

Sculpture NorthWest

July/Aug 2014



Inside:

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT:
PATTY MCPHEE

SILVER FALLS CENTERFOLD

KAZUTAKA UCHIDA
BY KENTARO KOJIMA

THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY

PATTY MCPHEE: 'WOVEN SHARD',
35' X 13' X 12', MARBLE, COPPER AND WOOD

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In This Issue

Letter From The President ... 3

Letter From The Editors ... 3



Artist Spotlight: Patty McPhee... 4



Silver Falls Stone Carving Symposium ... 6



Kazutaka Uchida ... 10

That's What They Say... 12

Classifieds & Carving Calendar ... 12



FROM THE PRESIDENT...

and some basic administration of the organization. Our July Camp-B board meeting will review and discuss the highest and best use of your contributions. Again, THANK YOU! to all who gave.

By the time you read this, Camp B will be over and Silver Falls will be about to occur. If you can make Silver Falls, I strongly encourage you to come participate, there is much to learn and a great gathering of instructors.

This coming fall we will once again ask what you would like to see for workshops, so look for an email survey. In preparation for the survey, and as an elaboration from last year's responses, I'd like to ask for your help with ideas for discussions we could hold, either at people's studios or other venues, on thought provoking topics.

Some examples:

- When nudity becomes nakedness, what's the difference?
- What does Darwinian Theory predict

about what we value in Art? (From Denis Dutton's The Art Instinct)

- Art(ifacts) to What End?
- Man or Machine Made – How and when does it matter?

Please add your ideas to this list by sending me a topic or an idea that you think would be worthy of an evening or afternoon of discussion.

Finally, are there workshops from last year you would want held again? We will be holding a polishing workshop and one or more figurative workshops. Let me know so we can get it on the survey and plan.

Looking forward to seeing you at Silver Falls and the fall workshops.

Carve On!

... Carl

A big THANKS! to all those who gave on May 6th to the GiveBIG campaign. Because of your generosity, a total of a little over \$2,670, including the match from the Seattle Foundation, was raised. THANK YOU! Your giving helps fund the running of the symposiums, the tools, scholarships,

FROM THE EDITORS...

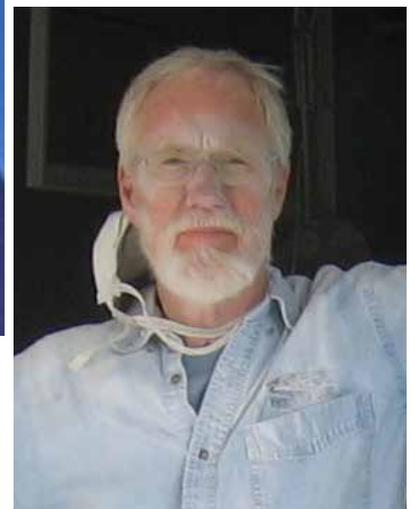
Here we are in the good old summer time, many of us getting ready to gather again at Camp Brotherhood and Silver Falls.

In the last issue, we gave you a look at the instructors for Camp B, and in this issue you will be introduced to the teaching staff for Silver Falls.

In addition to our Centerfold of instructors for Silver Falls, Kentaro Kojima has written an in-depth account of one of them, Kazutaka Uchida. You will read a little about how he discovered his direction in art and the philosophy that has guided him through his long career.

This issue will also Spotlight what Patty McPhee has been working on recently. She shares with us pictures of many of her sculptures as well as the way she gets her ideas, her methods of carving and how she feels about the important roll sculpture has played in her life.

This is the time to make your decisions about symposiums. Maybe you will be lucky enough to hit them both this year. Whatever you decide, carve happy – good times are precious.



...Penelope and Lane

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

MEET PATTY MCFEE

Please introduce yourself.

I am Patty McPhee, a Tacoma based artist and poet and a long time member of NWSSA and past Board member.

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

I found my medium fairly late in life. I had always known that I was an artist but it was not till I was forty that I realized that I am a sculptor. My husband gave me my choice of classes at the Kirkland Art Center and the only one that fit my schedule and looked interesting was a life model class taught by Janet Brown. We worked in clay and I fell in love with everything about sculpture.



