

Sculpture NorthWest

Jan/Feb 2015

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BY MARIE SIVAK

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MOVING STONE WITH SABAH AL-DHAHER



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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...



One of the things NWSSA members are always interested in, is opportunities to show their work. Here are a few.

First is the Seattle Flower and Garden Show Feb 11-15th (see: <http://nwssa.org/n-membership/call-for-artists> for more info). In addition to the opportunity to show your work, this is the year we will “refresh” the booth design. If you are interested and can lend a hand in the weeks leading up to the show,

contact Pat Barton (425-643-0756 pat@bartonstonework.com), Cyra Jane Hobson (206-406-0711 sirenicity@gmail.com) or Nicky Oberholtzer (nanobie@hotmail.com).

Next is a three month “NWSSA” show opening May 14th in Bellingham at a new gallery. They want all sizes of sculpture for 600-700 sq. ft. inside and 400-600 sq. ft. outside. NWSSA has been asked to be the first point of contact and Wade Marlow (previously owner of Blue Horse Gallery) will be NWSSA’s contact point. There will be a reasonable sales split in favor of the artist. Look for the details from Cyra Jane in the coming weeks.

The week before Mother’s day (May 2nd to 10th), Lakewold Gardens will offer opportunities for display, sale and education. Cyra Jane will be updating us. Similarly, at Kruckeberg Botanic Garden, in Shoreline, NWSSA has been asked to show outdoor sculpture (small and large) at their Mother’s Day weekend event. Several pieces from members sold last year. Cyra Jane will be handling coordination.

FROM THE EDITORS...

When, occasionally, Spotlight interviews with our members are not available, we like to take a look around the NorthWest sculpture scene to find artists whose work we can feature in Sculpture NorthWest.

In this issue, we include the work of Marie Sivak, a Portland based artist, who is a NWSSA member and is currently teaching art at Marylhurst University.

Technology being what it is, our looking around is not limited by geography, as we cyber-zoom to England to have an up-close look at the delightful animal carvings of Pippa Unwin.

And for the answer to that question that you’ve all been asking: What on earth would Bernini be doing hanging out in tattoo parlors? Check out some astonishing pictures of Bernini’s art, old and new, on page 10.

Finally, the weekend of June 20th a one day “Picnic in the Park” at Volunteer Park in Seattle created and coordinated by Cyra Jane. Members will bring their sculpture. NWSSA will provide pedestals, invite the public to bring a picnic lunch, and enjoy the sculpture and talking with our members. If you’d like to help organize a similar event, contact Cyra Jane.

As you see, Cyra Jane has been asked to coordinate the call to artists. With so many events and possibilities, the board wanted to have a single point of contact so things go smoothly, questions can be answered without delay, and details are not dropped. If you have questions or want to know more, contact Cyra Jane.

Over the coming spring and summer months, Pat Barton’s efforts with Rock and Gem Clubs, will bring us opportunities to show at the Issaquah, Puyallup and Everett Rock and Gem shows. Our presence there will help to educate a likely group of new members about stone carving. We will be posting more on our web site and Facebook. Contact Pat if you are interested in participating or helping.

Matzke Fine Art Gallery and Sculpture Park (www.matzkefineart.com) has many of our members’ sculptures and is a strong supporter of our stone carving community. If you have not contacted Karla (matzke@camano.net) about showing your work, please do. Recently, Karla has been hosting our hand carving retreat. This year it will be April 24, 25 and 26. Sue Taves will be guest instructor and there will be a show and opening the evening of April 25.

It’ll be a busy spring and summer. I am looking forward to seeing your work in the upcoming shows.

Be mindful, positive, and Carve Proud,

... Carl



We are already well into January, but it is never too late for a chorus of Auld Lang Syne and to wish all of you a year filled with creativity and joy.

Happy carving,

...Penelope and Lane

ALABASTER AND LIGHT

By Marie Sivak

MARIE SIVAK'S WORLD OF ALABASTER AND LIGHT

Excerpts from her interview with writer Nikki Grattan published online by San Francisco based "In The Make."

