A Tribute to One of Our Own: Ken Patton

By Carole Murphy

This article is a compilation of portions of other articles that have been written about Ken Patton as well as a few thoughts of my own.

The more you knew Ken Patton, the more you wanted to know him. When you first met Ken, you might think him to be just an unassuming, gentle soul with an absolute love of art. Very true. And then you might begin to notice that everything he did was accomplished with excellence, and when you came upon his art, you would find at least one area of his genius.

From the article “Former Sawmill Engineer Brings Kinetic Sculpture to Tillamook” by Samantha Swindler as posted in the Tillamook Headlight Herald.com:

Leave it to a sawmill engineer to blend the industrial-inspired “steam punk” genre with moving sculptures.

Tigard artist Ken Patton’s kinetic artworks are mesmerizing enough for any gallery in the Northwest. But you can only find them here in Tillamook County, where Wild Rain Gallery is the soon-to-be exclusive seller of his sculptures and jewelry.

As a professional engineer, he designed sawmills for Crow Engineering and later Weyerhaeuser for 35 years. “But long before that, I was interested in art,” he said. “Before my engineering degree, I was working on a graphic communications degree, but I didn’t think I would get anywhere with that.”

Patton dropped out of Eastern Washington University following a battle with pneumonia. He was working part-time as a draftsman at a Portland consulting firm that designed sawmills when he decided to go back to school and pursue an engineering degree.

Patton’s work with Crow Engineering took him across the Northwest and Canada, where he designed new sawmills and converted older mills used to running large, old growth trees to handle smaller logs. Patton, in fact, did consulting work at Tillamook’s Hampton Mill, before spending the last 15 years of his career with Weyerhaeuser. “I was fairly good at it, but not all that excited about it,” he admitted. “I did enjoy dynamics and kinematics, and I enjoy inventing and designing things.”

Throughout his engineering career, Patton continued to dabble with art—pencil work, watercolor, and acrylic painting. In 2005, he began working in metal sculpture and truly found his calling. When Patton retired in 2007 at age 55, he devoted himself fully to his metal art. “I wanted to do art, art was the dream,” he said. “I saved my money so I could afford to leave engineering and do artwork and not have to worry whether I succeeded or not.”

A year after retirement, Patton sold his first sculpture—a kinetic piece in which a number of hammers slowly and seamlessly spin around a steady axis. His metal sculptures quickly received accolades and were sold and exhibited internationally. “Hammers,” Patton said, “have all the physical properties that I need. When you want to have rotating motion, you want to have as much weight as far away from the rotation of axis.”

Patton’s engineering background plays a large role in his kinetic creations. “Some of them require some math,” Patton said. “I use an AutoCAD program (computer aided design) I used for sawmills for a lot of my art.”

Patton’s most complex, expensive and, well, mesmerizing piece is the Mesmerometer, which took him a year to complete. “The continued on page 6
Studio Rules 3

By McAllister Merchant

D id you know that it is a rule of the universe that you can never write down too much information? And that “later” happens too often? It also may be true that you cannot write something you know too many times, and that “later” does not happen often enough.

Several months ago... some years ago, following a suggestion made in at least one of the books I was reading (still read), I created a Firing Log to provide records of successful bouts with the kiln. It works, sorta. But the more kilnwork I do, the more questions I want answered, later.

Later I want to know how fine or coarse was the frit I used. Was the frit poured in first, last, or what? What was the weight of the wax model 1) before spraying and venting, 2) after spraying and venting... later? Was there structure (of what type, of how much) in the wax? How much burnout was evident in the kiln... later? How much wax was in the steamout...later? What was the weight of the plaster after steamout/burnout/curing as it entered the kiln later?

Sometimes I do check. Unfortunately, I promise that I will write it down... later. I don't. And I regret that. LATER. Often.

Jocelyn is trying to convince me that one thing I might do is talk to my iPhone. I keep it near all day for entertainment, for company, for summoning, for supplication. She contends that if I talk to it about what I'm doing, its circuits are surer than mine, and I'd be able to capture the information...later.

We'll see (hear, too).

About my Firing Log...I first created it back in 2007 and have changed it several times. I'm seriously about moving to two pages rather than one, so that there's more detail and more room for narrative. Sometimes I find I'd like to know... later, “What was I thinking?” You can take a peek at it if you wish. Copy and use it, or just tell me what's missing that you use on yours successfully: http://www.mcallistermerchant.com/pdfs/_firing_log_.pdf

I just took three pieces from the kiln and started devesting them from their plaster jackets, which reminded me of a few things that I also need to add to the Firing Log: holes for details of items just out of the kiln. Could be helpful to know how well the mold endured the firing, how much more (or less) glass there was than was needed, specifically where and how the final piece differed from plan, even if it is beautiful.

To cut costs, rather than printing the photos and gluing them into the firing log, I recently created a Word document that contains the photos with labels and dates. Though this saves money and time, it means that documentation on kiln firings is in two places (downstairs and upstairs/in the log book and on the computer). And if I'm busy, it can be in three places because some photos stay in the camera a while and even four places, if I also count the computer photo files I keep of every studio event! Less "later."

When I move the log, it will allow me to take studio photos with my phone and add them directly (the house and studio are networked) to a file that contains all the information or references to files that have the information. Then I can view them on the monitor in my studio. No ink cartridges, no paper, no printing, no book, no trips away from the studio to record studio events! Less “later.”

