



Ethnic Portrait: *Meiko Front* by Susan Gallacher-Turner

Over the last 15 years, I've worked in many schools doing art projects with children. I've taught Art Literacy, mask making, drawing, painting, clay, and Dramatic Arts. I always envisioned combining my love of art and writing in one project that would bring literacy into the classroom in a whole new way, and this year, I was fortunate to have a teacher share my vision.

At Farmington Elementary in Hillsboro, four classes of students from fourth to sixth grade worked for six weeks on the Cultural Book Box Project. Funded by a grant from the Hillsboro Education Foundation, I worked with over 120 students to complete this visual and verbal art piece. Each student picked a boy or girl from around the globe and researched their country and lifestyle. They gave their boy or girl a name, sculpted and painted their faces, painted a landscape and the book box in colors and patterns taken from the boy's or girl's country, and wrote a short essay about his or her life.

## Cultural Book Box Project: Bringing the Joys of Writing and Art to Children

*PNWS Featured Artist: Susan Gallacher-Turner*

The birth of the Cultural Book Box Project began with my own art work. My box series, "Ethnic Portraits," was an exploration in mixed media, research, and writing. I was inspired by the beautiful face of a woman from Africa, and as I sculpted her image in clay, I began to wonder about her life. What did she see when she woke up in the morning? What did she eat? Did she have a partner and children? Was it warm or cold there? What did she dream about?

With these questions in mind, I went in search of answers. I love to research, and this gave me the opportunity to dig into books, magazines, and the Internet to learn more about the lives of the women I was sculpting. In the process, I learned about the economic importance of salt mining in Niger, the gathering of saffron in India, and the history of the Ainu people in Japan. I researched the geography of their country and gathered pictures of the types



Susan Gallacher-Turner working with students at Farmington View Elementary

of landscapes where they lived. I found books on ethnic dress and adornment so I could more accurately replicate their head-dresses, jewelry, and tattoos.

The "Ethnic Portrait" series boxes feature a copper repoussé on the front depicting a moment in the woman's life. Inside the door is a short piece of writing about her daily life along with a culturally appropriate name. The box itself contains a portrait of the woman in clay, complete with head-dress, jewelry, and tattoos. The portrait is mounted in front of her native landscape, which is painted in oil.

To be able to take the "Ethnic Portrait" series concept, which brought together art and writing, and to use it as a teaching tool in the classroom was an amazing opportunity for me. Every Friday, with their paint shirts on, the children's hands were busy sculpting faces, priming, and painting. They searched books, magazines, and the Internet to find out what life was like for their boy or girl. After six weeks of work, they put it all together in a finished art piece: a mask portrait, a landscape painting, and a short essay in a painted book box as part of The Cultural Book Box Project. As the artist-in-residence, I worked with these children from start to finish, teaching them to sculpt, paint landscapes, and discover what life was like for another boy or girl from around the world.



*Meiko Inside* by Susan Gallacher-Turner



6th grade Cultural Book Box Projects

## Pacific Northwest SCULPTORS

4110 SE Hawthorne Blvd. #302  
Portland, OR 97214  
www.pnwsculptors.org

The *Pacific Northwest Sculptors Newsletter* is a bimonthly publication of the Pacific Northwest Sculptors, a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the public through educational programs and sculpture exhibitions. We are a dynamic, inclusive community of artists who inspire and support each other's growth with ideas, skills, and knowledge.

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### Submissions to *The Pacific Northwest Sculptors Newsletter*

Send to: lmlustberg@gmail.com

**Deadline for the Dec.-Jan. issue:** Nov 1

**Join or renew your membership at**

[www.pnwsculptors.org/membership.htm](http://www.pnwsculptors.org/membership.htm)

## President's Message

By Carole Murphy



Hello Everyone,

This is one great group of people, isn't it?

As I write this, Susan Levine and Laurie Vail, along with a lot of other volunteers,

are busy getting ready for Art in the Pearl. It should be a good show once again. For next year, there are plans to add a show at the Columbia Art Center in Hood River, and of course, thanks to Ben Dye and Ken Patton, we will be the main draw for the show at the Lake Oswego Arts Festival. We will also be featured in the incredible guide they put out about it!

If you aren't making it to the monthly meetings, you are really missing out: There are some great studios to explore, and some wonderful times to be had. Check out the ones that are coming up; they are listed here in the newsletter. As usual, Rick Gregg has done a stellar job lining up some really good ones.