We visited Marie in her bright and airy Portland studio in an industrial area right near the Willamette River... One of Marie's main preoccupations in her work is the exploration of the complex and elusive world of memory... Using a variety of materials besides stone, she creates mixed media pieces that bring both personal and collective memory and meaning to the forefront to provoke a collision of time, emotions, and space.



MARIE SIVAK
PHOTO BY SABINA POOLE

One of the most magical aspects of Marie's work is how she has combined video with stone sculpture— her piece "Memoir" is a great example in which video is projected onto an alabaster carving of a book, and so it appears as if a woman is writing from inside the book. Another of her more recent sculptures "Floating Remnants" reveals a new direction. In this piece a bee is projected from within the stone, creating luminosity and a buzzing, building, moody atmosphere.

Marie's work is like that— it builds up quickly within you and around you, initially entering softly, light-hued and fragile despite the weight of its materiality, despite the heaviness of its ideas...

How would you describe...the content of your work?

My work provides a poetic and analytical platform where objects and environments act as portals through which we may access the world of the sublime. I seek to reunite the intellect with the emotions; to know intangible ideas by giving them concrete form. The focus of my recent and current projects has been the psychology of memory and language as well as the role of the individual's experience within society; how personal experience has greater cultural implications...

...I believe personal experience brings an incredible amount of honesty to art. I'm not saying that every single thing that happens to a person is of interest to the rest of the world, just that allowing oneself to be driven by personal life experience involves risk. Anyway, I've gotten to a point where I just feel like, "Well, I'm not turning back now."

What mediums do you work with?

The juxtaposition of materials creates the grammar of my work: salt and organza, hematite and silk, rare earth magnets, stainless steel, thick layers of graphite and ink on paper, video and stone... I often use nylon organza with different forms of stainless steel to create