▲ 'MOONRISING', 60' X 60' X 10', BASALT, CEDAR AND BAMBOO

After taking Janet's classes for a year she recommended that I take a Masters summer class taught by the recently retired, Professor Everett DuPen. I went in to the Seattle UW campus from Kirkland every Wednesday night throughout the school terms for the next eight years. Everett insisted that I join NWSSA and attend the Symposium at Camp Brotherhood.

At Camp Brotherhood I fell under the spell of stone and all of the possibilities that it presents. That first year I met many who would become my friends and mentors through the years. Some, like Ward Lynch, were there for some of my worst moments and helped me use my art to keep strong through it all.

What key life experiences affected your direction in art?

As a young artist I equated being an artist with being a painter. Painting was difficult for me as I have a tremor. It did not stop me, but I never experienced that feeling of attaining mastery of my craft. With sculpture the tremor is less of an issue and I found that I had always been a spatial artist. I like making "holes in space."

Who or what has influenced your art form?

It's hard to know where to begin. There are the usual historic figures like Michelangelo, Rodin, Claudel, Degas, and Brancusi. Everywhere I looked there were examples. Closer to home Everett DuPen, Rich Hestekind, MJ Anderson, Myrna Orsini, Meredith Earles, Janet Brown, of course, and almost everyone that has attended Camp Brotherhood.

Why is art important to you?

That is like asking why I breathe. I see art in every aspect of existence. It is transcendent and embracing, like glue holding our world together, holding us together. We do

not all like the same artistic expression but it is there in every culture.

How does your art reflect your philosophy?

I find in stone sculpture a way for me to explore “the interdependent web of existence,” the invisible threads that connect us, and I want to explore that in whatever way that I can.

How has NWSSA influenced your work as an artist?

NWSSA has been the catalyst for much of my work. I would not be the artist I am today with out the training, mentorship and friendships that I have found in NWSSA. From the thoughts, ideas and examples found in the NWSSA Journal, to the people that have encouraged and nurtured me. It is so much more than just a group of artists. It continues to open doors, introduce me to new ideas and sustain me.

Describe your art in your own terms.

I have written many artist statements over the years and I still

find it difficult to put into words what my art is. However, I have found that stone allows me to explore the dichotomy of creating softness, movement and emotions in something that is considered hard and unyielding. I love that juxtaposition. To me my art is an emotional study, an exploration. Sometimes I just like to have fun. I find carving stone fun!

Is your work representational and/or non- representational?

I don't allow labels to control my work. I hear many different languages from the stone. I want to be open to all possibilities. That is to say that I do both. I know that I have a style that can be recognized but I sometimes find the line between representational and non-representational blurry. To me, they all represent something.

How do you get your ideas?

Ideas are all around me. I, however, am not always available to them. That is an ongoing struggle for me. There are times when the ideas swirl around and through me and other times when I am as empty as a deserted bird's nest in fall. Those are



▲ 'NEPTUNE'S GIFT', 60' X 10' X 10', TRAVERTINE AND BASALT



▲ 'TIDE POOL'S GIFT', 3' X 4' X 2', BEACH STONE, ALABASTER AND PEARL

Continued on page 8 ►

Silver Falls Stone Carving WORKSHOPS AND

THIS YEAR, THE SILVER FALLS STONE CARVING SYMPOSIUM HAS BROUGHT TOGETHER
FROM CLASSICAL ROMAN FIGURATIVE, TO MODERN MINIMALISM AND THE TOOL
INSTALLATIONS, THERE IS KNOWLEDGE AND INSPIRATION TO BE GAINED FOR THE M



Kazutaka Uchida

Uchida Sensei travels again from his home in Japan to talk with us about his unique approach to stone art. He will be sharing, through Kentaro Kojima's translation, his insights on the clean lines, subtle beauty and harmonious balance of sculptural forms, stripped of all superficial qualities.



Matt Auvinen

Matt has worked and taught for years in Europe. From Florence he ran tours into the marble quarries of Carrara. From 1988 to 1992 he worked as an artisan for several Italian sculpture studios. He has lived and worked in Pietrasanta, one of Italy's stone carving centers, for 8 years.



