

Sculpture NorthWest

Nov/Dec 2013



KEN BARNES: 'CORONA', 24" X 12" X 5", 2013, WHITE MARBLE

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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...

A few take-aways from my experience:

1. The photo you want to take should invite the viewer to ask more about the piece, not about the photography.
2. Nothing substitutes for a basic understanding of “how to use a camera to take a photograph” meaning to produce good photos you need an idea of how depth-of-field and f-stops work.
3. There’s an order and iterative process to setting up for a good photo.
 - a. Set your camera and piece for an initial composition
 - b. Set up main light source
 - c. Adjust background light(s)
 - d. Focus composition for shot and adjust.
 - e. Adjust fill lighting as needed.

Once you have gone thru steps a-e and don’t think it’s a good image, move the camera, piece, base, or backdrop.

If you like the image of your piece, consider leaving the lighting in place

and rotating it for additional images that might better communicate your work.

Many thanks to Gregg and Dan for their teaching, Jack Stevens for his voice activated support, the stone carvers who, from the level of interaction I saw, really enjoyed themselves, and of course Marenakos for providing the great space to hold the event.

And on a final note, one of the questions we asked in the workshop survey to our members was “Finding Your Style”. I was surprised at the interest (sandwiched in priority between “Pedestal Building” and learning about “Group & Juried Shows”) and think it deserves to be a future workshop. I will have more to say in the next issue and if all goes well there will be workshops related to this topic.

Camp Brotherhood 2014 is taking shape and there will be much to talk about in the coming months.

Keep checking Facebook for posts and the web site for upcoming workshops.

Learn Much and Share with Many,

Carl Nelson | carl@nwssa.org

Let me tell you a little about the new workshops we’re doing.

They have gone well and the Nov 16th Photographing 3D Art was wonderful teaching by example with a lot of interaction and questions. See the Nov 16th post at nwssa.org or on the NWSSA’s FaceBook page. Greg Krogstad brought his professional gear and Dan Colvin brought, “A good camera with a Home Depot supplemented” set-up. They took the time to explain how the equipment worked and what they were out to achieve by working with the stone carvers who brought pieces to photograph.

FROM THE EDITORS...

Happy soon-to-be Holidays.

Grab an eggnog and settle in to this issue of Sculpture NorthWest. In our artist spotlight we have Ken Barnes. You will see that Ken has been busy as you look at his new work and read about how he develops and produces it.

In our attempt to introduce sculptors from ffar and wide, this month’s ‘Found On Facebook’ artist is Shaugn Briggs. We hope you will enjoy reading about this sculptor from New Zealand.

Closer to home, Carl Nelson, our president, will fill you in on what happened at the first of the day-long workshops we are now holding. Al Mangold volunteered to be the first one and his workshop on the making and sharpening of hand chisels was a great success. More workshops are happening as you read this. Get the details at nwssa.org or ask Carl Nelson about them. carl@mostlyrandom.info.

Sheri Tangen, one of our brand new members, tells us what it was like for her to attend a NWSSA symposium for the first



time. She was invited to Silver Falls by Pat Barton. This is what can happen when you simply ask someone to come have a look.

And finally, you get to see something of the fascinating marble carving done by Elizabeth Turk. See if it inspires you to try your hand at producing unbelievable detail in stone. Or maybe just makes you glad that you don’t have to.

Cheers!

Penelope and Lane

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

MEET KEN BARNES

Who are you?

Ken Barnes, long-time member, current board member and treasurer.

What is your life history as it relates to being an artist?

I was never the kid in school that the art teacher lavished with attention. I realize now I didn't understand the purpose of the art class was to instill creativity rather than to produce a drawing of a horse.

Why did you become an artist?

Art became a part of my life when I was dating an art aficionada. I took it as a challenge to see if I could create some art - to prove that I had both a left and right brain. I thought it would be a passing hobby, but it has taken over my life. The transition from "trying" to "dedicated" came when I was introduced to Kazutaka Uchida's art. After seeing his work I sought out instruction and ultimately found Camp B and the NWSSA.



▲ 'CRADLE', 33" X 12" X 9", 2013, CARRARA MARBLE

How has NWSSA influenced your work as an artist?

In the early years the NWSSA was a smorgasbord of ideas, tools, techniques and stone, for me. I was interested in trying every stone, tool and style. Eventually I settled on a comfortable style and the NWSSA became more of a social group.

Describe your art in your own terms – focusing on your stone carving.