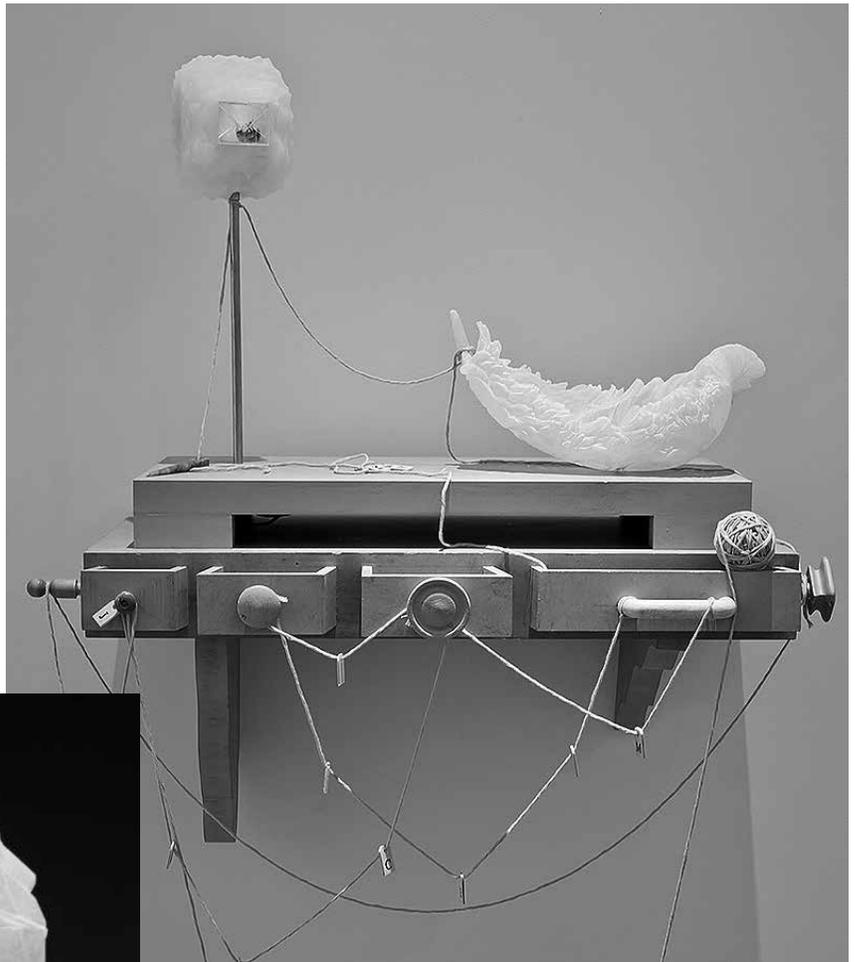


▲ 'LACING ATROPOS: PNEUMA'(DETAIL), 40' X 30' X 27', CARVED ALABASTER, VIDEO, STAINLESS STEEL, SILK ORGANZA, SALT, PHOTO: BILL BACHHUBER

flaccid structural systems. My intuitive process resembles the form finding approach of architects such as Antoni Gaudi... Most recently I have been mildly obsessed with combining video and stone sculpture...

How do you think your wide array of materials and mediums benefits your work?

I think the work is richer conceptually because of the media I use. In the last 10 years I have been fascinated by the conceptual and expressive possibilities of combining video with traditionally carved stone objects. The power of the hand worked object, the labor that resides in the carved object can be felt physically by the viewer. I think people have a kinesthetic response to objects that have been touched so much by the hand. But I also love technology, not for technology's sake but for what it can bring to the experience of the work.



▲ 'FLOATING REMNANTS OR THE LINGERING STING' 60' X 29' X 17', CARVED ALABASTER, VIDEO, STEEL, PHOTO: DAN KVITKA

The real-time of video and the option of being spontaneous that this medium offers is a counterpoint to the lengthy labor of crafting objects. I can draw from Renaissance and Baroque sculpture while also responding to the history of film and performance art.

You have said that hand-made objects are “magical tools for understanding the human condition.” Can you please further explain this notion?

It is not just the hand-made; it is the hand-made combined with technology that allows me to use sculpture as a way of contemplating experience and relating it to greater philosophical concerns...One of my recent works called “Memoir,” is about feeling a sense of remoteness and intimacy while reading a book. The piece collapses the experiences of writing and reading into one instant, compressing time and space. The page of the book is both a window and a barrier. It explores the need to write one's memories and thoughts even if they don't survive. It is also about the human desire to create and put oneself (literally or not) into a work of art...



▲ 'FLOATING REMNANTS OR THE LINGERING STING' (DETAIL), 8' X 6' X 6', CARVED ALABASTER, VIDEO, STEEL, PHOTO: BILL BACHHUBER



ALABASTER AND LIGHT

(continued)

What influences outside the visual arts inspire and impact your approach...?

Reading has always been an important influence on my work. I love novels that explore ideas as experienced through the structure of the imagined experience...I just finished two great books by Ivan Doig...The Sea Runners and The Whistling Season. I like stories about ordeal or a journey where the landscape is described to a point of meditation. While perhaps not always overtly a part of my work, landscape, especially that of the Pacific Northwest influences what I do. I love hiking and exploring new landscapes; it's a part of my creative process...Science is another topic that greatly influences my work (as well as) digital tools and machine technology.

What does having a physical space to make art in mean for your process...?

Having a space that reflects my thoughts, a room that is a metaphor for my own mind is essential...I need to see my work and have a place where I can shut the door and reclaim my autonomy of thought from the everyday demands of my job and my life.

Is there something you are currently working on, or are excited about starting...?

About 10 years ago I began thinking of ways in which I could incorporate video with stone sculpture. "Pneuma" and "Memoir" combine video with alabaster, a translucent stone. When video is projected onto the stone the stone absorbs (and transmits) some of the light resulting in the sense that the imagery is illuminated from within...

