else as well can be unnerving. I have found that letting go of outcome and just carving, works for me. I had the happy experience to be paid more than the asking price for one of my commission pieces.

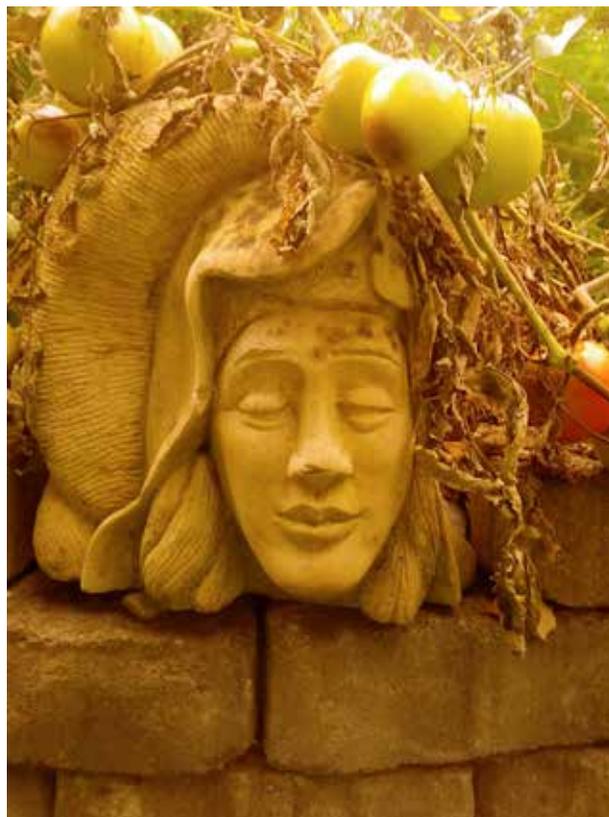


▲ MAQUETTE FOR  
'CHILD'S WORLD',  
MODELLING CLAY,  
7" X 10" X 9"



▲ 'CHILD'S WORLD',  
LIMESTONE,  
2016, 14" X 20" X 18"

I have also had the novel experience of selling some of my already carved sculptures. The first time was at Camp Brotherhood a few years back. Someone wants to buy one of my pieces?? – WOW! I sold two that day and was later told they got really good prices!



▲ 'GARDEN SPIRIT' LIMESTONE,  
2017, 12" X 12" X 10"  
*She also watches over my garden.*

*Continued on page 8 ►*

# SUTTLE LAKE SYMPOSIUM

## Greetings fellow carvers!

Each year, when the trees and flowers bloom here in Oregon, I realize that we are only two months away from our unique event in the mountains. The gathering of friends with the common goals of learning, creating and the sharing of ideas. The synergy I feel from being with new and like-minded people in THIS experience has no boundaries and is immeasurable.

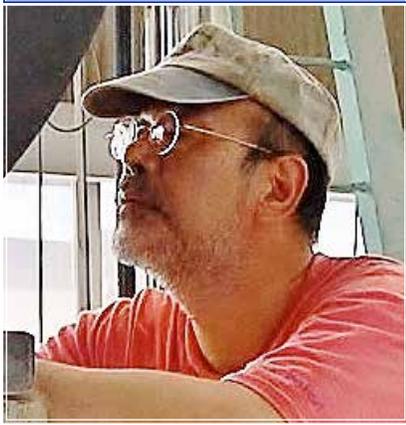
It is my pleasure to have the honor of awarding **Kazutaka Uchida** our Lifetime Achievement Award this year for all of his involvement in NWSSA's Oregon symposiums since their beginnings. We have been fortunate enough to foster a relationship with Japanese traditions because of his presence. This year we will

also have **Mitsuo Saiki** as an instructor. He will demonstrate his approach to the human figure as he did with such amazing skill last year.

It will also be my honor to present my sculpture mentor, **Lee Imonen**, with the Hammer Award for his years of selfless dedication and teaching to our cause. I know that he has touched the lives of almost everyone who is a NWSSA member and beyond, with his time, materials, and his infectious "Can-do spirit."

And **Joseph Kincannon** will be joining us from Texas. This will be Joseph's first experience with NWSSA symposiums, and should prove to be a fresh perspective towards a professional's relationship with stone.

KAZUTAKA UCHIDA



MITSUO SAIKI



LEE IMONEN



JOSEPH KINCANNON



JASON CLAUSON



# CENTRAL OREGON

Seattle Solstice will be with us again after an absence of four years. Both **Jason Clauson** and **Stuart Kendall** will be here to tell us about their latest projects, which I am sure will prove to be nothing short of remarkable.

**Mark Andrew** will be leading a “group monument carving event” for the venue. **Jim Ballard** will teach us about sandblasting stone to enable the visually impaired, **Stephanie Robison** will be bringing her talents as an instructor for newer students and **MJ Anderson** will be sharing her adventures from Italy earlier this year.

