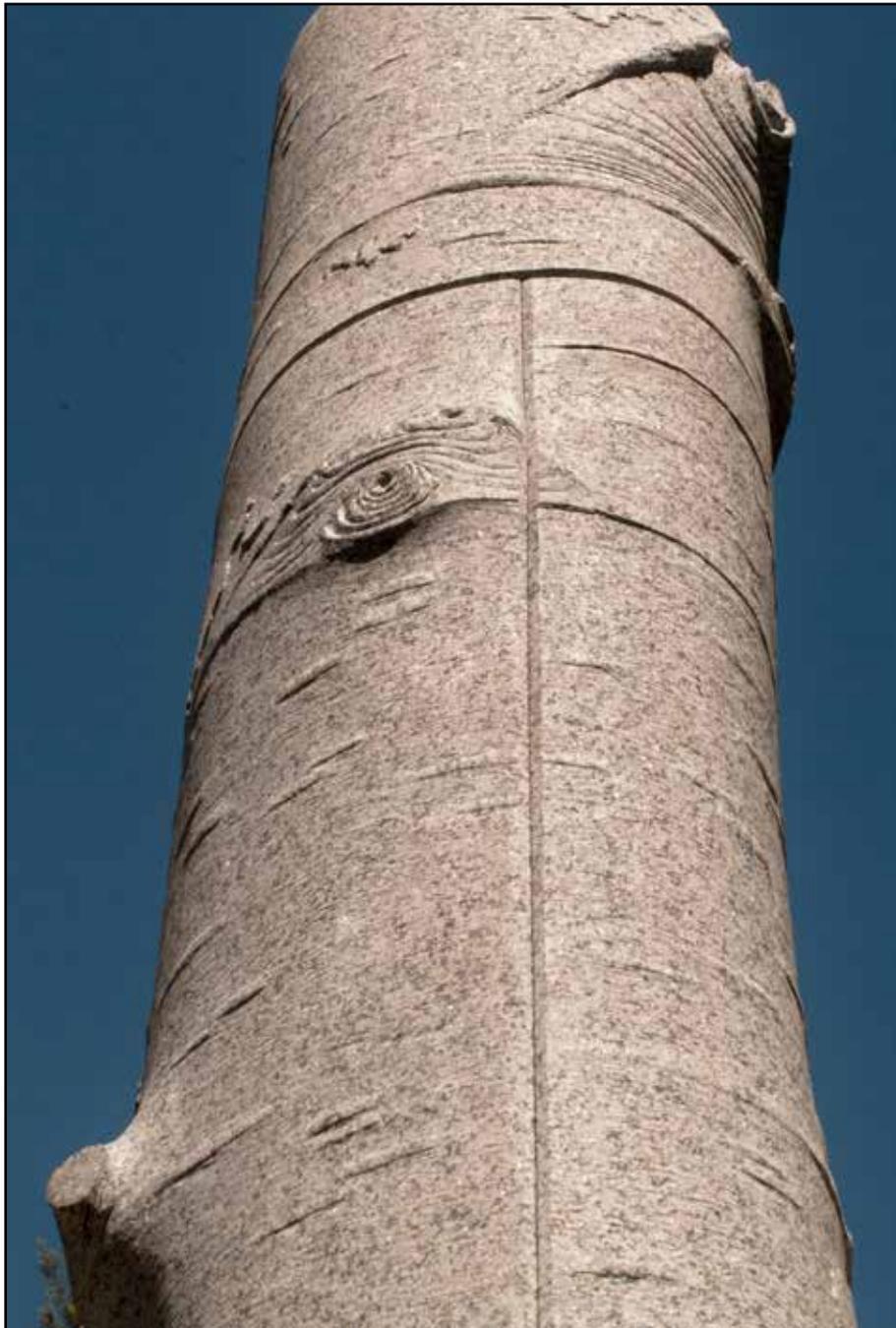


# Sculpture NorthWest

Nov/Dec 2015



## I nside:

"CONVERSATIONS"  
WHY DO YOU CARVE?  
BARBARA DAVIDSON  
BILL WEISSINGER  
DOUG WILTSHIRE  
VICTOR PICOU

STONE CARVING  
VIDEOS

"THRESHOLD"  
PUBLIC ART BY:  
BRIAN GOLDBLOOM

◀ BRIAN GOLDBLOOM:  
'THRESHOLD' (DETAIL, ONE OF  
FOUR VINE MAPLE COLUMN  
WRAPS), 8 FEET HIGH AND 14  
INCHES THICK, GRANITE