The most recent sculptures ("Floating Remnants", "Vicious", and "Aftermath") represent a new direction. In these works the video imagery projects from within the sculpture, through the stone, onto its surface. Embedding video inside the sculptures is technically challenging, time and labor intensive, but its conceptual and expressive magic makes it hard to resist. Video rendered through stone is transfigured into gentle, luminous gestures...

How do you navigate the art world?

Well, I do my work, I apply for shows. I am especially dependent on grants. This might sound odd, but I actually enjoy writing grants...The process helps me pin down my goals and subject matter. More recently I have been far more proactive in getting my work out there. I just received last year, Career Opportunity Grants from The Oregon Arts Commission and The Ford Family

Foundation...which I used to produce a 24 page full color catalog of my work with an essay by Charlotta Kotik, Curator Emerita, The Brooklyn Museum... It took me a long time to understand what is important to me as an artist and to feel ready to seek more visibility; the work comes first. (It's really important) to bring people in the art world into my studio, to have a dialogue, and to be part of this experiment that is contemporary art.



▲ 'MEMOIR' (DETAIL), 33' X 28' X 29',
CARVED ALABASTER, VIDEO, WOOD, MDF,
PHOTO: MARIE SIVAK

Words of wisdom?

"Don't give up."

"If you are not being rejected; you are not trying hard enough."

For the original interview and to learn more about Marie's work visit:

inthemake.com/marie-sivak/

mariesivak.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEo99csJ0Ao>

<https://iwa.rutgers.edu/programs/momentum/artists/#Sivak>

Marie recently received Career Opportunity Grants from the Oregon Arts Commission and The Ford Family Foundation and a RACC Professional Development Grant to participate in the curatorial project Momentum: Women/Art/Technology, January 20th-April 17th, 2015 at Rutgers University in New Jersey.



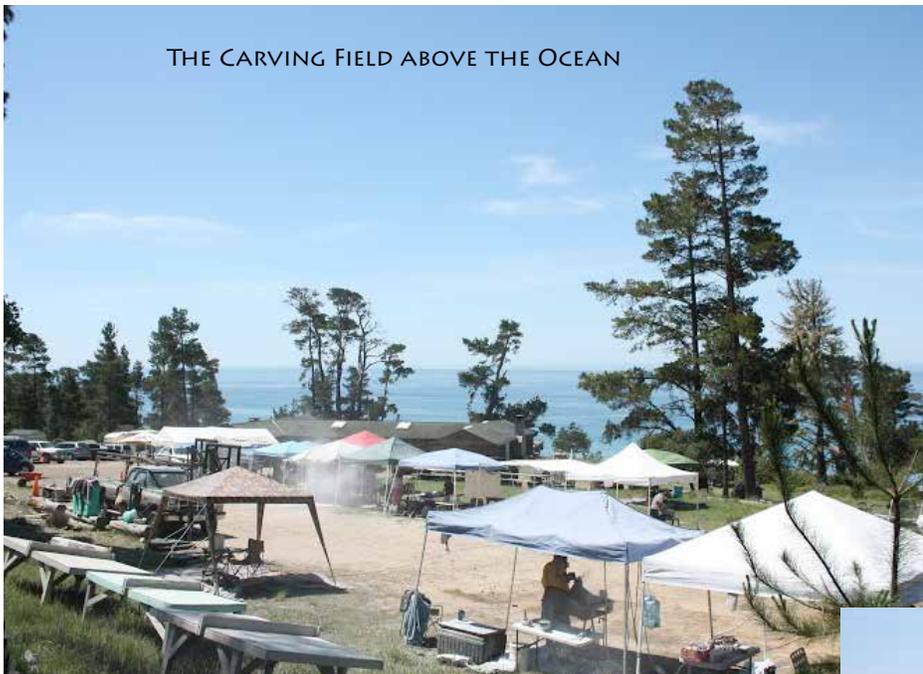
A NOTE FROM VICTOR PICOU ON THE CALIFORNIA SCULPTORS SYMPOSIUM

APRIL 26 – MAY 3, 2015

Vic has been a NWSSA member since 1986, Symposium Director 1989 to 2000, Board President 1989 to 1996

Photos by John Truer

NWSSA Members, please consider attending our 13th annual symposium in the charming coastal town of Cambria, CA, between San Francisco and Los Angeles.