My work in the past has been mostly "expressive", to borrow a term from Rich Hestekind. Kazutaka Uchida and Isamu



▲ 'RELIC', 30" X 10" X 9", 2007, BELGIAN BLACK LIMESTONE

Noguchi have heavily influenced my work, though of late I am trending more towards Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Constantine Brancusi. I would call my latest pieces abstract, and particularly biomorphic, as I pull more from recognizable forms. I am nearly done with a large outdoor piece that is highly representational.

How do you get your ideas, and what is your process?

I spend a lot of time looking at images, whether they are human forms, natural objects or manmade creations. My main use of Facebook, for example, is to scroll through all the images that are posted. I am in a phase right now where I am drawing quite a bit from animal forms. I have been a beekeeper for the last couple years and have been trying to find a way to use any of the fascinating bee-made patterns in stone. I stumbled across a way to do this while I was fret cutting last week, so am looking forward to that as my next piece.



▲ 'STRETCH', 24" X 11" X 11", 2013, WHITE MARBLE

drew my eye on paper will prevail in the work. I moved my studio two years ago so I came to realize exactly how many stones I had acquired – it was sobering. I gave many of them to the Camp Brotherhood auction but renewed my focus on turning the rest of the pile into something interesting. Now I start my drawings with a focus on how to turn this

or that particular stone into a pleasing sculpture. A recent piece is a great example of this. I had this black Belgian marble spire standing vertically in my rock pile for about 8 years. When I looked at the stone I couldn't figure out what to do with it – the lean of the stone was difficult. When I moved my studio the stone went into a pallet box on its side. Seeing the stone lying sideways gave me the radical idea to carve a horizontal form. I had not previously thought in horizontal forms, but in less than 10 hours of chiseling I had a very pleasing horizontal form at hand. It took well more than that to figure out how to mount and present the



▲ 'FLUKE', 15" X 30" X 11", 2012, BELGIAN BLACK MARBLE

I typically develop my ideas through drawing. I am not a good draftsman – my wife can't understand what I am thinking of by looking at my drawings, but they make sense to me. I'll doodle around with various forms and eventually one particular presentation of a form will grab my eye. Then I'll take that presentation of the form and redraw it dozens of times as part of a sculptural form until I am happy with the concept. The ultimate sculpture will likely have little similarity to the paper work, but the sense of movement that

piece, with Fluke as the result. Fluke opened my mind to the possibilities of horizontal presentation. It seems kind of silly that I had not thought in a horizontal fashion previously, but now that is added to my language in addition to vertical, suspended, round and poked through with holes. I am really curious what other form language is staring me in the face, for now unrecognized.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT,

continued from page 5

I rely heavily upon the “happy accident” to bring my work to life. There is nearly always an “oh crap” moment, where I am sure that I have ruined the work. I cut too deeply on that side or the balance isn’t what I expected or I get an unexpected break of a fret. I never recognize it at that instant, but that bad fret break always turns out to be the best part of the piece. And working with these unexpected problems becomes my favorite part of sculpting.

What scale or size do you work in? How much work do you create in a year? Do you show?

Human scale is my favorite size – 6 feet tall. However, I mostly work in the 100lb or less size, since it is so much easier to move around. I’ll typically have one large piece in progress along with one new smaller one and another one or two re-works – pieces that I decided after display somewhere that they need some tweaks.



▲ 'POD', 25" X 13" X 9", 2013, BELGIAN BLACK MARBLE



▲ 'SLICE', 22" X 15" X 7", 2013, BELGIAN BLACK MARBLE

My annual volume is highly size-dependent. I have about 300 hours/year that I devote to my sculpture, which I would like to double over the next year or two. So a single 200-hour piece will take up a big portion of my year’s output. When I am feeling stressed for time I tend to work smaller because it gives me the feeling I am accomplishing more. When I was working on building my studio I had no extra time to create sculpture, so I didn’t worry about marketing and showing. Now that I have no other distractions I have been showing at SHIFT Cooperative in Pioneer Square. I work well to deadlines, so take advantage of the imposed show schedule to improve my productivity.

How is your work area set up? What tools do you use?