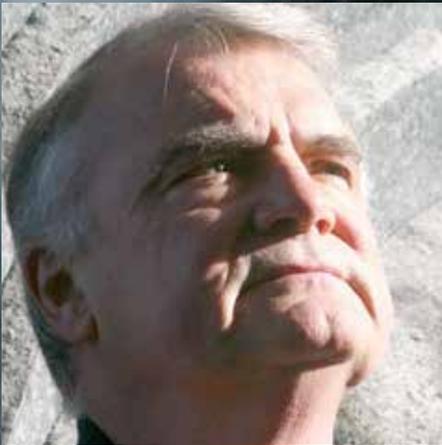
Tracy Powell

Tracy is a self-taught master in wood and stone carving. He has taught numerous hand tool carving workshops on Whidbey and Camano Islands and uses his naturalistic and fulsome style to tell stories and create memorials and public art monuments.

Carving Symposium

INSTRUCTORS

MEET SEVERAL WORLD CLASS SCULPTING MASTERS FOR A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY. LEARN THE TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT USED TO CREATE SMALL AND LARGE SCALE SCULPTURAL WORKS. FROM NOVICE STUDENT TO MASTER SCULPTOR.



Stuart Kendall

Stuart is CEO of Seattle Solstice in south Seattle. He blends art, fabrication and engineering to create technically advanced custom stone cutting equipment. He is currently working on the cutting equipment for the large scale Ten Thousand Year Clock Project in Texas.



Daniel Michael

Hailing from Olympia, WA, Daniel will be instructing us on a wide array of the power tools commonly used to carve stone. His classes will feature hands-on instruction in the use and maintenance of these tools while teaching us how to use each tool effectively and safely.



**Paul Buckner
(1933-2014)**

On one of our evenings, former students and friends will gather to celebrate the Legacy of Professor Emeritus Paul Bruckner, a man who epitomized the "highest ideal of the word teacher." Paul Buckner is remembered for his work in stone, metal, and wood and for his legacy of fine arts teaching.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 5

What are you trying to express?

I want the viewer, whomever that might be, to have an emotional response to my art - anything from love to surprise to anger to joy. When there is an emotional response there is a connection. For myself, there is always the joy that I have in creating art. That is a part of what I want to express, in the end.

Describe a recent piece or two.

I recently finished several pieces that had been sitting waiting since last summer. The Flower and Garden Show is a great impetus for me to return to partially finished pieces. The two pieces that I finished for that show are dramatically different from each other. One is an abstract figure in white translucent alabaster incorporating a flame motif. I named that piece Let Her Shine. She is about the welling up of passions and being free enough to release them.

The other piece is a marble shard that I got at one of the stone auctions some time ago. I knew that it would be an abstract but I thought that I would be pinning it. I found that this piece of marble was filled with mica and not very stable. In fact, it was rather soft. This caused me to have to explore some other ways of

presenting it. It became the center for an idea that I had sketched out months before. At that time I did not have a stone in mind. It was great to see it all come together. The stone is woven into a weft of wires supported by upright copper pipes set into a wood round cut from a local tree. I named it Woven Shard. In the stone there are paths smoothed, as if by many feet, traveling its length. This is a reminder that though a path may seem impossible there have been others to show the way.

What is your working process – do you do one piece at a time or do you have several in process at once?

I always have several stones in various stages around the studio. They spur me on and give me a chance to work through ideas as they sit waiting for their turn.

What tools do you use?

Whatever will do the job. I am a tool junky. There, I said it. I have a 60 gal. Compressor with a 1hp motor, a Foredom, a Matabo angle grinder (my pride and joy. It is probably 15 year old) and an assortment of hand tools. The lift table and Jawhorse that I got for last few birthdays, have been wonderful. They really help me keep healthy as well as making working easier.



▲ 'FALLING LEAF', 55' X 12',
ALABASTER AND STEEL

the times when I go back to my sketches and books and, of course, nature. And I have always found inspiration from seeing what others have done. We do not create in a vacuum. We are products of the world around us. After that I am not sure where they come from.

How do you develop your ideas?

I will use any method that will bring me closer to my vision. At times the stone's voice is very strong and I let it lead me directly. More often I see something in the stone and use that as the jumping off place by making drawings and maquettes to help keep me on track. I try to always stay open to the unforeseen, the unexpected. Some of my most satisfying works have evolved from "accidents."



▲ 'DESERT THUNDER', 14' X 15' X 11', LIMESTONE, QUARTZITE
AND METALS

Where do you exhibit your work?