THE CARVING FIELD ABOVE THE OCEAN

Camp Ocean Pines, a private conference center in a pine forest overlooking the ocean, is where we carve all day, enjoy home-style meals and have comfy straw bale cabins to sleep in. We have a generator and air compressor to empower you all day.

Scheduled workshops in stone, clay and wood will whet your interest each day. We will have 2 nude models each day for figure drawing and for clay modeling.

Imagine that – a view of the ocean and a great model (or an air compressor) depending on your perspective. :~)

MARINE SCULPTURE PROJECT (A 3 YEAR GROUPCARVE GIFTED TO ► CAMP OCEAN PINES). THE SEVERAL TONS OF STONE THAT WAS DONATED BY ART CITY STONE SUPPLY WAS DESIGNED BY PAUL LINDHARD, CHRIS PROVENZANO, C RAMON BYRNE, AND RUDY CALDERON. INSTALLATION / ENGINEERING BY PAUL LINDHARD, JOANNE DUBY AND RIGGS HOHMANN. PEBBLE SURFACE DESIGN AND INSTALLATION BY KEVIN CARMAN.



We have a big show/sale on Saturday, plus a live and a silent auction during the week.

If you have questions about CSS, ask some members who've been there: Rick Johnson, Arliss Newcomb, Gus Schairer, Nicky Oberholtzer, Gudrun Ongman, Sabah Al-Dhafer or Samantha Hicks

Escape the cold damp NW and come enjoy spring on the California coast.

For details, please visit us on Face book or on our website at www.californiasculptorssymposim.org

You can also get a great glimpse of the site by visiting www.campoceanpines.org



▲ BUST BY GEORG SCHMERHOLZ, JADE AND GRANITE

THE ANIMALS OF PIPPA UNWIN

The fact that she loves animals is reflected in her work. It is also evident when looking at her web page at www.mewstonemasonry.com. This address was chosen not only because her husband lived near the little rocky island off Plymouth known as the Mewstone, but because it also contains the word Mew, the English onomatopoeia for the cat's meow.

Stonemasonry is also part of the web address. To explain we need to back up a bit. It was always Pippa Unwin's dream to illustrate children's books, a vocation which led to some success. Gradually the scene for illustrators was shifting, she writes, "The work changed and was less fulfilling."

She mentions nothing of a search for new challenges let alone of a crisis. But already during her school years at Wells Cathedral School, stonemasonry caught her interest, as she had always been fascinated by the stone carvings in the cathedral.



▲ PIPPA ASTRIDE HER POLAR BEAR, ONE METER HIGH, PORTLAND ROACH STONE



▲ 'HIPPO', 60 X 40 X 50 CM, CHICKSGROVE STONE

So she decided to try her hand at sculpting. The material was all the same to her, that is until she heard of an apprenticeship for stonemasonry. Her then husband, a geologist, supported her interest, so she made up her mind, "The apprenticeship was cheap, relatively nearby and flexible, so that it fitted in with my 8 year-old twins' school day, so I enrolled in that."

After her apprenticeship she worked part time for a stone mason completing her qualification and began working full time all the way up to company director. By then she had begun doing freelance sculpture as well.

Her webpage makes little mention of art. She explains: "For a long time I was working predominately as a stonemason, to pay the bills. But in the last couple of years I have seen myself more as an artist and sculptor."

This is also due to the fact that the area around Devon, her current home, has less traditional work for stonemasons. So she turned to new frontiers.

But her work for interior and exterior decoration still plays an important role.