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT...



The planning for Seattle's 2016 Flower and Garden Show in February has begun. Kerin Monica Hawkinson has agreed to take on the

coordination of this year's NWSSA booth at the show. As a member, you may display your work at this show where thousands of people will see it. Watch for the NWSSA list serve notice in your email or check our web site for details starting after Thanksgiving, to make your submission. If you have never participated before, this is a good way to get started with displaying your work.

Reserve the evening of Saturday January 23rd 2016 for an informal workshop/discussion/salon at Batya Freidman's home in Seattle. The discussion will be a follow-up on last year's: "Art, Design, and Intention - All to What End?" It promises to be an evening filled with good conversation, so check the workshops part of the NWSSA web site in December.

Last year Lakewold Gardens presented an opportunity for NWSSA members

to display large outdoor pieces in an extraordinary setting

(check the article: <http://nwssa.org/events/past-shows-openings/937-lakewold-gardens-show>)

One thing we heard from members was that the display time for big outdoor pieces was short. We are working with Lakewold so that this year large pieces will be on display from early-mid April until mid-late September. If you have large outdoor pieces please consider participating in Lakewold this year and keep an eye out for the call.

May you flourish in the coming months and your work area be filled with chips, dust, and mud -- if you work wet.

Carve proud

... Carl

## FROM THE EDITORS...

It appears that summer has truly packed its bag and gone elsewhere. Gone with it are our symposia and carving events and outdoor shows.

What to do? Where to get that fix that we get from being amongst like-minded people hurling themselves and their tools at stone? Must we wait til our part of the earth once again faces the sun? No! Take heart fellow carvers. There is a whole host of tutorials and workshops available to you, as close as your key board.

In this issue we have visited two of these presentations courtesy of You Tube. Each video is unique, each inspires. And, each one has links to a seemingly inexhaustible array of styles, stones and approaches.

Our past two "Conversations" [March/April issue asked the question "Where do you get ideas for your sculpture?" July/August issue asked "When is it your art?"] have not only been fun to put together, but also well-received.

The Conversation in this issue asks the all-too-broad question "Why do we carve?" Four of our fellow carvers have courageously shared some of their deepest feelings regarding the carving process, and we want to personally thank Bill and Doug and Vic and Barbara for stepping up.



Our Quick Look is Brian Goldbloom who has been producing stone sculpture for public art and private collections for thirty years. He lives and works in Amboy, Washington.

So sit back and don't worry about the rain, you can always have a private workshop in the sun from the carvers on You Tube."

... Penelope and Lane

# WHY DO WE CARVE?

## BARBARA DAVIDSON

I began my adventure in art twenty-eight years ago when my three children were all in school and I needed to see if my brain still worked. I took a Visual Forum Course in 1987 at Okanagan University College which awakened my creativity. Following a move to Vancouver, I earned a Diploma in Fine Arts at Langara Community College. I went on to earn my Bachelor of Arts at Okanagan University College in Kelowna in 1995. I am the epitome of “Leo the Late Bloomer.” I graduated at the tender age of fifty-two.

