

Sculpture NorthWest

Quarterly

Oct - Nov - Dec 2010

BUILT TO IMPRESS - A CARVED MARBLE ARCHWAY AT THE DOLMABAHCE PALACE, ISTANBUL.



Inside:

TAPESTRIES OF
STONE

IMPRESSIONS OF A
SILVER FALLS
NEWCOMER

AL'S DUST-FREE
STONE SCULPTING

TERRY'S TIPS

TRIVIA

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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...



It's days like today when it is particularly difficult to find inspiration. The rain doesn't let up; it's cold, windy, and close to snowing. The stone offers no warmth and you question why it is that you do what you do for the three hundred and fiftieth time. The good news is that tomorrow is another day and that while today may feel more humiliating than humbling, these places are often where a nucleus of ideas can expand. Certainly creativity can move easily when the winds are warm, the flowers are in bloom, and the days are longer. However, it's when things are uncomfortable that we are forced to think differently and find ourselves spurred in different directions.

So yes, the world is shifting and things are paradoxical and difficult. The weather has changed and if you work outside, the romance of working in nature is notably diminished. But I challenge you and me to see it as an opportunity for growth, to push ourselves in ways that we never have, and come out richer and better for it in the process.

Happy Carving Everyone,

-Gerda



FROM THE EDITORS...

As fall turns into winter and we carvers start donning snowsuits along with the rest of our gear, this issue of the Quarterly brings you warmth from places as diverse as Oregon's Silver Falls State Park and the nation of Turkey (did you ever think you would read about those two places in the same sentence?)

As we were getting everything together for this issue, we found ourselves with an unusual, but happy, problem: too much material. The three main features: an article from Alexandra Morosco about her recent stone carving trip to Turkey, our report on Silver Falls and our triple Artist Spotlight all involved photos that we didn't want to reduce in size just to fit them all in.

Since we now publish three months apart, it is not as practical as it once was to split stories into multiple parts. So, in order that Turkey, the Silver Falls symposium and the Artist Spotlight would all have full pictorial coverage, our three talented Spotlighters

originally scheduled for this issue: Nichole Sharpe, Michael Binkley and Dave Haslett, have graciously consented to be featured in our first Quarterly of the new year. We'll look forward to that. However, it seems there's always room for Terry's Ten and an interesting trivia question. (By the way, if anyone has ever heard of this artist, please let us know. It's seems incredible that someone could have carved something like this and be virtually unknown.)

So come on inside, get cozy and we hope you enjoy this issue.

-Penelope and Lane



TRIVIA QUESTION:

CAN YOU NAME THIS SCULPTURE AND THE 18TH CENTURY MASTER WHO CARVED IT? AND DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU CAN SEE IT TODAY?

TAPESTRIES OF STONE

THROUGH THE EYES OF A CARVER...

BY ALEXANDRA
MOROSCO



I sit unnaturally erect in a silver steel airbus capsule, floating 36,000 feet above a land I will long be digesting. As I fly away from the earthen richness of Turkey I reel in my reflections while the editors of NWSSA's Sculpture NorthWest await an article in just a few days time. My thoughts circulate through the flock of images and memories like a working Anatolian Shepard Dog through a flock of sheep – counting each one, noticing ones that stray, protecting that which is most valuable: Sacred Inspiration.

▲ LEARNING FROM LOCALS, ALEX WATCHES HOW FATHI DELICATELY TRIMS STONE WITH A RATHER UNWIELDY HAMMER.

◀ DETAIL OF CARVED MARBLE PILLAR IN THE HAGIA SOPHIA MOSQUE, ISTANBUL

ORIGIN OF OPPORTUNITY...

It was through my networking within the stone industry that the invitation to travel through Turkey with a group of like-minded stone lovers came to be. We would travel for three weeks, beginning in Istanbul, to study the architectural stonework, as well as to do volunteer work on a restoration project for several days in central Anatolia. It sounded like a great opportunity to travel to a place filled with all that feeds the soul: lots of stone, exotic music, savory foods, endlessly rich imagery and many unknowns. It was a recipe for intrigue, so I signed up right away! Our group consisted of 9 fellow travelers, most with some draw or connection to stone; masons, carvers, landscape and building stone suppliers. We were also gifted with a few musicians, poets and bona fide storytellers.