I have been involved with Gallery 3 in Puyallup for the past three years. I am out of that gallery for the time being, though. I have several pieces in outdoor galleries in Puyallup and Longview. I am currently looking into Etsy online and galleries in the Tacoma and Olympia area.

I also, have a website. I have not sold much from that but it has brought me several clients for other work.

How much work do you complete in a year?

My production is low right now but I expect to complete seven or eight pieces this year. I have done several commission pieces lately.

Do you teach art?

Yes. I often have apprentices that I teach and in exchange they help with finishing, moving and setting up shows. I find this to be very satisfying. Helping emerging artists to realize their vision and potential is stimulating and gratifying. I love seeing the blossoming of new talent and seeing the pleasure that comes from learning that one thing, that they did not know they needed to know. Being a part of the transformation and then stepping back and watching them fly is a major source of joy for me.

What scale or size do you work in, and do you have a favorite scale?

I work mostly in what George Pratt likes to call coffee-table pieces. I have worked larger and smaller. I find that the factors that regulate the size I am working has more to do with my ability to maneuver it in the studio and transport it to shows rather than what I am inspired to do. I have a dream of a studio with a hoist on tracks that will allow me to work larger.

How is your work area set up?

The area that I have for a studio was once a covered hot tub pad which meant that it had 220v coming to it. It is roofed and on the south side where there was a gap there is now Lexan ripple roofing which allows great light into the work area. I have shelves and cabinets that I have collected from garage sales and craigslist along the walls and my rolling tool box off to the side. I have old freezer shelving along the sidewall of the garage where I store my stone pile. All I have to do is pop around the corner to find base material or stone for the next project.

Because I have several pieces going at once there are several workstations. These are what allow me to have apprentices working with me in such a small space. There is an area just outside of the studio at the end of the driveway that comes up to my studio, where I sometime stage work and do the final finishing and basing.

What have been your satisfactions in your life as an artist?

Working with and helping others to see their potential is one of my greatest joys. And nothing beats having something that

I have created touch someone. When they love it enough to take it home it closes the circle of creation.

What obstacles and challenges have you overcome?

There have been times when I have been in places where I could not do sculpture such as when I was living on the East coast on a boat. In the end, though I found that I spent time sketching ideas to work on during the summers back home. At times my hand tremor gets to be a problem but then I turn the compressor on and it is hardly noticeable. It does sometimes influence how detailed I make my work

What are you looking forward to (goals, commissions, new ideas?)

I want to continue to explore different and unique ways of approaching how my work connects to the earth. I have done many pieces that use unconventional methods of basing like Desert Thunder, Falling Leaf and The Shard. I look forward to seeing where that may lead me.

Finally, I just want to say.....

Sculpture, stone sculpture in particular, has been the anchor of my life. It holds me steady when nothing else can. In looking back I know that becoming a member of NWSSA was one of the pivotal events in my life.

Art is everywhere. Our job, as artists, is to bring it to life. There are those who would say that art is unnecessary and to them I would say that they are not looking, because art, that wondrous, nebulous, ubiquitous glue that holds the universe together, is in the very air that we breath. I am grateful to some small part of that wonder.

Editors' note: See more of Patty's work at: <http://www.pattymcpheearmist.com>



▲ 'CAGED BIRD SINGS', 11' X 11' X 20', SOAPSTONE AND COPPER



KAZUTAKA UCHIDA

LIFE AS AN ARTIST

By Kentaro Kojima

Kazutaka Uchida's first catalyst for becoming a sculptor came fifty or so years ago. While walking through Auguste Rodin's exhibition in the National Museum of Modern Art in Kyoto, he came upon a piece called "La Pensee." The piece was a pure white marble and depicted the portrait of Camille Claudel on top of the rough textured block. This piece, to the young Uchida, fifteen at the time, was shocking and he sensed a scent of Europe in it. Little did he know that seven years later he would be moving to Paris to study art and would be showing at the Rodin museum with Rene Collamarini and his students.

Kazutaka Uchida was born in 1948 in Toyota City, Aich, Japan. His father was an engineer that designed military airplanes during the war. He told the young Kazutaka to work on things that would not hurt others.

Uchida went to Tama Art University in Tokyo where the curriculum was such that it encouraged the pursuit of both figurative and abstract. His senior show at Tama consisted of steel abstract works, although later he used more traditional methods and materials, such as clay, wood, and stone.

