Sculpture NorthWest

Quarterly

July - Aug - Sept 2010



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Artist Spotlight Gudrun Ongman John Lafortune Penelope Crittenden

THE VENTURA
RAMPARTS, PART II

THE ROSE-RED CITY OF PETRA

SILVER FALLS SYMPOSIUM

STONE CAMP 2010

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CONTACT

P.O. Box 27364 • Seattle, WA 98165-1864 FAX: (206) 523-9280 Website: www.nwssa.org General e-mail: nwssa-office@nwssa.org

NWSSA OFFICERS

Gerda Lattey, President, (250) 538-8686 Carole Turner, Vice President, 503-705-0619 Petra Brambrink, Treasurer, (503) 975-8690 Carl Nelson, Secretary, 425-252-6812

NWSSA BOARD Al Mangold, 206-282-6593 Seth Friedman, 206-755-8422

PRODUCTION STAFF
Penelope Crittenden, Co-editor, (360) 221-2117
Lane Tompkins, Co-editor, (360) 320-8597

DESIGNER Adele Eustis

PUBLISHER
Nannette Davis of PrintCore, (425) 485-5570

WEBMASTER Carl Nelson carl@mostlyrandom.info 425-252-6812

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MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the NWSSA's *Sculpture NorthWest Quarterly* 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...

oday after a particularly long day of problem solving and cutting stone, I found myself pondering my sometimes-conceptual arts community and subsequently you: the good folks of NWSSA came to mind. While attending Camp B I had several opportunities to reflect on a field full of dusty, unique individuals divided only by tarps and functioning as a whole.

While the sharing of knowledge, ideas, inspiration, jokes, hugs and beer is paramount for our kind of function - it is the rarity of our community, and the genuine spark that this collective possesses, that keeps me coming back for more. Thankfully, I get to witness this miracle one more time this year - at Silver Falls. I'm looking forward to seeing you all there.

-Gerda

ere we are in that delicate time between fond memories of Camp Brotherhood and the anticipation of seeing again our friends at Silver Falls. Not a bad place to be, really. Somewhere between these two annual events we have to take a breath to regain our equilibrium. Okay, breath taken and hopefully some sort of balance is regained.

This issue of The Quarterly is again packed full of all things stone.

Kentaro Kojima is back with his second offering on the Ramparts of Ventura. We have certainly enjoyed learning about the traditional Japanese stone mason team that came to Ventura to build something never seen there before.

And standing in our Artist Spotlight this time are two

artists that few of you know and one that many of you know. For the first time in the Quarterly you will meet Gudrun Ongman and John Lafortune, each with a sculpture carved at Camp B. While long-time member Penelope Crittenden shows us something she finished early this year.

And, hey, how about Petra? This time

I mean the fabled desert town carved out of living rock, not our very capable NWSSA Treasurer, Petra Brambrink. Joe Diedrick will show us some close-ups of stone carving writ large that he saw on a recent trip to Israel and Jordan.

Carmen Chacon, who was seen working every day at Camp B wearing a Utilikilt, has some insights for us on her time at camp.





FROM THE EDITORS...

So, nothing left to do, but kick off your shoes, and settle back and listen to some folks who love stone as much as you do.

Your Editors,

Lane and Penelope

THIS FROM CHUCK SHEPHERD'S NEWSOFTHEWEIRD.COM

ew Zealand's Waikato National Contemporary Art Award in September went to Dane Mitchell, whose entry consisted merely of discarded packaging materials from all the other exhibits vying for the prize. Mitchell called his pile "Collateral." (Announcement of the winner was poorly received by the other contestants.)

At a Christie's auction in September in New York City, London artist Gavin Turk's empty, nondescript cardboard box (the size of an ordinary moving-company box) sold for \$16,000. (Actually, it was a sculpture designed to look exactly like an empty, nondescript cardboard box.)



We know why the word angle is in angle grinder, but what is the word die doing in die grinder?