This is not a year to miss. The relationships we have developed with folks from Montana, Canada, and the Pacific Northwest make this symposium what it is; an

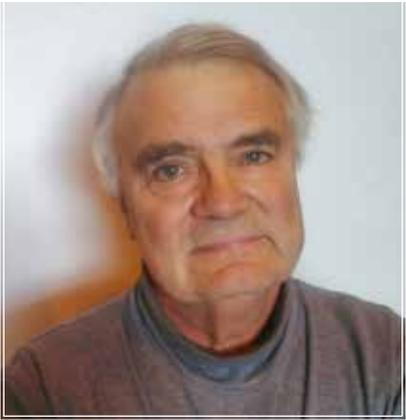
event worth coming to every year to recharge ourselves and in turn, the communities we go home to.

We have an extremely talented group of work studies people this year. Without your support, many young carvers would never consider stone sculpting an attainable endeavor.

Thank you all for making this happen.

Doug Wiltshire, SL Symposium Director 2018

STUART KENDALL



MARK ANDREW



JIM BALLARD



STEPHANIE ROBISON



MJ ANDERSON



# ARTIST SPOTLIGHT *continued from page 5*

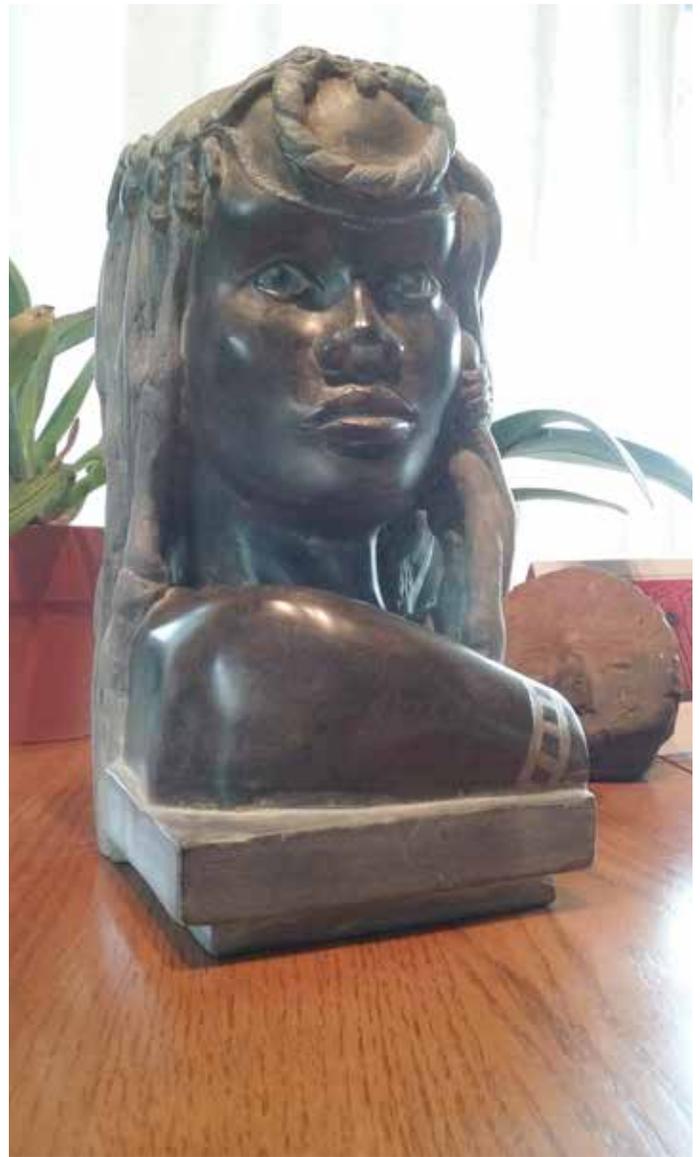
Most recently I sold a sculpture at this spring's Flower & Garden Show. It was a large piece of white alabaster titled "Laughing Wind." The piece is a woman's face with open mouth laughing while holding back her billowing hair. It went through three manifestations, first a baby in a basket, then a woman blowing over her hands and finally, "Laughing Wind." I was volunteering the last day of the show when I watched this couple standing in front of the piece, the lady with her hand on it for a long time. They asked if I would take less for the piece. When I said no, they seemed happy to pay full price. My last view of "Laughing Wind" was of it covered in the woman's coat, riding in a flimsy garden cart they purchased there, with them pushing/pulling it down through the crowded isle of the show. I'm a very lucky guy!



▲ 'LAUGHING WIND', ALABASTER,  
18" X 14" X 16"

My last two carvings seem to be following the times. With all the energy right now for women striving to achieve their rightful place, I wanted to add my expression of it.

The first is from a piece of chlorite. I call it "Proud" and it depicts a young African woman looking over her shoulder conveying her pride in who, what and how she is.