► WHERE CONTEMPORARY MEETS ANCIENT. A NEW BUILDING IN GÖREME MERGES WITH CAVE HOMES OF THE PAST.

▼ FATHI, OUR FAVORITE MASON DRAWS CUT LINES FOR THE ARCHITECTURALLY CARVED STONES.



DESCRIPTION OF OUR PROJECT - LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The project we were invited to work on entailed building a deep barreled arch that sprung from a cave-dwelling home into the side of another existing building that had fallen into disrepair and was no longer habitable by its owners in the town of Göreme, Cappadocia in central Anatolia. This town is known for its “fairy chimneys” that are made from volcanic ash, the local stone. It is referred to as Tuff or Tufa. It is softer than most limestone, along the lines of Texas shellstone, but without the advantage of being a benign calcium carbonate. Cutting and carving this stuff was like carving fluffy glass. ►



▲ CARVED MARBLE ARCH IN-PROGRESS AT STONE CUTTING STUDIO.

▼ COURTYARD OF THE ANATOLIAN ARTS CENTER AT THE SULTAN CAVE SUITES, IN GÖREME VILLAGE.

The town of Göreme is changing with the times. The entire town has been named a World Heritage Site, thus allowing it to be recognized as a site of international responsibility. Though the Turkey Ministry of Culture decides how it is to be honored and whether it is restored or let alone. The village stewards, mayors and Ministry of Culture recognize there is a need to modernize and restore these ancient cave homes in order to keep the local economy

strong and village life intact. However, with boutique hotels, upscale restaurants, savvy carpet dealers and a strong regional tourist trade - how does an ancient troglodyte village keep its authenticity? One of the local hotel owners of The Sultan Cave Suites sees the importance of supporting the village culture. He has assisted several villagers in restoring their inherited family homes (many are mere hovels), to encourage villagers to stay in town and keep it a living village rather than a seasonal tourist community that goes virtually dormant each winter. Additionally he has built the Anatolian Culture Center, offering contemporary art shows and musical performances in their beautiful stone courtyard. The mission for our group was to





◀ RICK SPRINGER, OF GEORGE GONZALEZ STONEMASONS, WORKS AT CUTTING IN ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS.

▲ TRADITIONAL TURKISH STONE CUTTING TOOL.

▶ A FEW OF TEAM BOLINAS TAKE A BREAK AT THE JOBSITE WITH TURKISH CREW OVER A TRADITIONAL ÇAY (PRONOUNCED 'CHAI') TEA. WHEN LEFT WITHOUT AN INTERPRETER FOR SHORT PERIODS, WE RESORTED TO MIMING AND SIGN LANGUAGE.

extend a helping hand to work together as an international team to restore architectural elements in the town. A few of the projects were a stone footbridge, structural columns to strengthen a “fairy chimney” and some architectural carving and restoration. This work is being overseen by George Gonzalez of Bolinas, California, just north of San Francisco.

Working alongside the Turkish masons was a memorable experience for us all. They started out with introductions by name, which was confusing enough because most of the men had the same name: Ali or Mustafa. They then went around with a pencil and paper and wanted each of us to write our birth years, “Ali 1956,” for example. It was decided life and work in America must be easier because the Americans all looked much

younger and healthier than their Turkish counterparts of the same age. I was the anomaly of course. Turkish women are not masons or stone carvers. At first I detected a little tension amongst the rugged Turkish men with a woman on the jobsite, but soon after I began chipping away at the carved detail architectural cap stones they figured I was at least willing to work. I think they assumed I was inexperienced at carving because of the awkward nature of the tools. In an amazing feat of economy, they do almost everything with one tool: a 4 inch wide steel toothed double blade hammer that weighed about 8 or 10 lbs. Even on the smallest details, they wielded this awkward, gangly hammer like a surgical adz. I longed for my Trow and Holden half inch B air hammer and thought how they would love it so much. But after reflec-

tion, I thought maybe they already have the perfect tool. That hammer is the tool they have in hand, the one they have had for hundreds of years, and it works well enough for them. However, next time I am bringing my tools and sharing! ▶





◀ LOCAL TURK CARVING RELIEF IN MARBLE WITH UNIQUE CARBIDE TIPPED REBAR!