We're working on a number of things. I'm gonna be calling some of you who have offered your time and pull you into the network to help us keep moving forward. Thanks so much for your offers to volunteer, and I look forward to seeing you at the meetings!

—Carole

## Upcoming Meetings

Portfolios and works-in-progress always welcome!

**Note:** Meetings are potluck, but do come anyway even if you can't bring food! Potlucks are a lot of fun and good eating, too. Lately, some members have noticed that we've been getting a lot of snacks and few main dishes. If you can, bring a prepared dish or beverages. It will always be appreciated! —Rick Gregg

### October Meeting – Potluck

Wednesday, Oct. 13, 7 pm

Come at 6 pm to tour the studio

Hosted by Ben Dye

14182 S. Spangler Rd., Oregon City, 97045

About 8 minutes south of 205 off of Highway 213

First house on left

(503) 320-3044

[www.bendyesculpture.com](http://www.bendyesculpture.com)

### November Meeting – Potluck

Wednesday, Nov. 10, 7 pm

Hosted by Patrick Gracewood

4920 NE 55th Ave, Portland, 97218

Between NE Prescott & NE Alberta

(503) 804-3170

[www.gracewoodstudio.com](http://www.gracewoodstudio.com)

**No meeting in December**



## July Meeting Reveals the Many Talents of Kirk deFord

PNWS members were treated to an outdoor barbecue and an outdoor/indoor tour of Kirk deFord's vast and impressive artistic talents at his home in July. Outdoors, one of Kirk's attention-grabbing pieces included his Whimsy Wall of figures. These figures were first wrapped in canvas and then painted. Indoors, Kirk's walls and floor spaces are filled with acrylic paintings, mixed media pieces, digital photos, and sculpture. Members loved his carved avocado owl, and the Goddess, both shown below. Thanks to Kirk for an inspiring evening.



# On the Role of Nature in Northwest Art

By David Lochtie

This is the final installment of an essay entitled "On the Role of Nature in Northwestern Art," which asks if there are nature-derived aspects of our art in this region that are recognizable and unique. The first installment dealt with the work of Hilda and Carl Morris and the second with the painter Carl Hall.

Art critics have made the case that the artists of the Northwest School—including Morris Graves and Mark Tobey—had a mystical connection with nature that permeated their work and that constituted their contribution to the art world. Nature as subject, sublime and virgin, had been a primary inspiration for painters and photographers before them as well. It can likely be said that the preponderance of serious work done here in the last century and a half takes the land of the Northwest as its inspiration, either directly or circuitously. But that still does not prove the claim that such subject matter is the seal of Northwestern Art.

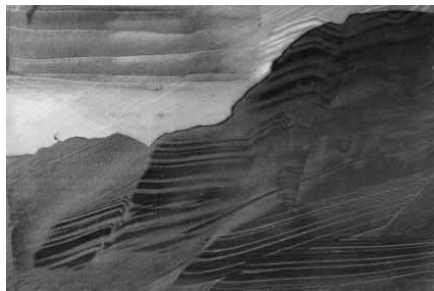
One authoritative voice on the matter comes from the painter James Lavadour, whose spontaneously produced paintings arrive as uncanny depictions of the canyons, mountain ranges, and plains of Northeastern Oregon. His work also crackles with accurate approximations of the lines and shapes of nature, those same qualities so compelling in the work of Hall and the Morrises. But unlike those artists, Lavadour was born here and walked the draws and tops of the Blue Mountains and the high plateau from his earliest youth. So he did not have to acclimate himself to the landscape or learn it as a stranger. It has been a part of him from the beginning.

But on the question of whether the land is what makes Northwestern Art unique, he resists such a thesis. He does not want to forget "the oneness of humanity" while contemplating "this big cat's-eye marble of matter." Lavadour is concerned with "the Unity that lives in everything. You apply that spark of energy from the Great Source—this life we're given—and contemplate that Unity from a fixed point and a unique perspective." He sees the artist as a chronicler of events, something like a phonograph needle registering a place and time. The creative event includes the life of the artist up to that moment: "Whatever happens in the world, when you make a mark, all of that is registered in the mark."