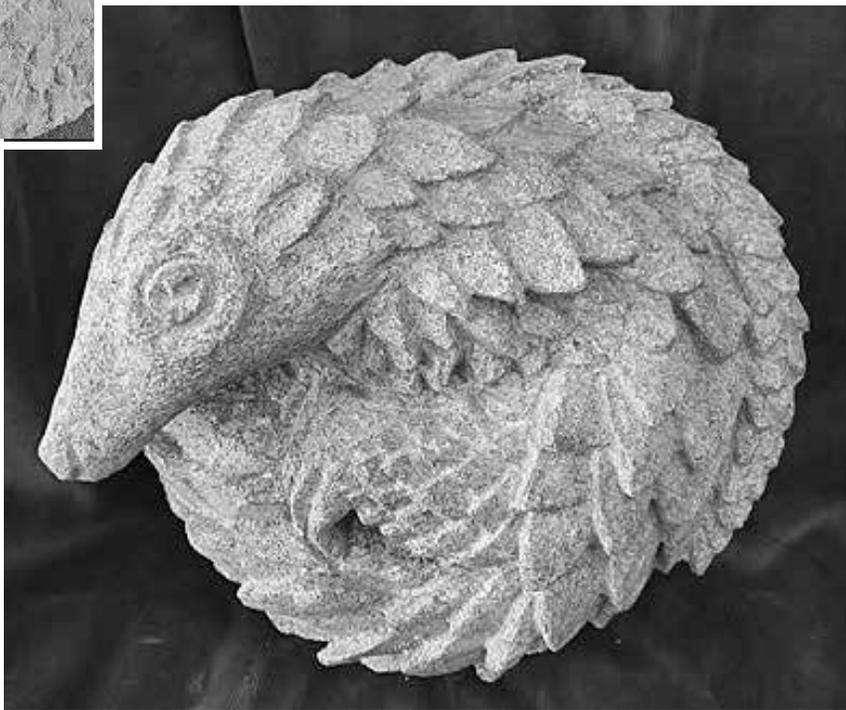


▲ 'TUMBLING HARES', 45 X 25 X 45 CM, BATH STONE



▲ 'CROCODILE FAMILY', 60 X 40 X 40 CM, BATH STONE

She is a member of the South Hams Art Forum and the South West Sculptors Association. Among other places, she exhibits her work at Delamore Arts in the Southwest of England (http://www.delamore-art.co.uk/cur_artists.php) and the Artparks Sculpture Park on the English island of Guernsey. (http://www.artparks.co.uk/artpark_sculpture.php?sculpture=6168&sculptor=pippa_unwin).



▲ 'PANGOLIN', 18 X 18 X 12 CM, HAMSTONE



BERNINI

LIKE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN HIM

Angel With Spear >

This amazing Bernini Angel inked on the left thigh, was completed by shop founder, Rafa Barragan in two sessions totaling seven hours at the Illuminati Tattoo Lounge in Orange County, CA. Bernini was an Italian artist born in 1598, known primarily for his stunning sculptures. He is often credited as creating the Baroque style of sculpture which emphasized the dynamic movement and energy of human forms.



< David

The ink artist, Jun Cha, currently is working in Los Angeles, CA. This tattoo on the subject's left side is of the famous Bernini sculpture of David. It depicts the scene from the Bible where David flings a stone at Goliath, the giant. David slays Goliath, dropping the armor and throwing the stone with just part of a robe covering him. We see the movement, as well as each nuance of the statue captured in this tattoo.

St. Teresa >

This Ecstasy of Saint Teresa tattoo put on the right bicep, depicts an episode of "religious ecstasy" in the life of the cloistered Spanish mystic and Carmelite nun - Teresa of Avila (1515 - 1582.) Critics of the work are divided as to whether Teresa is experiencing an intense state of divine joy, or a physical orgasm. However, Professor Robert Harbison says he believes that Bernini used the erotic character of the experience to reflect a new and higher type of spiritual awakening.