While still in Vancouver I met George Pratt (one of the founders of NWSSA) whom I will always refer to as my mentor and friend. His encouragement (he was actually very pushy) led me to Camp Brotherhood in 1993 where I fell in love with stone and my fellow dusty, dirty playmates at Camp B. Twenty two years later I continue to plan my holidays in July for the trip south and inspiration gathering. Each summer I feel like a beginner and so appreciate the wonderful support so freely offered. This summer I was struggling to create what I thought was going to be a swan out of Brucite. My dear friend MJ Anderson lovingly pointed out that my errant swan could indeed be an owl. A swan? What was I thinking? I clearly see the outline of an owl now. It is a work in progress. I still need to remember that the stone is the boss and it is my privilege and responsibility to see that the image within the stone is released.

Ever since I saw Brancusi’s sculptures, I, like many others, was captivated and inspired by the flowing graceful lines, the simplicity, and perfection of his work. The human form and forms in nature also informed my work and much to my surprise, I have created a few animal shapes which, at one time, I vowed never to do. My belief at that time was that George Pratt, Michael Binkley and Native Indians carved animals – that was their wheelhouse, not mine. But apparently not.

Although I have sold many of my sculptures and have been involved in three public shows, I have never carved for anything but selfish pleasure. I carve only at Camp Brotherhood, my excuse being that I do not have a studio, time, etc. Yes, I know. One of my greatest discoveries during



▲ 'ISABEL', 18 INCHES HIGH, LIMESTONE

my early carving days was that when I am fully engaged, four hours can feel like a few minutes. This is what I refer to as the “Zen Effect.”

With Camp B over for this year, I have packed away my stone and my tools. I know they will wait with me for next year and another sculpture.

~Barbara

## BILL WEISSINGER

I carve stone to create something new that addresses an inner need. I could do that in three dimensions with clay, or in two with paint, encaustic or pastel, but the fine particles of clay have only the life the artist gives it. The same is true of featureless white canvases. I prefer working with a medium that has its own personality, each stone different but all with their own opinions. Plus I confess my aptitude leans more toward subtractive rather than additive media.

I don't carve to sell, but selling work is important to me. If a friend says "I love that salmon," that's sweet, but if she says "I love that salmon – here is a check for \$3,000," then I know she loves it. Van Gogh sold only one of his more than 900 paintings during his lifetime, and yet he kept painting. I don't

have his strength of character, flawed though it was. Thomas Wolfe said that "[t]here are two kinds of writer's block. One is when you freeze up because you think you can't do it. The other is when you think it's not worth doing." The critic who sits on my shoulder already scoffs at my work; if I didn't sell anything, I'd have no proof that what I do is worth doing. That said, I have no interest in making sculptures the only purpose of which is to be sold.

What if I were left alone on a desert island equipped with an art studio, protected both from approval and from condemnation? I think I'd open the basement to my soul and invite out the devils. (That, or I'd watch a lot of television.)

My guess, though, is that my executor would find troubling sculptures dealing with anger, hate, guilt, sex and desire. Even now in some of my artwork, I'm toying with the handle to the basement door. Will I open it? Perhaps, but I'd be on my own: there is no art market in Friday Harbor for some of the work my basement devils might craft, such as the clay model gathering dust in my garage of a half-man, sculpted from waist to feet, spiked through his abdomen to a stake. His phallus is erect; his legs writhe in agony. Yikes! Close that door!

Tim Burton, the moviemaker, is good at opening up his art to what lies in his basement. He says that "[m]ovies are like an expensive form of therapy for me." Like Burton, I make my sculptures as much for the therapy as the art.

I also sculpt stone because if it doesn't like what I'm doing it fights back. Sometimes I have to struggle to get what I want out of my stone, and I like that. Of course, I like it in part because (I've just knocked on wood) more often than not I win the struggle. Sometimes the stone and I are of like minds, and then we do this nice little dance together. As many of you know, I like dancing.

~Bill



Continued on Page 8 ►

# STONE CARVING VIDEOS

## YOUTUBE'S LIVING ROOM SYMPOSIA FOR THE STAY-AT-HOME CARVER

*Dressed in sweats and relaxing in the privacy of our homes, rain pelting at the windows, our own Workshops, for many of us, are but a distant memory. Nevertheless we can, with a click of the keyboard, have small private stone carving tutorials brought to us at any hour, thanks to YouTube and the generous souls who share their processes and work.*

Here are a few to get you started. Warning: Watching these videos can become habit forming.