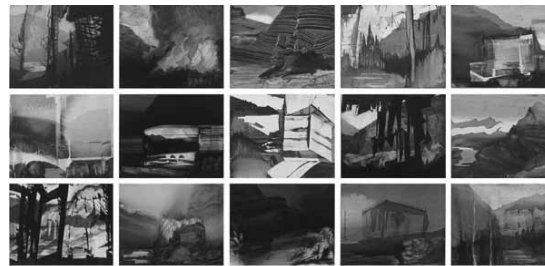
The idea of Unity is in the art materials themselves, Lavadour says. "The properties of paint are the properties of soil. Minerals, they erode, break down, shift, and drop—these are cosmic occurrences. The flow of paint, the flow of the land. What happens in flow is it moves until it encounters resistance, then it enters a vortex, and with that

vortex there is all this geometry. This is the fundamental cosmic vortex." Lavadour paintings, then, have left the realm of depiction and become channelers of vital forces, some geological, some spiritual. One senses that he has come close to disclosing the untold secret of nature that Emerson spoke of.

Is there a regional art we can claim? Lavadour answers: "Instead of regional, call it circumstantial. Forms and events are regional things. I live here, and this Unity



James Lavadour's *Goldshine, Scratch, Shadows, and Waiting for Rain*



*Blanket*, oil on wood, 15 panels by James Lavadour

lives in everything. It has its own energy, substructures, fixtures, flow, all that stuff."

While his paintings seem to be of landscapes, their source is not landscape only. Other factors—memory, good will, fascination, connection to the source of Life—are equally important. "We are here to transmit the beauty of this Unity to others. So you ask yourself what are the good things, what gives substance, what are the gems? All that goes into the work. To be able to deliver beauty to other people is a pleasure."

So we are left with no definitive conclusion on the matter of nature in Northwestern art. Organic geometries and diffuse lights are prominent in many Northwestern paintings, that's true, and organic geometries can be found in the sculpture, but we cannot claim that these borrowings from nature are definitive. Perhaps the most that can be said is that outside of almost any studio in the Pacific Northwest, mountains are insisting their way to the sky, or roaring water is smashing against shores, or rustling prairie grasses blanket undulating expanses of earth, or rainwater is enveloping everything. Whether the microcosms and macrocosms of that scenery are foremost in the definitive work of the region, and whether there is enough overlap in the work of Northwestern artists to even identify a common trajectory, is difficult to say. What can be said is that there are men and women who have devoted their lives to divining sublime information from the land. Their lives can be an inspiration for artists seeking to continue the exploration of this wonderland, and in a world where wild places are disappearing, what they produce may have greater urgency for people seeking remembrance and inspiration.

The works of Carl and Hilda Morris can be seen at Reed College, the Portland Art Museum, the Portland Civic Theatre, and the Oregon Health Sciences University. Carl Hall's paintings can be viewed at the Portland Art Museum, the Willamette University Library, and the Lake Oswego Library. James Lavadour's works can be found at the Portland Art Museum, the Seattle Art Museum, and the Tacoma Art Museum, and at 1414 NW Northrup Street in Portland.

—David Lochtie  
[www.davidlochtie.com](http://www.davidlochtie.com)

## Member News



*Despite the Rain* by Jennifer Corio and Dave Frei.

### Newest Sculpture by Jennifer Corio & Dave Frei Unveiled in Bremerton, Washington

In July, Jennifer Corio and Dave Frei installed their new 6-foot sculpture *Despite the Rain* in downtown Bremerton, Washington. The whimsical metal woman flaunting her umbrella is an ode to the Pacific Northwest weather...and not letting it get the best of you. "I really have to drag myself outside during the long, dark, rainy months, but when I do, I find it quite liberating and soul cleansing," says Jennifer who designed the sculpture.

Dave Frei, craftsman of the husband/wife team, fabricated the body of *Despite the Rain* using stainless steel. Both the umbrella and puddle are made from mild steel with bright-metallic powder coat colors. "I chose orange for the umbrella to add a bit of sunshine to the piece," says Jennifer. Stainless steel together with a powder coat finish will withstand the test of time even in Bremerton's maritime climate.

This public art project was funded by Bremerton's 1% for art program. You can find their sculpture on the corner of 5th & Pacific in downtown Bremerton.

In October, Jennifer and Dave will install two more large-scale metal sculptures at juried exhibitions in San Diego and Palm Desert, California. You can follow their progress on their blog Metal Matters at [www.cobalt-designworks.com/blog](http://www.cobalt-designworks.com/blog).

Jennifer Corio  
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360 281-5619  
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[www.cobaltdesignworks.com/blog](http://www.cobaltdesignworks.com/blog)



Dave Frei installs the sculpture he fabricated from Jennifer Corio's design in front of a crowd of eager onlookers.