After graduating from Tama Art University in Tokyo in 1972, Uchida moved to Paris and studied at the Ecole de Beaux-Art for four years under Rene Collamarini and Louis Leygue.

Rodin's "La Pensee" was an inspiration to Uchida and helped him imagine the infinite possibilities of sculpture. When studying, however, Uchida didn't really think of works in terms of figurative or abstract; he was determined to pursue freer and freer expressions, as boundless as possible.



▲ UCHIDA IN THE STUDIO

In Paris in the 70s, time flowed gently and Uchida remembers his time there fondly. However it was his time in Nepal that was pivotal to his art and even to his outlook of life.

Uchida was sent to Nepal by the Japanese government to research the artisan traditions in hopes to have him function as an advisor to start an artisan industry in Japan. He was first sent there in 1982 and he returned there many times after that.

The profound shock, the foundation-shattering impact that Uchida felt through these visits was, without exaggeration, existential to him. He visited remote areas of Nepal and interacted with the minority tribes. These visits and interactions cemented the very foundation of him as a sculptor. He realized that here is the "Asian culture" Noguchi has told him to look for.



Uchida was introduced to Noguchi in 1976. Meeting with Noguchi, he brought images of his work that had been very well received in Europe (Uchida has a large piece in the National Museum of Modern Sculpture in Senart, France.) But, to Uchida's disappointment, Noguchi was completely uninterested in his work and told him to seek and study Eastern aesthetics as a Japanese artist.

However, Noguchi was not uninterested in Uchida as an artist. Noguchi encouraged and supported Uchida as a young sculptor in Japan. Noguchi invited Uchida to his studio in Shikoku and whenever Noguchi visited Japan, he would meet with Uchida.

To Uchida, Noguchi appeared as an extremely talented artist, almost untouchably so, but also as a very lonely man. Noguchi seemed to always be searching for his identity. Born between the East and the West and not belonging entirely to either.

Uchida finished his formal training with Noguchi in 1977. Noguchi had a profound influence on Uchida as an artist and on his approach to life as an artist.

Uchida has won numerous awards and recognitions over the years and has had many shows and commissions in Japan and abroad. He continues to sculpt and has been teaching at Kinjo University in Japan for 11 years.

Philosophy Of Art

When Uchida was in his twenties, he felt alive as an artist. However, as he aged and matured, he began to get a sense that he was not so much the 'creator,' but a conduit for what nature has presented.



▲ SPIRIT AND MATTER

Ideas for pieces are everywhere, like simple stones, just strewn about. However, to take these ideas and turn them into reality, that is the important part. The act of creating art is little like the process of making "spirit." In making spirit, one has to get rid of the impurities and superficial qualities again and again. That is the only way to get to the super pure, above ninety-percent, spirit. In art one has to remove the superficial, the surplus, the unnecessary and pursue the form. Then the form becomes a representation of the essence of the artist.

However, there is no such a thing as "complete" to an artist. Complete does not exist in art making. This is why artists are lifelong learners and continue working. Sculptors carve and polish stone not to make beautiful stones; rather, the forms they make are the result of their search for the limits of their artistic capacity.

Uchida quotation from Stephen C. McGough's 1994 book "Roundness of the Horizon: The Sculpture of Kazutaka Uchida"

"Except when I am working on a monumental piece, I find myself often creating two very similar works at once.

Sculpture is an activity of removing the unnecessary. One has to concentrate deeply to be able to accurately perceive what is not necessary and what is. Once one sees what is not necessary, that should be removed. This is the on-going process of sculpture.

Now in our era, we should not just think about the East and the West, but we should also think about the whole earth and even the solar system surrounding the earth. The human body is composed of numerous cells. If each human being completes his or her life as fully as possible, as one single cell of the earth, then the earth as a whole will be rejuvenated. The rejuvenated earth will revitalize the solar system and the universe." 





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THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY

"When you slow down enough to sculpt, you discover all kinds of things you never noticed before."

~ Karen Jobe

"It is a great privilege to be able to work with, and I suppose work off, my feelings through sculpture."

~ Louise Bourgeois, 1911-2010

"Within every block of wood and stone, there dwells a spirit, waiting to be released. Direct carving is a way of freeing the spirit - my own and that of the stone or wood."

~ Hap Hagood

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Silver Falls

Silver Falls State Park, OR

August 22nd through 28th, 2014

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