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GUDRUN ONGMAN



It amazes me that it has taken me this long to find stone as my favorite medium. I loved painting, drawing, and sculpting in other mediums because I could be fairly direct, emotive and "impatient." I feared that stone, with all its protective gear and "chipping away" methodology, would be incredibly frustrating. Imagine my shock when during an introductory workshop with Tamara Buchanan, hours

passed unnoticed. Over and over the only thing that brought me back to the outer reality of the 90° day was Tam's gentle

insistence I get rehydrated and stretch. Is it the timeless quality of the stone? Is it the contrast of soft muscles and hard stone? Is it having the outside world muffled by earplugs? Whatever, this collaborative process has me hooked.

'QUARRY NYMPH'

BY GUDRUN Ongman

And one of the best things about NWSSA and going to a symposium is the opportunity to learn from and watch others who dance and speak with stone. "Quarry Nymph" is only my second stone sculpture to near completion. I like to think she emerges from the stone depths in order to feed my new addiction.



'QUARRY NYMPH', LIMESTONE. 24" X 6" X 6"

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT



'A Dream of Wings', chlorite on steatite and limestone, 29" X 20" X 10"

NOT JUST "WINGS" BUT 'A DREAM OF WINGS'

BY PENELOPE CRITTENDEN

ears ago at Brotherhood, a slab of chlorite on one of Randy's palettes said to me 'Wings.' 'Swell', I said back, 'I love wings.' For such an obvious message, the details were slow in coming. I hauled that 75 pound piece around with me for about 6 years, until finally one day, it didn't just say 'Wings', it said "A Dream of Wings." Ah ha. I could do that.

PENELOPE CRITTENDEN

Once started, I won't say that the carving just zipped along, I am not a zippy carver, but it did progress... and that's one of the beautiful parts of carving: When things are going forward.

British Columbia chlorite is a hardish soft stone; it responds well to air tools, grinders and rasps. But what I really love about it is the natural quality of color variation that can be achieved through the use of varying textures. It can polish to a dark, lustrous color, or be a muted gray. This piece incorporates just about everything: the natural stone, some highly polished stone, and the almost white, muted gray left by the rasp.



John Lafortune

few years ago, while in the midst of several operations for a severe back injury, I wrote this: I carve not to become rich or famous. I carve for pain therapy. The more work I sell the more pain therapy I can afford.

One day while helping me, Serena looked at some of my drawings and said that she really liked this one drawing. It was an abstract shape much like a two-sided heart. I told her that if she ever married Cole, maybe I could make them a sculpture. Long story short, their wedding is getting close so I decided to turn the drawing she liked into reality.



"A HEART OF TWO', CANADIAN MARBLE, 27" X 14" X 6"

'HEART OF TWO'

by John Lafortune

The sculpture that I created at Camp B is for two very special people who came to live with my wife and me in 2007. That year I had two operations keeping me in bed for much of the time. I spent a lot of that time doing rough sketches for future sculptures. Serena and Cole were young, but willing helpers. Their being there made all the difference to my wife and me. It is for them that I carved this sculpture.

Having gotten a piece of red marble from Randy Zieber at Neolithic Stone, I started the sculpture on the first day of Camp Brotherhood this year, and had the rough shape done in two days. A seven inch grinder worked wonders, and the air hammer with a few carbide chisels to work the rest of the shape were the right tools to use for this piece. It took 3 days of shaping and wet sanding to get the final finish.

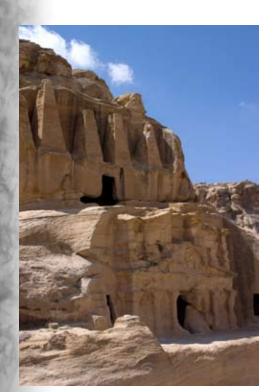
This sculpture has given me great satisfaction to carve for two people who absolutely deserve it. This sculpture is titled "HEART OF TWO" for two people with the biggest hearts I know. I hope they enjoy this sculpture as much as I enjoyed carving it. I am honored to have carved this piece for them.