### Susan Gallacher-Turner Mask Shows and Classes

Susan Gallacher-Turner will be showing masks in two shows this fall. Her copper repoussé masks will be part of Maskibition 26 in Eureka, California, in October, and a new mixed media mask will be shown at Re:Vision Gallery from October 4 through 27 as part of the SCRAP Gala Auction in Portland on October 28.

Susan will also be teaching classes through PCC and local after school programs. For more information about Susan's work and classes, visit her website at [www.susangt.com](http://www.susangt.com).

#### Create a decorative box or bowl

PCC Willow Creek Campus  
November 6, 12-4pm

#### Mask Makers

Sunnyside Elementary School  
After school programs



Above: *Thunderbird* by Susan Gallacher-Turner. Below: Happy PCC students show off their pieces.



**Visit PNWS Sculptors During Portland Open Studios**

There many opportunities to watch sculptors at work during Portland Open Studios, a tour of 100 artists' workplaces all around metro Portland on October 9, 10, 16 and 17. All studios are open both weekends.

Six PNWS members are participating this year: Denny Boone, Pamela Grow, Jeanne Henry, Robert McWilliams, Sara Swink, and Jill Toberson.

Denny Boone's bronze and and ceramic sculptures are a mixture of realism, fantasy, and abstraction of the human form.

Pamela Grow, who was born and raised in Australia, does ceramic figurative sculpture. She says, "Hand building is my focus, often loose coiling. Sometimes there is a story, sometimes not. The process of creating is always pure joy!" Pam works out of Sara Swink's West Linn studio, and they'll be doing open studios together this year.



Left: *Rollin Wingman* by Denny Boone. Below: *In Dream Time* by Pamela Grow, *Charms* by Sara Swink. and one of Jeanne Henry's clay reliefs.



*Grandpa Kendall Ride* by Robert McWilliams.

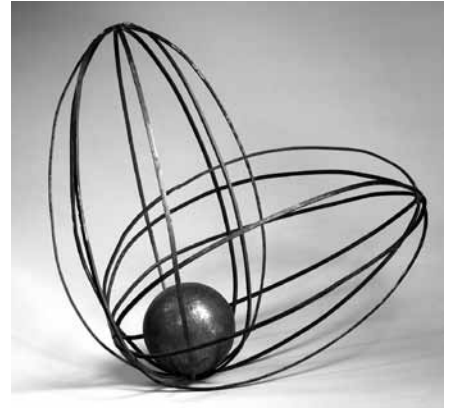
Jeanne Henry, an Oregon potter for 33 years, creates carved clay reliefs to create a sense of space and the illusion of depth, emphasizing perspective. For Portland Open Studios, she will be featuring a new body of work based on the whimsical villages of Marc Chagall and continuing her study of historic structures in the Oregon landscape.

Robert McWilliams is a self-taught artist who makes wry constructions that combine original woodcarving and nostalgic junk to re-create the imaginings and memories of his life. His work is inspired by 40 years of studying and collecting American antiques, folk art, crafts, and tools.

Sara Swink makes ceramic human and animal figures with a psychological stance, delivered with dash of humor. Encoded shapes, surfaces, color, and facial expression suggest the subtleties and contradictions of what lies within.

Jill Toberson is a mixed media artist who has turned a lifelong fascination with "garbage" and surplus materials into a unique form of expression. Deconstruction plays a large role in her design concepts. Jill sees interest in the inner workings of the machinery of our lives, be it our household objects, or the heavy equipment used to build our cities and farms. She transforms these objects into smaller pieces, and reconstructs the pieces into objects that focus on form over function.

The Portland Open Studios \$15 Tour Guide comes with 2 tickets good for all four days, maps, directions to the studios, and pictures of artworks. Children under 18 are free. Available from participating artists, at Art Media, New



*2 Birds 1 Stone* by Jill Torberson.

Seasons, and other stores listed on [www.portlandopenstudios.com](http://www.portlandopenstudios.com).

**Member Discounts**

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**Welcome New Members**

Ryan Beard  
[ryanbeard@onesunmetalworks.com](mailto:ryanbeard@onesunmetalworks.com)

Jen Ellsworth, [jen@fairyforge.com](mailto:jen@fairyforge.com)

## Digital Image Preparation

by George Heath

Next to the quality of your work itself, nothing is going to do more for your career as a sculptor than the quality of the images you use for submissions or for a website portfolio. Having submitted images to juries for way too many years (don't even ask), and having done web-based portfolios for the last eight, I've experienced just about every pitfall there is. Perhaps I can save you a little head banging and maybe even some serious money. In this and subsequent articles, I'll cover the whole process from setting up a studio to proper submission format for Zapp. Finally I'll write a bit about website design. For this first article, I'll cover the fun part: that is, buying stuff cheap.