I have a good-sized studio, but I found that a functional work area is like a functional kitchen – you want everything within a step or two of the carving table. The rest of the area is essentially storage or room for secondary projects. I have a hydraulic lift table that I put on steel wheels with a track on the floor so that I can move it up and down and laterally. It can be my direct carving table or a cutting table for a big saw that I sometimes use to block out work. I rented a studio for years that had a chain-fall bridge crane. That crane so increased my safety and reduced the stress on my back and fingers that I put an electric one into my studio as the highest priority. The other work habit that I adopted 15 years ago out of necessity was wet carving. My first studio was a totally enclosed space so I had to carve wet to keep the dust down. I have stuck with that ever since. Prior studios had sloping floors due to settlement so the water easily ran away from my carving area. But I spent many hours leveling my work or carving tables and I decided I wanted level floors, with the downside that I spend many hours instead squeegeeing the floors clear of water/mud. But the consequences of improper squeegeeing are minor compared to the consequences of out-of-plumb sculptures.

I use whatever tool I can get my hands on. The technology in your studio definitely determines the forms that come out of the studio. So I like to experiment with different tools to keep new forms available. I have many go-to tools that have been part of my studio since the early years. My core drill/stand makes any hole-cutting quite easy. I turned the drill stand upside down and mounted it from an overhead beam so that the base doesn't get in the way of my drilling and can tilt the drill to nearly any angle. I bought an old block saw from George Pratt about 15 years ago, and use that for small base prep and some early blocking out. I bought a larger block saw from Dean at Princess Jade about 10 years ago. This is handy to block out larger stones and create larger bases. I burn through every electric angle grinder put in my hands, so I mostly use pneumatic grinders because of their durability. Over the last year I have become enamored with electric circular saws because they seem to bear up well under stone-cutting stress. I bought a couple at a pawnshop and they are still running a year later. I zip-tie water feeds to their frame and have even tied a bungee between the saw and my crane hook to lower the weight in my hands. My pneumatic water polisher remains my favorite tool of all time (after the crane). I just love the meditative process of pneumatic polishing. However, even with these power tools I still maintain a diverse chisel collection and use quite a number of them to break, bruise or shape the stone in unique ways.

What obstacles and challenges have you overcome?

My main challenge is my fascination with tools and facilities. Sculpture has brought out some latent engineering genes. I can easily become enamored with designing and building a cool tool or studio modification and have spent far too much time on this instead of working on stone. I am now painfully aware of the art time I have burned through and have purposely been focusing my work time on just art, with the minimum on studio maintenance/improvement.

What are you looking forward to?

More time in the studio. The ideas for new work still come more quickly than I can finish pieces. And sculpture is more rewarding to me than most other activities I undertake.



▲ 'STITCHED', 21" X 11" X 6", 2012, MARBLE



FOUND ON
FACEBOOK:

SHAUGN BRIGGS, NEW ZEALAND

Shaugn Briggs was born in 1970, in Christchurch, New Zealand. From a very young age, a passion for art emerged. It was not until his early 20's that he decided to pursue a career in the arts through painting and sculpture. An accomplished painter, he discovered Oamaru Stone sculpting in the early 1990's. At this time Symposiums were all the rage in Christchurch and at one of them he picked up an off-cut from a piece of Oamaru stone to have a try. After working with the Oamaru, his skill became evident and very soon he was selling his work.

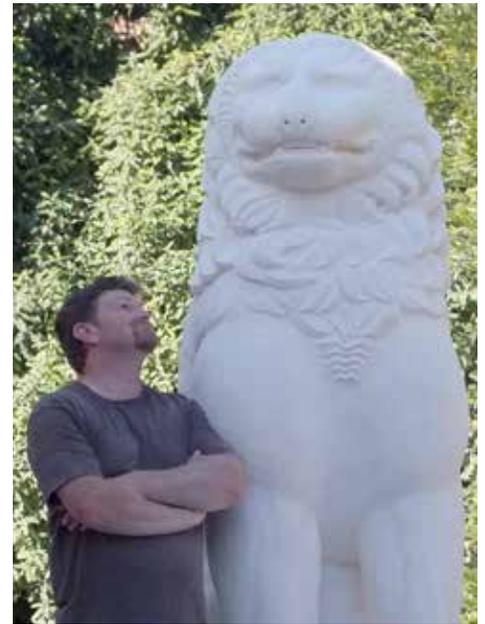
Not long after beginning to sell his sculptures, he was approached by a Community Park Committee who commissioned him to sculpt an original statue that incorporated a bird bath. His sculpture became a feature of the community park. Since this time Shaugn has kept very busy selling carvings through galleries and obtaining numerous private commissions.