THE ROSE-RED CITY HALF AS OLD AS TIME

BY JOEY DIEDRICK

he abandoned city of Petra, located in the middle eastern nation of Jordan, is not the easiest place to get to. In order to most easily access it, you must travel down a narrow gorge, (al-Siq in Arabic) dodging Bedouin donkey carts and throngs of tourists. The shade it provides is a welcome relief

from the searing hot sun you endured on your way down from the visitor's center. Nature has done her part carving the walls that tower overhead. As



RUINS ON THE HIKE DOWN TO PETRA



JOEY IN PETRA

you descend, you come across the occasional evidence of what man has wrought. The one constant is a waist-level trough that was used to bring water into the city.

The crawling pace would be more bearable were any of the tour leaders around you speaking English. With eavesdropping not an option, you take to weaving in and around the larger, slower groups to make your way through the pack. Then you see it. The Treasury stands just a hundred yards away. A massive breath-taking façade carved from the Cambrian sandstone that makes up the entire valley. It stands alone, both in location and preservation, above the rest of the ancient city. A short camel ride delivers you deeper into the city where you can crawl amongst the mineralized rocks and studio apartments cut into the cliffs.

From afar, the valley appears monochromatic as you would expect from such an arid landscape.



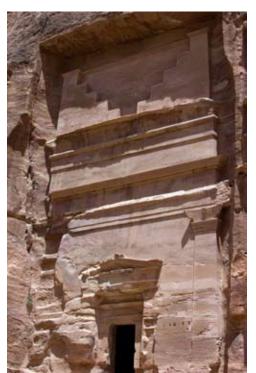
THE NARROW WALLS OF THE GORGE LEADING DOWN TO PETRA



STUDIO CONDOS, VIEWS OF THE WHOLE VALLEY



PRETTY COMMON FOR COLORS FOR THE WALLS AND CEILINGS OF THE CAVES

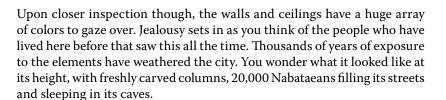


FAÇADE IN SLIGHT DISREPAIR



ARCHITECTURAL DETAILING

WALL DETAIL HIGHLIGHTING MINERALIZATION



For any person appreciative of stone or architecture or history or adventure, it is well worth the trip.



IRRIGATION CHANNEL DELIVERING WATER TO THE CITY



SOME OF THE LARGER BUILDINGS IN THE VALLEY

SILVER FALLS SYMPOSIUM

AUG. 28TH - SEPT. 15T

The trees are green, the falls are silver and the time is now. If you've got the yen for some stone carving now is the time to signup for five days of nothing but stone - morning till night.

And we have some wonderful people to show us how they do things. John Fisher from California will be there carving stone with a furor that'll make you think you're in a second renaissance.

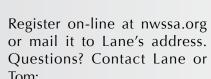
New to NWSSA workshops will be William Pickerd, an artist from Eugene, Oregon who turns translucent alabaster on a lathe like you wouldn't believe. He will be doing that right in front of us every day.



Tom:

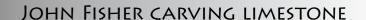
Tom Urban (541) 741-4117 tfurban@uoregon.edu

Lane Tompkins (360) 320-8597 lane@whidbey.com 673 Third St. Langley, WA 98260





WILLIAM PICKERD TURNING ALABASTER



Rich Hestekind will be there telling us about his successful work in using stone to move water, as well as giving us demos on flaming stone with a torch. Fire and water. What could be more elemental?

And for all of our tool questions, **Tom Urban** will show us the answers on the tools, including core drills diamond chain saws and the unbelievable ring saw.

David P. Miller is also making a one day appearance with his hand tool magic and his winning personality.

In addition to all this, we also get gorgeous hiking trails, great food, campfire fun into the night and lots of fun-loving friends, both old and new.



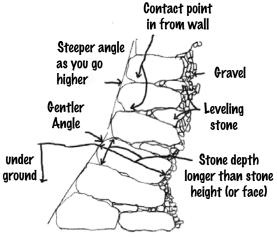
THE ANOH-SHUH-ZUMI RAMPARTS OF

VENTURA, CALIFORNIA

PART II

BY KENTARO KOJIMA

Ed: We are happy to present here the final installment of Kentaro's wonderful description of the ancient Japanese art of Anoh-shuh-zumi drywall construction as it was used in the small town of Ventura, California in February of this year.