< Bust of Jesus

Over his 82 year life, Bernini produced thousands of sculptures. This bust of Jesus was the last sculpture he worked on before his death in 1680. The tattoo of Bernini's Jesus was inked on the left, upper arm and was completed in six hours by Francisco J Sanchez

Angel With Cross >

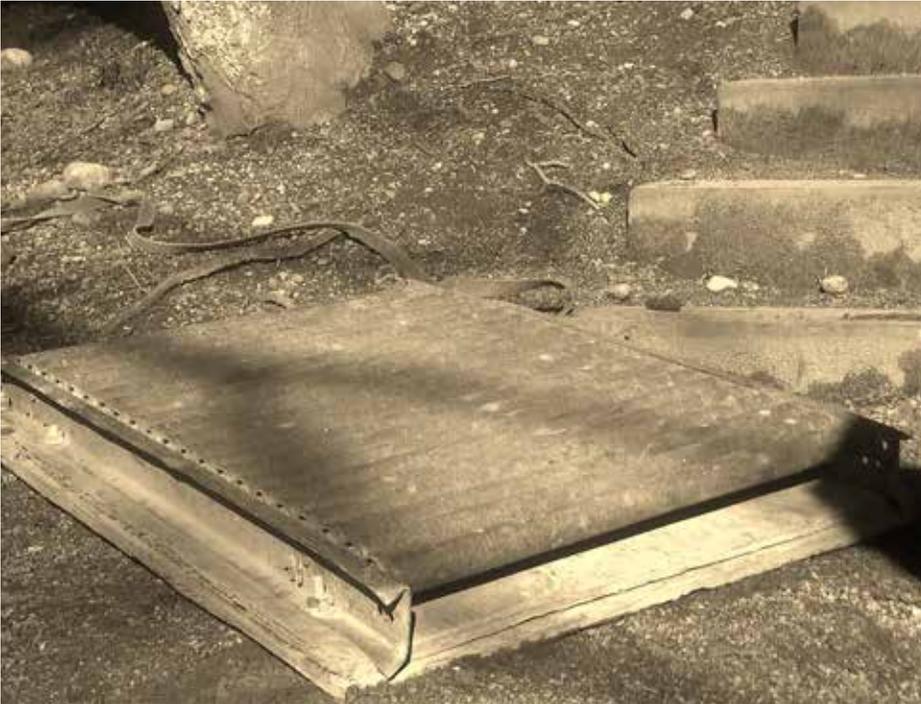
This piece was inked on the subject's left thigh at Big Gus's Gallery in Los Alamitos, CA. "I love to do black & gray photorealism.....it's my favorite! I have come a long way in this biz tattooing till the early mornings but what the hell, it's the only time you get some peace and quiet." It is one of a dozen angels designed by Bernini that line both sides of the bridge to the Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome.



SLICK WAY TO MOVE STONE

Submitted to Sculpture NorthWest by long-time NWSSA friend, Steve Erickson.

All sculptors and landscapers need to move stone whether natural or worked. This can be a problem when too heavy to lift, too light for machinery, or due to constraints of the locale. Here's a tool that Sabah Al-Dhaher finds useful, easy, manageable and safe.



It's a section of conveyor with rollers placed downward and two thick layers of plywood bolted to the top of the frame. Two "drawstrings" of nylon webbing, with handles made of garden hose, allow one or two people to pull, turn, pull backward, or prevent rolling by tying to something solid or by driving a crow bar into ground through the handles. Sections of overlapping plywood can be used as a road on soft ground or to protect surfaces such as floors, concrete or tile. This provides smooth, low-friction rolling and facilitates ease of turning.

Advantages of this device are: low cost, size, control (better than pipe rollers), and it's safer than a hand truck.

For Sabah's latest installation, a 1500 pound basalt base was transported over 200 feet horizontally, with some inclines, over both concrete and gravel. A previous installation of a one ton stone used the device, with two "pushers" plus two "pullers," over a grass lawn without damage.

While Sabah doesn't have any extras, you might try searching for "Gravity Roller Conveyors" in salvage yards.





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2015 CARVING CALENDAR

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Silver Falls

Silver Falls State Park, OR



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