His works became sought after and this led him into another area – that of teaching sculpting. Shaugn has been involved in teaching adults for 12 years and is enormously satisfied by the joy that many students have received from carving. Students are often amazed at the work they can produce when guided through the process of beginning to know the tools through designing their own carvings.

Many of his works are about the human connection. The sculpture "Reflection" is a good example. It represents dealing with the devastating earthquakes that rocked Christchurch in 2010 and 2011. During this time so much loss was experienced that the sculpting of this piece was a way of releasing the built-up emotions. One head faces backwards, acknowledging the past sorrow and the other faces forward looking towards an unknown future and all the promise it holds.

A word from Shaugn:

"Sculpture has given me many things. It tests my intellect, supports a passion, has created many relationships, has made me a creative tutor and drives my love for the arts."



Shaugn's website is:

www.learnstonecarving.com



▲ 'GODDESS OF FLORA', 40" HIGH,
OAMARU STONE



▲ 'REFLECTION', 59" HIGH,
OAMARU STONE



▲ 1.) 'TUATARA', 14" LONG, OAMARU STONE (ABOVE); 2.) 'UNTITLED', 20" HIGH, OAMARU STONE (TOP RIGHT); 3.) 'CRADLED IN THE LORD'S HAND', 39" HIGH, OAMARU STONE (BOTTOM RIGHT)



NWSSA WORKSHOPS:

A WAY TO MEET OTHERS WHO CARVE STONE AND TO LEARN FROM THEM

by Carl Nelson

If as a NWSSA member, you could take 3-4 hours in one day to learn something about the carving of stone and the creation of sculpture - what would it be? That was the question asked at the July 2013 Board meeting. The result, after 103 people gave us their opinions was to schedule workshops scattered over the next year that addressed their desire to meet other carvers and learn.

By the time you read this the Sharpening Tools, Working with Marenakos, Pedestal Building, Learning to Photograph Your Sculpture and the Neolithic Stone Warehouse Tour will have been completed. Coming up in 2014 are two soft stone figurative workshops by Sabah Al-Dhaher. First will be Carving the Face and Head on February 15 and on March 15 will be Carving the Human Figure. In the planning stages are: Basics of Carving Marble, Working Hard stone, Combining Stone and Steel, and River Walks – What's hidden in the stones you find. There are more workshops that have been proposed and that will be put in place as we find instructors

and places to hold them. Speaking of places, a big thank you to Al Mangold, Kentaro Kojima, Rich Hestekind, Ken Barnes, Sabah Al-Dhaher and Carl Nelson for opening their studios. And to Randy Zieber from Neolithic Stone and Scott Hackney from Marenakos for opening their businesses. Thanks to all of you for setting aside the time to welcome NWSSA.

In October, the workshop "Sharpening Tools" was held in Ken Barnes Studio. A full house of new and old carvers got to share Al Mangold's wisdom of sharpening and tempering steel for tools. Some of the less experienced carvers had the opportunity to ask good questions and received good answers. Questions like, "This 1 inch wide flat tooth chisel, when would I use it in carving?" The answer came in the form of a demonstration where we all get to see: how it is used, the trace of the teeth on a new flat surface, how sharpening makes a big difference and that when carving marble it keeps its edge (unless abused on the corner.)



▲ AL MANGOLD DEMONSTRATES HIS SIMPLE AND INEXPENSIVE CHISEL FORGE

The first weekend in November, Marenakos hosted "Working with Marenakos as a Sculptor," There were many faces from all over Puget Sound

Continued on page 12 ►



MY FIRST TIME AT SILVER FALLS

By Sheri Tangen

I already had an interest in stone carving when Pat Barton, a NWSSA member, was invited to my driftwood sculpting class. I hadn't talked with Pat for very long before I knew that I wanted to know everything about it. Pat suggested that I come to Silver Falls, one of two NWSSA stone carving symposiums held each year. All my questions were answered in a quiet forested environment at Silver Creek Falls State Park and in the lodges spread across a grassy field and in the dining hall eating three scrumptious meals daily alongside new friends.

I was so excited I got there early to help set-up. I felt like a kid going to summer camp. Right from the start I could see and feel the cohesiveness that bound these people together.

There was a common thread there and it was strong. I questioned many carvers and they were extremely giving of their time and knowledge, very open and sharing. Many loaned me tools to try and books to look at. I was given the parts to base my sculpture, including the pin, the epoxy to hold it

and the temporary wood base. Along with the parts, I got the knowledge on how it all comes together. I was even given suggestions on finishes for the temperamental alabaster. The level of expertise was high. But more than that, I felt they had a genuine regard for me,

a newbie trying to find my way with stone carving.