### The Equipment

Professional photographers earn every penny they make. There is a highly skilled occupation with an insanely high equipment budget. For your premier pieces, hiring a professional photographer is a great idea. You can expect to pay about \$90 an hour for their services. You can also take excellent photos on your own with little if any pain to your pocketbook. In fact a complete photo studio, assuming you have a computer already, need not set you back more than \$200 and that includes a good camera.

### The Camera

You will want a decent digital camera that has a good, sharp zoom lens and manual settings. A new camera will have a 10 megapixel ccd and set you back between \$200 and \$500. However, 3 or 4 megapixels is ample for web work and for submitting images to a jury. You can often find cameras for sale on Craigslist. Google them first to read reviews. In fact, while writing this, I saw a Canon Powershot on Craigslist for the grand sum of \$25. It would do nicely. Before you make your purchase, you can even download the manufacturer's manual to make sure the camera fits your needs.

As a sculptor, you will be shooting three-dimensional objects, which means you will want to control what is in focus and what is not. In most cases, you will want your piece in sharp focus and the background fuzzy. To do this, you need to control depth of field. Depth of field refers to how much of a scene is in focus between the camera and infinity. Controlling this precisely requires manual settings for aperture (size of the lens opening) and shutter speed, and a zoom lens. A 3x zoom lens is sufficient. If you plan on doing long exposures, you'll want a delay feature. In low light situations, where a long exposure is required, the very act of pressing the shutter button will blur the photo. The shutter delay gives the camera time to stop vibrating. To sum up, your camera should have: a manual setting

feature, a good 3x zoom lens, 3 megapixels or better, and a shutter delay or self-timer feature.

All that said, if you already have a digital camera and it does not have manual settings, it will probably do a decent job if it has a good lens and an aperture priority setting.

### The Tripod

Unless you can stand very, very still you will need a tripod. Goodwill stores are awash in them. A decent one will set you back about \$5 to \$10 at the most. Your camera has a threaded hole in the bottom. There is a little, quick-release doodad that fits into the top of newer tripods. It has a bolt that, in turn, fits that hole in the camera. Make sure the tripod you buy still has that little doodad with the bolt. Older tripods just have the bolt and no doodad. In either case, make sure the tripod is sturdy and extends to a decent height.

### The Lighting Setup

What the pros do that makes their pictures look so good is control light and shadow very precisely. Professional photographers use remotely controlled, high-powered flash units, soft light boxes, and reflectors of various kinds and sizes.

What can you do for \$25? Quite a lot actually. You will need: three clamp lights, three photo flood bulbs, light stands (these are anything you can attach a clamp light to), enough pvc plumbing pipe and connectors to build a frame that can hold your pieces, and enough white ripstop nylon to cover the frame top and sides. I use light gray construction paper for the background and foamcore for both shading and reflecting light into dark spots.

My setup is downright ugly, but it works. The lights are clamped to the basement rafters. Usually I don't even have the legs on the frame but just hang the top part from the rafters and drape the ripstop over it. The ripstop softens the light, eliminating harsh shadows. For the sample shot here, I held a piece of foamcore behind the piece to create a background shadow.

### Image Editing Software

You will need to crop; resize; adjust exposure, contrast and color; and sharpen your images. Photoshop Elements will do the job



George's photography set up and resulting photo.



as will Paintshop Pro. There are also gazillions of freeware programs that do the same. Unfortunately, most aren't very good.

Download only from a trusted source, of course. Both Paintshop Pro and Photoshop Elements run about \$60. Paintshop Pro is probably a little better than Photoshop Elements.

The full version of Photoshop is the *Holy Grail*. If you are a student or a teacher, you can buy the full version and get an 80% discount. Photoshop has a long learning curve, but it is a medium in itself. Want to take that old family group shot and switch everyone's heads around? Little Bessie's head on Uncle Fester? Priceless! The retail price of Photoshop is astronomical, but I have heard that you don't have to be a full-time student to qualify for the student price.

Tune in for the next issue or check the PNWS blog when we actually take a picture!

*George Heath is the web person for Pacific NW Sculptors and has designed web-based portfolios and websites for a number of NW artists. He has been an avid photographer since 1969. He is a tight-fisted scoundrel.*

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**Bringing the Joys**, continued from page 1

I am always inspired by the energy and creativity of children. I loved working with all the students researching, writing, painting, and sculpting. It was a fast-paced six weeks, as we all worked toward completing the Cultural Book Box Project, but we all had a great time learning more about the world around us and ourselves.