### MARK CARROLL

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#### CARVING MARBLE BY MARK CARROLL

(Mark Carroll Copyright 2010, all rights reserved)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BknPB6kcg\\_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BknPB6kcg_E)





JOEY MARCELLA CARVING MANTIS FROM A 500 POUND BLOCK OF CARRERA MARBLE

*(You may have to watch part of an ad before the video starts)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzAFILwcXIM>

*(Then scroll down three rows to the Mantis video.)*



## DOUG WILTSHIRE

*Greetings,*

Art is as different to each individual as we are to the entire collective. It is the marvelous that stands before us in our social reality, which we call life.

I have spent most of my life as an artist, never to let my self be harnessed into one genre or medium. It is my personal assertion that all of these "things" that we work with are interconnected.

The purpose of my work could be many things. In my custom Jewelry it is primarily to help others signify a special touchstone event in their lives. While sculpting bronze, wood, clay or stone I try to evoke a feeling or emotion that strikes me while I am in the design phase.

I have had good years where money was not the primary reason for my work. During those times I feel I was the most creative. I am a full time student at U of O working on my Fine Art and Folklore degrees. The financial expenses connected with tuition are enormous. At times I feel too pressed to turn on the creative process.

I feel that when I am done with school I will be pouring myself into writing and creating with a greater level of understanding concepts of design.

*~Doug*



## VICTOR PICOU

The purpose of my art is to express “my force within.” Having been “farm raised” with parents and 15 siblings, as #16, I was creative, independent and a hard worker like the rest. My father was a farmer/carpenter, my mother, also a farmer/dress maker and milliner. With repeated voice commands, they taught me “the world don’t owe you a living boy” (Dad) and “you can always do more than you think” (Mother). I learned to obey and work hard, yet I found time to be creative and to be alone (much needed by artists.)

It took me a long time, however, to be honest with my art and to really “bring it out.” The voice of my heart, the feelings in my gut, the fantasies in my head, and what I observe around me – inspires and influences my studio practice: what I carve in stone, model in clay or sketch with charcoal and pencil.

I do not create for the market, though I have followed guidelines and budget for commissions. I give a nod to the stars above, when someone sees a value in my sculpture and

wants to own it. This validates that I’m not the only one who loves it.

Early in life, I thought that an artist needed expensive materials and tools. Later in life, I remembered that at age 6, I was digging clay in our Texas yard to model my horses, people and cars. Over 60 years later, I enjoy natural resources: stone and clay, to create unique expressions. This connection with the Earth and the universe is important.

My motto is “expressing what I love through art.” It’s all autobiographical folks. Just look at my art and then you can write the book; what I’m about, where I’ve been and what I’ve experienced. I approach my art with a professional attitude, but I’m fortunate that I don’t rely on sales for my living. It is a pleasure striving to be an artist with frequent help from Everett DuPen, Jacob Lawrence, Pablo Picasso, Auguste Rodin, Michelangelo Buonarroti, Sabah Al-Dhaher and Richard Hestekind.



In my early years of ‘old age,’ I am gaining a deeper understanding of expressing “my force within” with painting, creative writing and with more works in stone.

It’s been a grand experience being a member of NWSSA since 1986. Everyone who has kept NWSSA a wonderful network, deserves a nod from the stars above.

~Vic



# BRIAN GOLDBLOOM'S 'THRESHOLD'

*A multi-pieced work in granite for Portland's TriMet Milwaukie/Main Street light rail station in Milwaukie, Oregon.*

**"Threshold"** spans the length of the Milwaukie/Main Street Station, with three pieces that take their cues from the site's history. The north end of the platform is in downtown Milwaukie, while the south end faces Kellogg Lake. The lake began as a natural creek before becoming a millpond for a large flourmill in the mid 1800s. Later, it was enjoyed for recreational use until around the mid-1950s when it began to decline. Now there are ongoing citizen efforts to restore its scenic integrity and healthy habitat.