▲ 'PRIDE', CHLORITE,  
2017, 6" X 11 1/2" X 6 1/2"

The last piece is from white marble I finished this January. I have been struck lately by sculptures some of the famous cemetery in Staglieno, Italy. More specifically by Sammartino's "The Veiled Christ" and Strazza's "The Veiled Virgin." The work of these two 18th and 19th century Italian sculptors, clearly show the human features that lie beneath a veil yet show the features with a strong emotional impact. I wanted to try my hand at it. Also, I wanted to get more negative space into my work and wanted to make a statement to reinforce current women's struggles. Drawing a sense of my collective idea on each face of the block, off I went into free carving mode, finishing with "Lifting the Veil." I decided somewhere along the line to leave the veil material coarser than the sculptures from my research, I think, to suggest more aliveness to the piece.



▲ 'LIFTING THE VEIL', MARBLE,  
2018, 13" X 12" X 7"



▲ 'AFGHAN WOMAN, STILL SMILING',  
LIMESTONE, 2015, 20" X 21" X 4 1/2",  
2" CARVING DEPTH.

*Found this image on a Google search on refugees. Out of a large group of women, this woman was sitting in the middle of all the turmoil with a gentle smile. Had to try it. Also it was an interesting composition for a square stone with a number of textures. Getting the depth perspective right was a challenge.*

◀ "THE GODS", LIMESTONE, 2014,  
19" X 20" X 4 1/2",  
2" CARVING DEPTH.

*The challenge of this piece was in getting each individual face to work within the whole. I was interested at the time in the classic Greek and Roman sculpture of their male gods.*



Right now I'm in a two-month slump and need more stone. I have a persistent feeling that I'm just a beginner in this whole business and in many ways that is true. I suspect that for all of you carvers that are reaching into the unknown, at any level, feel a similar way. I feel gratitude for finding stone carving at this time of my life and comradeship with the many fine carvers I have found these last few years.



# GEORGE PRATT CARVES BLUE GRANITE DUCKS

Ten years ago, I found a remarkable piece of what I dubbed 'Malaspina Blue Granite' right here on my own property i.e., very close to Secret Cove on British Columbia's Sunshine Coast. Over the years I have carved some handsome sculptures from it, exploiting the numerous white quartz veins throughout to create ring-necked birds; see the mother/baby ducks. I broke one too-large piece of it up with an almighty sledge-hammer blow and was startled to find that it hosted several instances of a natural cross. This remarkable, rare egg that I carved from it needs no further description. Oh, yes, I carved and cast the 'egg-cup' from bronze. It is a fine little piece of artwork in itself.

Finally, I'm happy to report that a collector spoke for it an hour after I posted the advisory. Yay!



*“We don’t make mistakes, we just make happy accidents.”*  
*Bob Ross*

Every writer at some point will experience writers block. Carvers too can have the experience of feeling as though they have come to a creative dead end. Sometimes facing a new stone is all it takes.

Unless we have A Plan. Often we carve from a maquette. Following the original design precisely. Sometimes we begin with a drawing on paper and transfer it exactly to a grid on a block of dimensional stone.

Or, sometimes, we just direct carve.

We may begin with an idea, or we may just let our mind float. Go on automatic and get lost in the shapes and texture and color of the stone.

Or we might come up with nothing. That’s the time to invite your muse in and listen to what she has to say. Maybe something like this:

Anything you want to do you can do here. Maybe there’s a figure ready to leap from the stone. Maybe there’s an abstract inside. Often it just happens - whether or not you worried about it or tried to plan it.

Isn’t it great to do something you can’t fail at? We spend so much of our life looking - but never seeing. Now’s the chance to see our inner vision and translate it to stone.

Talent is a pursued interest. That is to say, anything you practice you can do. And the more you practice, the better you get.

No pressure. Just relax and watch it happen. The least little curve can do so much.

Don’t hurry. Take your time and enjoy. Let all these things just sort of happen. Chip a little away from here, make a swoop there, create a space.

Grind off a third of the stone. Smooth out bumps. Create bumps.

All you have to do is let your imagination off the leash. There’s really no end to this. Have a little bit of fun.

Come on. Pick up a tool. Let’s get started.

*The editors thank Bob Ross for the inspiration for the above suggestions.*





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*If you'd like to see your work in color in the Journal, Sculpture North West, (circulation over 275 copies) let us know. We are accepting submissions for the Spotlight Feature, a Snapshot article, or just a cool photograph of your work that you'd like to see published. Contact Lane at [lane@whidbey.com](mailto:lane@whidbey.com) or Penelope at [artist@crittendensculpture.com](mailto:artist@crittendensculpture.com).*

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**2018 CARVING CALENDAR**

**Camp Pilgrim Firs**

Port Orchard, WA

July 7-15, 2018

**Suttle Lake**

Sisters, Oregon

August 12-19, 2018

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And don't let us forget our friend Peter Becker who brings us stone ideas from around the world in the monthly, online [stone-ideas.com](http://www.stone-ideas.com).

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