## Offered by PNWS Members

### Sculpting Classes with Carole Murphy

Classes are held at Carole's studio at 1404 SE Stark, Portland, 97214. Classes include absolute beginners up to established artists. All you need to bring is your enthusiasm and play clothes. It's my job to bring out the "creative" in you and it is your job to relax, play and let the stress and bothers of life float away. You'll be sculpting in an atmosphere that invites laughter and lightness of being and at the same time fosters your creative juices.

The media you will be carving in is considered a 'green' building material that begs to be carved, aerated cement.

Gallery of student's sculptures <http://www.carolemurphy.com/studentgallery.htm>

Gallery of Carole's sculptures <http://www.carolemurphy.com/>

*"I love the encouragement and advice she (Carole) provided me with...Plus, the material...is to die for! –Samantha Christie*

*She (Carole) offers instruction and suggestions as gentle nudges to your own creativity... I am grateful for finding her... –Jere Fitterman*

Classes are held Sundays 2pm to 4:30pm and Thursdays from 6:30pm to 9pm. 8 week sessions. \$200 plus materials. (10% off for PNWS members.) 503-235-7233, sculptor@CaroleMurphy.com

*Come be part of it!*

### Sculptural Welding Class: Oxygen-Acetylene Torch with Rick Gregg



We'll begin with a brief review of safety and handling of the torch and then cover basic welding, weld filling, armatures, metal building, sculpture forming, metal moving with the flame, sheet metal applications, the cutting torch, surface treatments, and more. Each class is small, limited to three or four students, to allow close one-on-one teaching. It's fun and it's intense.

Classes are held at 3601 SE Division, up the short driveway from the Metalurges Gallery in Portland, OR.

The cost is \$135. All tools, equipment, supplies, and materials are provided. Wear work clothes—no synthetics.

Ongoing classes are held about every six weeks. Call or email for next class schedule.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please call with any questions any time.

Contact Rick at [rickgregg@centurytel.net](mailto:rickgregg@centurytel.net), (541) 905-6046, or visit [www.rickgreggstudio.com](http://www.rickgreggstudio.com).

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**Deadline for the next issue is Nov. 1.**

## PNWS Sculptor Spotlight

### Maria Simon



*Tidal Gem (detail) 2010, 25" x 22-1/2" x 2", carved terracotta bas-relief with colored terra sigillata.*

All my work is fundamentally about landscape, even the more abstract. It's a deep exploration of form; energy; light and shadow; and rhythm and movement in the natural world and within the human spirit. I am learning to navigate the small stuff and see how it really behaves through careful observation and experimentation with my tools and with color.

The work is meant not so much to render a scene but to evoke a sense of place: it's luminosity, the velocity or stillness, the peace or tumult, the "voice" of the place. The images are meditations that begin with a hike in the forest, a snapshot, a line of poetry, a dream, a word, even a song.

All pieces are built with terra-

cotta or porcelain. Each begins with a thick slab, to which coils of clay have been added. At the leather-hard stage, it is hand-carved on an easel using spot lighting, so that I am working with light and shadow from the get-go. Each piece is burnished and then allowed to dry slowly. After the initial bisque firing, it is painted with successive thin layers of stained terra sigillata (a finely milled, decanted, and stained clay slip), burnished, and fired to cone 04 (earthenware temperature). The finished piece is rubbed with a fine layer of cold wax, polished, and set into a recessed "shadow-box" hardwood frame.

View Maria's work at [www.mariasimonstudio.com](http://www.mariasimonstudio.com).

## Pacific Northwest SCULPTORS

4110 SE Hawthorne Blvd #302  
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### Sculpture, or Stainless Steel Espresso Pots? Yes!

Yes, OK, these tiny (2.5" wide) stainless steel espresso pots aren't really sculpture. But these shiny, bunched-up rounded forms sitting on top of an espresso

machine looked like they would make a great sculpture. Imagine these forms several sizes larger and mounted on a panel, as is, painted, or powder-coated. Nice!

I guess my inspiration came from the fact we are daily surrounded by shapes and forms that potentially could be recycled physically, or conceptually into art. So, if you get stuck, and need some inspiration, take a look around you. I bet you'll find an idea for a sculpture. I saw these tiny, round steel pots at the Spunky Monkey in the Kern's neighborhood at 35 NE 20th Ave. in Portland.

—Jim Ayala