▶ BALCONY OF PRIVATE HOME IN MIDYAT, SOUTHEASTERN TURKEY.



In our travels through Turkey, I searched for sculptural carving, but mostly what I found was vast architectural ornamentation. The purpose of traditional decorative ornamentation in the Turkish culture is as multi layered as the honey-sweet baklava. But as in most cultures, common people did not decorate their homes or gardens with stone art. This was done only for palaces and homes of the super wealthy

The intricate lacework of carvings found in the palaces and grand homes in limestone and marble was astonishing. Carved gates, pillars, and architectural details were abundant. Turkey is rich in limestone, travertine and marble, allowing for floor to ceiling stonework. A concept that struck me was the strong contrast to environment that the ornate stonework created. The landscape is sparse and feral, this rugged landscape makes the color in the carpets and tapestries and beautiful limestone and marble seem to sing all the more. Perhaps this contrast accounts for some of the Turkish love of intricacy. Steeped into the Muslim belief system, as strong as the coffee, is the long-standing tradition to not create false idols. They carve no faces whatsoever, no human forms and no animals. In the absence of the figurative tradition there is an abundance of room for abstract, geometric, and floral design and forms; leaving the eye plenty full. I recall a cemetery in Istanbul that had particularly interesting turban shaped forms atop slabs of intricately carved stone. Each was a symbol of a given sultan or heir. They were peculiar onion-like forms that were more figurative than not – while still honoring the silent code.



◀ STYLIZED TURBAN HEADSTONE IN SULTANAHMET MOSQUE CEMETERY, ISTANBUL.



For teaching and workshop schedules, news and updates, or to find out more about future Turkish adventures contact me through my website: www.moroscofinearts.com

Two travel related resources: www.goreme.com and www.sultancavesuites.com



THE UNSEEN PORTRAIT

For those with an interest in lettering and architectural carving, I cannot recommend too much, a trip to Turkey. The variety of written script, whether it be in classical Ottoman, Arabic, Latin or Greek is stunning. The Turkish people have seen all these languages through their long history. Harking back to the abstinence of the portrait, sultans were recognized by their individual seals. Every line and brushstroke had significant meaning in these Ottoman seals. They became more than a name; they acted as portraiture without an image – especially when

carved in stone. This is to me ultimate abstraction. It abstracted both the written language as well as drawing a connection between a subject/person and ornamentation.

In my stay in Turkey I slumbered in magical cave dwellings consumed with thoughts of this Troglodyte living. Surrounded by stone, I wondered how my carving would be influenced if I lived inside the very womb of our work. I also relished the strong architectural buildings of southeast Turkey – traditional masonry in towns like Mardin and Midyat. What extraordinary examples they are of what stone

does for the environment and character of a city. If I go again to Turkey, I will explore the marble quarries and seek out contemporary sculptors and carvers. The concept of contemporary meets classical is very compelling – to say nothing of the vast array of possibilities with such generous and passionate people.



- ▲ WRITTEN IN STONE. A SULTAN'S SIGNATURE IN OTTOMAN SCRIPT.
- ▲ BUTTRESS OF THE CHORA CHURCH. PART OF THE 11TH CENTURY A.D "REMODEL" (ORIGINALLY BUILT IN THE 4TH CENTURY A.D.)
- ▲ RESTORED CAVE STYLE HOME IN GÖREME, CAPPADOCIA





IMPRESSIONS OF A SILVER FALLS NEWCOMER

BY DEB TAUBE

◀ ONE OF THE MANY SILVER FALLS THAT GIVES THIS DELIGHTFUL VENUE ITS NAME.

▼ A PIECE OF LIMESTONE AND A TALENTED MAN AT THE ONSET OF THE TWO-WAY CONVERSATION THAT IS SCULPTURE.

Hi, I'm Deborah "Deb" Taube, and it was really great to finally get to a Silver Falls Symposium. I've been trying for the last couple of years to get to the gathering, and I finally made it this year. It would have been nice to have a little more sunshine, but coming from a town where we have a Slug Queen presiding over the yearly Eugene Celebration, moisture in any form is always welcome. After the terror had passed about having to write something and actually have someone read it, I was delighted to be asked to share my impressions of the symposium.