ANOH-SHUH-ZUMI DRYWALL CONSTRUCTION

The secret of the strength of the walls and ramparts

rests on the interior and not the exterior of the structures.'

- Junji (the 14th)



TO START, YOU NEED TO DIG TWO BIG HOLES. THEN YOU NEED A LOT OF ROCK.

tinued, "You use the smallest face of the stone to face out. Say, if you have a rectangular parallelepiped (a long boxy stone) with the smallest face measuring one square meter, you want, on average, two meters of length that extends toward the inside of the wall."



hat you see is not the whole story," Junji con- I was starting to understand a little about the need to "weave" the stones and how you start with the cornerstone, but there were still many things I could not grasp. One of those was the importance of the depth of the stones.

> While doing laundry in the hotel, I put the question to Shun, the young apprentice, and he explained it to me this way.

"Basically, a rampart is a big pile of gravel encased in woven stone walls." I never thought about it that way, but I guess it can be simplified as such.

Shun continued. "So, if you have slabs of stones standing on edge facing the walls that is not much of a support. You need long stones to reach deeper into the core of the rampart for stability. That's why if you find yourself using the biggest face of the stone facing out, you have to think it over and choose another stone." This made a lot of sense to me. And then I understood better what Junji was trying to tell me.

When Junji speaks of stones and walls and building walls, he is very gentle and patient in explaining things. One can feel that this is a man who loves his trade and is very, very experienced. But, because of his deep understanding of the art and his tendency to be efficient, sometimes he says so much in a short sentence that it is only afterward that I realize what he is talking about.

The art of traditional stone wall building runs in his blood. He is the 14th generation of the Awata family: the only family left in Japan that specializes in the craft of traditional Japanese dry stone walling. Their lineage goes back 400 years; that's longer than the United States has existed as a nation.



The tradition goes through some ups and downs, but around the Sengoku period (the civil war era of the 15th and 16th century) demand for walls spiked. Warring generals needed defenses and they needed them guickly. It is around this time that the Anoh-group-stacking becomes famous and highly desirable.

a lot of questions regarding the ratio of the curve, how to determine that ratio, the secret formula, and so on, but the answers that were given was not nearly as specific. "The curve is determined by how firm is the ground, how tall the structure needs to be and how large the area needs to be on the top. It's a balance."



LEFT: TETSU SPLITTING STONE WITH TOBI-YA CHISELS. MIDDLE: DONNA HASBROUCK, A MASON FROM LOPEZ ISLAND, CUSTOM CUTS A FILLER STONE. RIGHT: THE CREW AT WORK. NOTE THE

WHITE TOBI-YA CHISEL MARKS.

Even with this long tradition, the Awatas told me of their concern when they accepted the invitation to come to the workshop and teach in "the west." They were well aware of the long tradition of using stone in buildings in "the west," so they did not know how they might contribute to it. (I am thinking they lumped Europe and USA together as "the west.")

"The curves, we thought that might be something we could contribute," they said, referring to one of the most extraordinary elements in the rampart - the curving walls that when looked in profile, give a very sophisticated and elegant grace to the structure. So much so that when I get caught up in the beautiful curve, I almost forget that it is made of big, rugged, unruly boulders.



just telling it the way it is. The curve of the wall started gentle and came to be perpendicular toward the top. If you imagine the inside of a wok, you get the rough picture (the walls even curve concave ever so slightly).

When pressed for more specifics, the

answer was, "You need to see many

walls and build many to develop your

taste. You will get used to it the more

experience you have." The answers were

slightly frustrating, but they seemed to

be neither evasive nor aloof, they were

Another hot topic was about the wedges the Japanese masons brought. These wedges were called mame-ya (pea-arrow, because they are small) or tobi-ya (jumping-arrow, because they jump out of the hole if you don't use them right.) They used these to split stones very effectively. I found these wedges fascinating for their efficiency and rarity, but even more for the almost primitive satisfaction of splitting stones without power tools.