There was plenty of carving time, and there were many talks and demonstrations in the field. These ranged from types of tools and fixing them to wet and dry carving, texturing, polishing and splitting stones. These were packed little sessions. I loved getting all that information.

Evenings offered up individual artist slide shows that left me in awe, and several very inspiring and educational lectures. Silver Falls could have been overwhelming. It could have been intimidating. But it was not. Instead it was amazing. And it answered my original question: I now have a good idea of what stone carving is all about. I'm on my way. I got a ton of knowledge about stone carving, certainly enough to get started. That was what I came for. But the selflessness of these artists is as strong as the stones they carve. I really admire that. It is now burned into my mind. It not only changed how I carve, but it changed how I think. Thank you, NWSSA.



▲ MARK ANDREW WORKING ON ANOTHER ONE OF HIS GORGEOUS LIMESTONE RELIEFS.



INTERESTING AND PERHAPS INSPIRATIONAL ART

ELIZABETH TURK

Employing a variety of electric and air powered grinders, files, and small dental tools with a dexterous touch, her technical virtuosity is on full display in “The Collars,” a series of sixteen painstakingly carved sculptures that explore a rich variety of organic and geometric patterns. The elaborate collars in this collection combine allusions to decorative motifs and the self-organizing systems of the natural world, drawing from lace-making and Elizabethan fashion as well as botanical, skeletal, and architectural structures. Continuing the theme of fragile, textile-like compositions with the strength and heft of stone, Turk creates a surprising sense of buoyancy and undulating movement in her recent series of marble ribbons suspended in midair. With these and other visually arresting feats of precision, Turk is pushing the physical limits of her material and reviving a classical medium for contemporary artistic exploration.



Elizabeth Turk received a B.A. (1983) from Scripps College and an M.F.A. (1994) from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Her work has appeared in numerous solo and group exhibits at such venues as the Mint Museum of Art (North Carolina), the University of Virginia Art Museum, the American Institute of Architecture (New York), and the National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington, DC).



See more at: <http://www.macfound.org/fellows/44/#sthash.tuEMDCG8.dpuf>





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NWSSA WORKSHOPS, *continued from page 9*

and many new to Marenakos that registered for this guided tour through their stone yard and fabrication facility. Again, it was the casual questions during the tour that revealed information about the “natural shapes of stone” they harvest, how to work their available stone (Especially basalt and granite). Kentaro was our host and if you ever want anything from Marenakos he will be the NWSSA contact. Rich Hestekind also accompanied the group in the walk thru the yard and his 20 year plus history of working with big and hard stone from Marenakos was invaluable. An example he gave of when to use their fabrication capabilities was in having

Marenakos do the “butt” cut – i.e. making a flat cut for the bottom of a large piece. Rich thinks of it as a huge time-saver.

After these two workshops I asked Lisa Svircic, a new NWSSA member to comment about her experience and here is what she said:

“As someone who is new to NWSSA and fairly new to sculpting, the workshops I’ve attended have been very helpful and encouraging. NWSSA members are fun and welcoming people with a ton of knowledge that is freely shared and this makes these workshops so invaluable

to sculptors of all skill levels. It’s nice to have the opportunity to learn from more experienced artists who encourage you to ask questions and expand your skills.”

If you know someone who is interested learning more about stone carving, these workshops would be good for them to attend, but even us older crusty carvers can get something out of them as Pat Barton said, *“There is always something new to learn! There are things that I have forgotten, and things that I needed to be reminded of. These workshops have done that, and allowed me to meet new people and talk with friends that I don’t see that often.”*



STONE ARTS OF ALASKA

www.stoneartsofalaska.com (360) 592-7408

FOR SALE

Kansas Limestone Fence Posts, 4’ to 6’ long, some smaller. A few larger pieces of limestone and Yule marble with some cutting available. A selection of Randy Zieber’s Neolithic Sculpture stone and tools. Deliveries arranged for the Eugene, OR area with trips to Portland every 3 or 4 months. Tom Urban 541-912-2197 tfurban@uoregon.edu

STONE SCULPTORS SUPPLIES GUERNEVILLE, CA

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.com

2014 CARVING CALENDAR

Camp Brotherhood

Mt. Vernon, WA
Dates to be announced

Silver Falls

Silver Falls State Park, OR
Dates to be announced