Everyone was so friendly, gracious, and more than willing to share whatever they had—be it information, tools, or inspiration. It was nice to wander around and experience all of the stylistic variations; the different carving approaches and, of course, the results of all the hard work.

And speaking of hard work, this brings me to John Fisher. How anyone can move that fast while carving stone is beyond me. His energy and enthusiasm is infectious. I love figurative sculpture so it was wonderful to watch a classical carver at work. I may actually find the courage to attempt a figurative piece



in stone someday. Although, I don't expect it will be 5 feet tall and be completed in 4 days. I'm thinking more like 5 inches tall and completed in 4 months.

Bill Pickerd's alabaster bowls were especially inspiring for me. My work tends to be form based and I use spheres, circles, disks and curves a lot. Turning wood is great fun, and it has worked well in some of my wood sculpture. Watching Bill turn alabaster opened up a whole new realm of possibilities for my stonework. I was absolutely entranced watching the walls of those vessels get thinner and thinner, and the beauty of the alabaster come completely alive. Amazing! Bill was very generous with not only all of the information he provided, but with preparing blanks for ten people to turn. Even though I may not turn any vessels (but I think I will try, even though I suspect I'll end up with a tube rather than something that has a bottom), I absolutely want to try turning some spheres and disks. I was so inspired by Bill's ►



► JOHN FISHER TELLING US WHAT HE SAW IN THE STONE DURING HIS EARLY MORNING VIGIL.



▲ JOHN'S BEGINNING TIP: "FIRST, TAKE OFF 30% TO MAKE A PURELY ABSTRACT SHAPE."



▲ JOHN FISHER SIGNS HIS THREE NYMPHS AFTER SELLING THEM TO BILL PICKERD.

demonstration, and the beautiful results that people turned from the alabaster he provided, that the next morning I wandered (read hurried) over to Randy Zieber's place of business and came away with 400+ pounds of chlorite. Silver Falls is a place that can be very dangerous—at least to the wallet; but I can't wait to have stone turning dust all over everything, including me.

I really like black stone. It's very conducive to my style. I hadn't really considered carving black granite or basalt because I've seen carvers grimace at the mere mention of them. However, after watching Rich Hestekind create and polish the granite basin I might even give basalt or granite a try. Rich made it look so easy to work granite, although I'm sure it's not nearly as easy



▲ PENELOPE CRITTENDEN THINS THE WALL OF HER ALABASTER BOWL UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF BILL PICKERD, THE MASTER.

◀ BILL PICKERD REFLECTS THE MOOD OF HIS AUDIENCE AT THE START OF HIS DEMO.

▼ THE BEGINNING OF A SCULPTURE BY ADRIAN HOYE, WHO ALONG WITH JOHN THOMPSON DROVE ALL THE WAY FROM MONTANA.

as he made it appear. That is certainly a testament to an accomplished artist and craftsman – to make it look easy. I really enjoyed Rich's sense of humor. But mostly I liked his deep appreciation for water and especially its importance to the quality of life in the northwest. His beautiful use of granite and basalt to express the nature of water caused me to think in new ways about our natural environment.

The slide presentations from all three of these instructors: John, Bill and Rich were very informative and entertaining. But, I do think that maybe the auction gets the prize for meeting-hall entertainment. I am so proud to have two 2002 Camp Brotherhood T-shirts and my own personal copy of a James Taylor Christmas CD. Our auc-





tion team did a terrific job selling anything and everything they had whether anyone wanted it or not. It was a very fun evening.

I want to thank Tom Urban for encouraging me to come to the symposium, especially since I am currently a sculpture major at the U of O (I'm a bit of a late bloomer where my degree is concerned). David P. Miller's discussion of hand tools and Tom's discussion of power tools were very helpful since I am pretty new to stone work. I stayed to help Tom pack up on Wednesday. After seeing all the equipment that he and several other people assembled so that the symposium can take place each year, I want to say how impressive the effort was and to thank everyone for all of their incredible hard work so that these gatherings can happen. It was really an informative, inspirational and fun experience.

Silver Falls is such a beautiful park, and the convention center is certainly a wonderful place to spend time carving stone, or in my case buying a lot of stone. The natural environment was wonderful (making chips and dust under all those towering firs – what could be better!), the accommodations were

certainly comfortable and the meals were more than I expected, although I had heard the food was great. But, mostly I was rewarded with a wonderful sense camaraderie, renewed inspiration and enthusiasm for all things stone, and all things that might be carved from stone. The Silver Falls Symposium is, quite simply, a great thing to do.