Suminori (the 15th) told me that he very often gets compared to Makizo. "I will never compare to this giant," says Suminori, who was trained by his grandfather Makizo and not Junji his father. "Maybe after I die people will give me a break," he said, laughing. It is said that the Anoh group participated, directly or indirectly, in about eighty percent of the existing large castle ramparts in Japan. This combined with the Awata's long family history, creates an incredible situation where Junji got to

participate in a historical castle restora-

tion project in 1963 of the famous Azuchi

castle in Omi (present day Shiga). Junji

knows his ancestors helped built it from

1576 to 1579.

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Makizo Awata (the 13th) was awarded

the National Treasure Award, the high-

est honor you can receive from the Japa-

nese government. Junji is said to be on

the list of future recipients as well, but

when asked, he just shakes his hand in

front of his face and says, "never, never."

And contribute they did. When the ramparts were done, I was very impressed with the curves and the masculine grace they emanated. As expected, there were

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TOP: SHUN NOMURA AND SUMINORI AWATA PLACING A STONE.

BOTTOM: "BASICALLY, A RAMPART IS A BIG PILE OF GRAVEL ENCASED IN WOVEN STONE WALLS."

Tetsu, the master monument and tomb stone carver, demonstrated how fast one could split a stone with these wedges. The staccato sound of his hammer hitting the special chisels and the way he had no hesitation on plunging into the stone with furious, but precise impacts were breathtaking. It was impressive, obviously he had a lot of practice, but as far as the sandstone we were using went, he was as fast splitting the stone in that method as if using an electric drill with feathers and wedges.

There were many questions asked about how these worked. First, you use a point chisel to start your holes. Then once you have the holes going, you use a progression of chisels that are made with the same angle, same profile as the wedge. Finally, after you get the desired depth and correct angles, you drop the wedges and pound them evenly, just as you would with feather and wedges.

The gaps between the stacked stones got a lot of attention as well. Some participants were ambivalent about the gaps and the way the Japanese masons didn't seem to be very concerned about them. The gap fillers are more decorative, they would say.

The contact points of the stacked stones are about 4" to 8" inside from the wall face. And the weight of the stones rests

there. So the filler stones are not necessary. When the walls and ramparts needed to go up fast, say in between wars, they didn't even bother shaping the stone much or filling the gaps

diligently. "In fact," Suminori said, "some masons would intentionally stick in a loose stone as a filler toward the top, so whoever was trying to scale it might grab it and fall." We, at the workshop, diligently filled the gaps with very tight stones.

There was another trick

Suminori told us. "A mason would stack the stone just so lightly jutting out from the bottom stone. Creating an undercut, which makes it harder to climb." Then he told us of an anecdote. "This shogun was having a rampart built for his castle. When the rampart was nearly finished, he came to the site to inspect. He called the master mason and asks him, 'Is this wall difficult to scale?' 'Damn near impossible, only I know how to scale it,' says the mason. The shogun tells the mason to show him how. The mason goes down the ramparts and takes out two short bars of metal, then proceeds to stab them into the gaps of the stones and climb the wall that way. When he got to the top of the wall the shogun chopped off his head and said; 'Now it is a secret."

I have leaned so much in the 10 short days I got to work with the Japanese crew. I think this feeling was shared by all the participants. I got a renewed sense of respect for the traditional world of Japanese masonry and an almost restless sense of curiosity.

I will be visiting the Awatas next time I am in Japan (whenever that may be, sooner rather than later, hopefully). Maybe I will get to share that experience on this forum.

Thank you for reading.





TOP: FINISHING OUT THE SECOND RAMPART.
BOTTOM: SOME WORK DAYS RAN LONG.

STONE CAMP 2010

BY CARMEN CHACON

came to brotherhood this year eager to reconnect with old friends, make new friends and to nourish my love of stone carving. This year I participated as a work study student and was fortunate

to be able to stay the entire week. I assisted with camp set-up and takedown, and can attest that the logistical expertise demonstrated by our organizers is impressive!