A pair of carved upright granite millstones marks the station's north entrance and pays homage to that early mill. Carving on one stone suggests an imaginary satellite image of how downtown Milwaukie might have looked circa 1895.

On the platform, between the two ends of the station, the shelter appears to be held up by columns of oversized vine maples. Although the carved granite trunks clearly refer to nature, each is composed of assembled sections, as evidence that the trees have been built rather than grown.

While the imagery of the north end evokes human endeavor, the south end speaks of nature. Here we have a naturalistically carved granite streambed that runs eighteen



feet, is spanned by a footbridge then drops fourteen feet to the landscape below. When nature cooperates, stormwater courses through the streambed.

For years now, I've been working full-time on this site-specific project for the light rail station in Milwaukie. Like most of my jobs, this one was obtained through a competition open to artists nationwide. The design process began about five years ago and continued for two years. Much of that time was spent collecting research and meeting with community groups and other design team members to define the parameters of the work, and to shoehorn my work into the built environment. Only after that research period did I actually start to design the work I would be making. All that information was figuratively thrown into a stew and my visual concepts took their inspiration from what floated to the top. My work is a direct response to the physical and societal context of the project site.

The fictitious satellite image was developed from current satellite images, old maps, a City of Milwaukie document that showed all the building footprints in town, and from photographs from the same time period. One interesting development came to light while looking at the photos. I had envisioned a carving that included quite a few trees and other landscape features. However, as I looked at a photo of Milwaukie's waterfront taken from across the Willamette River, I realized that I was looking at the town's buildings without a single obstruction in the way – no trees! Or even





patterns. They were then finish-carved and detailed according to my whim.

Kellogg Lake at the south end of the station has had a checkered past that includes becoming gradually silted in, as well as being used as an unsanctioned dumping site (another interesting, if lengthy, story.) My streambed carving includes a lot of “silty” forms and objects, such as bottles etc., to be discovered by those who look closely.

The course of the project has been very complex, to say the least, and continues to develop. I recently learned that TriMet has decided to add another waiting shelter to the station platform, and they will of course need some more vine maple trunks. More job security! I think of this project as being almost a career, rather than just a job.

bushes. So as you look at the carving you will notice a relative lack of detail, not because I didn't want to carve it, but because it didn't exist at the time.

The tree trunk columns in the waiting shelter are intended to provide a transition between the two polarized ends of the station by using a visual language that includes both natural and built components. Vine maples were chosen as the featured species because they are indigenous to the area and because they have particularly sculptural forms. The carvings were roughed out using a large (huge?) pointing machine, or 3-D pantograph, using actual vine maple pieces as



## Matzke Fine Art Gallery and Sculpture Park Announces its 2016 Spring Stone Sculpture Hand Tooling Workshop

Matzke Fine Art Gallery and Sculpture Park, 2345 Blanche Way, Camano Island, WA 98282

The three day retreat and workshop (**April 22nd, 23rd & 24th**) includes:  
lunches every day, potluck Party Saturday evening, instruction from a master stone carver.

Marenakos Rock Center and Neolithic Stone will provide stones and tools for sale during the workshop  
and loaner tools will be provided by the Northwest Stone Sculpture Association.

Please call or email for information

**360-387-2759 or [matzke@camano.net](mailto:matzke@camano.net). | [www.matzkefineart.com](http://www.matzkefineart.com)**

Our mission is to promote, encourage, and serve as an advocate for fine artists.

*The first tap of the chisel against rock, and with that first tap, the conversation has begun.*



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### KANSAS LIMESTONE FENCE POSTS FOR SALE

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#### **Camp Brotherhood**

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July 9-16, 2016

#### **Suttle Lake**

Sisters, Oregon

August 21 - 28, 2016



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

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