▲ DAVID P. MILLER ATTENDING TO THE TOOLS OF HIS BELOVED TRADE.

► RICH HESTEKIND HAS OUR ATTENTION AS HE STARTS TO SHOW US HOW TO CUT AND ASSEMBLE A WORKING, BLACK MARBLE, WATER FOUNTAIN.

▲ OUR LEADER, GERDA LATTEY, PAUSES IN HER PURSUIT OF WATER WORKING A BASALT PIECE.

▼ LONG-TIME STONE MAN, JOE CONRAD, GOGGLES UP AND PUTS STEEL TO STONE.



1 When carving outside, even under a tent, put a cover over your work at night, because dust plus dew equals mud.

2 Translucency of stone can reduce detail definition.

3 Don't waste time on ugly rock.

4 Make sure the SAWSALL blade enters and exits the stone where you want. A tendency to migrate exists.

5 Drill bits are hot right after withdrawal.

TERRY'S TIPS



6 Prepare for the "breakout" at the bottom of a hole drilled in stone.

7 Beware the grain direction when cutting, fretting, chiseling.

8 Check for cracks periodically during the carving process. A wet wash will find minute ones.

9 The back side of a rotating disk or blade cuts too, for better or for worse.

10 Magic marker ink can soak in fairly deep on some stones, complicating the finishing process.

AL SIERADSKI'S DUST-FREE STONE SCULPTING

I've started a channel "VirtualSculptures" on YouTube presenting some of my virtual sculptures drawn with the 3D graphics package "solidThinking." You can find my channel using the web browser link <http://www.youtube.com/user/VirtualSculptures> or by searching "Al Sieradski" at the YouTube site <http://www.youtube.com>.

The videos present short 8 to 14 second circumperambulations of the sculptures in simulated studio lighting with simulated surface structure. You can set the resolution request to 720p HD for the best image. I play the original files using Windows Media Player set in continuous loop mode for a fuller experience, but I don't know how to make the YouTube player loop continuously for a longer view. Perhaps the files can be downloaded, saved, and viewed outside the YouTube player.

If you enjoy them, encourage me by subscribing to the channel (whatever that means).

alsieradski@sieradskistudios.com 

TRIVIA ANSWER:

RELEASE FROM DECEPTION WAS CARVED FROM A SINGLE BLOCK OF MARBLE BY THE GENOESE SCULPTOR FRANCESCO QUEIROLO (1704 – 1762). IT WAS COMMISSIONED BY PRINCE RAIMONDO DI SANGRO FOR HIS FAMILY'S PRIVATE CHAPEL.

"*RELEASE FROM DECEPTION* SHOWS A MAN'S EMERGENCE FROM THE SNARES OF ERROR. IT IS, IN FACT, A SELF-PORTRAIT OF THE SCULPTOR, AS HE IS BEING HELPED FROM A NET OF CORDS BY HIS OWN INTELLECT, SHOWN IN THE GUISE OF A WINGED BOY; THE INTELLECT POINTS AT THE WORLD, THE SOURCE OF DECEPTION, WITH A SCEPTER."

-FROM THE WEB GALLERY OF ART (WWW.WGA.HU)

YOU CAN SEE IT IN NAPLES, ITALY BY VISITING THE SANSEVERO CHAPEL AT VIA DE SANCTIS #19.

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

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CARVING CALENDAR 2011

Camp Brotherhood 2011

July 9 - 17, 2011

Mt Vernon, WA

Silver Falls

August 27 - September 1, 2011

Silver Falls State Park, OR



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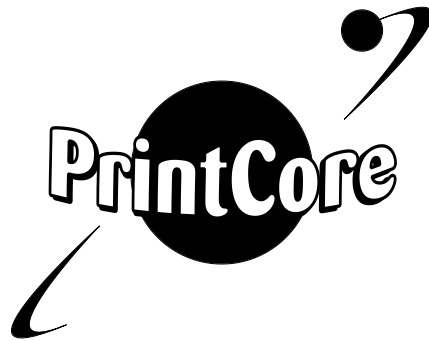
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