The session started with lunch (or was it dinner?) followed by a well received evening talk. (These evening talks, given by a different artist every night, were to be a regular and valued part of the camp experience.)



PRESIDENT GERDA LATTEY AND TEAM LOADING STONE

BLACKSMITH AND STONE CARVER, AL MANGOLD, MAKING A CHISEL

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We got to work on Sunday morning with a drawing class followed by a clay figure class. The afternoon was reserved

for carving and for observing other artists, as were the following afternoons. There is much to be learned by watching others at work, engrossed in the creative process.

We have all experienced the intense concentration, focus and sheer will required to remove mass and



create visual harmony. I am continually amazed by the process of transforming a stone into a thing of beauty. The individual studio tents on the field created the visual boundaries by which to observe the sounds and rhythms of each of us, sculptors, creating. People would stroll and visit with each other discussing tools and techniques or just admiring the emerging works of art.

Stone camp also had its quiet moments, usually when it was time for lunch or dinner, when the field was empty of people. At those times, I would wander through and reflect on the day's activities.



CAROL TURNER CUTTING CURVES IN LIMESTONE



THE BIDDING GOT INTENSE AT THE STONE AUCTION

A blacksmith came to camp this year and set up his portable shop, and demonstrated the fine art of forging carving tools in the fiery heat. And every day we had different presentations by sculptors from pinning and sleeving small pieces to working with monumental sculptures.

The early morning river walks were a popular event -- if one could be up and dressed by 6 a.m. (I could not, and besides,



STONE NEIGHBORS ON THE FIELD TALK IT OVER

I needed my first cup of morning coffee.) While drinking my coffee, I would contemplate the field, looking over the work from the previous day. I saw how each and every one there had the gift of transforming stone. I felt humbled and fortunate to be among such creative people.

The weather was warm, but that did not stop the mosquitoes from finding their way to the skin below the layers of stone dust. At night we socialized by the camp fires where we roasted tiny marshmallows with care. Laughter and group debates following the day of carving enriched the experience.



NEWCOMERS GET SOME HANDS-ON INSTRUCTION FROM RUTH MUESELER

On the last night of Camp, I looked up into the summer star triangle of Denub, Alter and Vega shining bright on our band of stone carvers and thought how lucky I was to be here to experience the collective force that brings to Camp B the power and passion for creating.



PETE WELTY PAUSES FOR THE CAMERA ON A BIG LIFT

CLASSIFIEDS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

TOM'S BIG SUMMER SALE

ICS hydraulic mini 814 Chain Saw with a 50% Premium chain. Used as factory demo Was \$1285. Now \$1188.

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Tom Urban cell: 541-912-2197

STONE SCULPTORS SUPPLIES GUERNEVILLE, CA

Thank you, Pat and Karen for helping to sponsor John Fisher's first-time attendance at Silver Falls this year. Your continuing generosity is certainly appreciated.

And, in addition, Pat and Karen are continuing their discounts on purchases by NWSSA members. All stone is 25% off unless it's a special or a grab bag. 10% will be taken off of imported, Italian tools (Cuturi and Milani). All other tools are 20% off. You must note in the comment section that you are a member or call in your order at: 707-869-1666 or 707-869-1021.

Info@stonesculptorssupplies.





TRIVIA ANSWER:

Dies are specialized forming shapes used to cut or mold parts for manufacturing. Dies (usually in a hydraulic press) are used to form everything from paper clips to automobile fenders.

Tool and die makers started using these hand-held grinders years ago to clean up and finish the metal dies they were making. That industrial usage has stayed with the name, though it seems ironic that we use die grinders to make stone come alive.

CARVING CALENDAR

Silver Falls 2010

Silver Falls State Park Silver Falls, OR

Aug.28 - Sept. 1

Camp Brotherhood 2011

Mt Vernon, WA

15

TBA







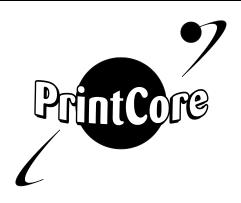




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