I suppose having the log as a viewport to a database will be more effective than the three binders of paper I have now. With a database, I can search on all kinds of things beside the name or date. I'll be able to sort by type of glass to top temperatures or firing time. I can get more answers, faster! Lots now and still more...later.

Upcoming Meetings

All meetings are POTLUCK. If you can't bring food or beverage, come anyway. Portfolios and works-in-progress are always welcome!

February Meeting – Potluck – BYOB
Wednesday, February 15, 7pm
Laurie Vail's, (503) 830-0149
www.laurievail.com
4915 SE Ash, Portland 97215, between Burnside and Stark @ 50th.

March Meeting – Potluck – BYOB
Elections Meeting! This is the members meeting—tens of people, lots of fun.
Tuesday March 20th
Martin Eichinger's, (503) 223-0626
2516 SE Division @ 25th, Portland, OR 97202
When the Going Gets Rough and Tumble: The Latest Sculpture from Ulrich Pakker

My medium has been sheet metal from early on in my career, whether it is quarter-inch thick stainless steel plate for my monumental works or 18 gauge bronze for smaller works. Exploring other mediums has expanded my palette into often unexpected directions. Ten years ago I began incorporating sculptured water flows into my work. At the request of a client who was trying to avoid windy wet sculptures, I moved from water into glass arcs, its cousin. Both of these introduced materials persuade me to walk down many different paths, learning and manipulating and stretching the medium and me. Reaching into new areas always presents me with a mass of questions to which I find solutions as I work the material.

In the spring of 2010, to create a tabletop piece, I grabbed some stainless steel rod I have had stored in my studio for, well, decades. The rod-and-sheet sculpture, *Sliding Form*, immediately attracted a lot of attention when it was first shown at the 2010 Pratt Art Auction, creating a bidding war between some patrons, all of whom have been collecting my work. With all the excitement surrounding *Sliding Form*, I took a new look at this latest addition to my established set of sculptural elements. Since then, a series of rod-and-sheet sculptures has exploded in my studio and been accompanied by a flurry of shows and sales.

In June 2011, *Wedge Issue* was awarded a blue ribbon in Lake Oswego’s Open Show. This exhibit was followed by the Seattle Sculpture Guild exhibit in September. I was honored at the inclusion of *Folded Rocks* and *Sheathed Blades* into the Rock Paper Scissors juried show at Seattle’s Columbia City Gallery in October 2011. The exhibit curator at TPN in Fremont saw the work from the Lake Oswego Show and asked me if I had additional pieces she could show at TPN, also in October. My sustained productive excitement in the studio allowed me enough pieces for both October shows. It was at this point that the series received their collective title of *Rough and Tumble*. Yvette Endrijautzki, sculpture curator of Rock the Terminal show invited my participation at the Art/Not Terminal Gallery, December 2011, where my work won first in sculpture. In January 2012, I installed additional works in the *Rough and Tumble* series at the Pratt Gallery in the Tashiro Kaplan Building. I am currently working on expanding this series yet again for a show at Arts West Gallery in West Seattle for the months of May and June.

The dynamic magnetism of the *Rough and Tumble* series comes from both the form’s surface manipulations as well as the materials themselves. The stainless steel surface treatments I routinely employ magnify two contradictory aspects. On the one hand, when it has a brush finish, the metal mimics velvet silkiness. On the other hand, with a swirl finish, the stainless surface appears three-dimensional to the eye as though you could almost put your hand into and/or through the metal’s exterior shell, creating an optical uncertainty. In the *Rough and Tumble* series, the materials themselves create a tension between the simple curves, dictated by the sheet metal and the twisting and torquing the rods allow. The simple method of laying one rod down next to another is distorted and perverted from a simple curved plane when the next rod is slightly twisted, before tacking them up. The resultant swoops and rolls, twists and torsions relieve the planar focus and let it loose. And that lets me loose, too.

Variations within this simple series are infinite and exciting. I invite you to visit the beginning of this series on my website where there is a short video overview of *Rough and Tumble* http://www.rpart.com/sh.html/newseries/newseries.shtml.

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Member News

Eileen Holzman: Origami on Display
Eileen Holzman’s sculptural paper art forms entitled Get Your House in Order, a metaphor for the state of our country, will be on display downtown Portland in the Justice Center’s windows on SW 2nd and SW Madison from the end of January through mid-March.

Eileen will also be hosting several workshops involving origami. One will be at the Midland Library on February 6 from 6:30–8 pm, and two others will be at the Currents Gallery in McMinnville on February 9. Eileen will also be an artist-in-residence in the Columbia Gorge for the arts in the schools week in February.

To see more of Eileen’s work or to contact her, go to her website at www.eileenholzman.com.

Resilience: Dedication
Metal sculptor and PNWS member, Joe Powers, installed his first large scale public art piece in October 2011. The commission was part of Washington State’s 1% for Arts program. Powers was selected to create an arch over the Centennial Trail, a popular hiking and biking trail in Snohomish County. The 20-foot-high stainless steel arch, named Resilience to honor the strength of nature, portrays the entwined branches of two trees done in an Art Nouveau style. The sculpture was dedicated on November 5, 2011, by Snohomish County officials.

Olinka Broadfoot: Art and Poetry
Olinka’s work will be on display at the following venues:

- ADX, 417 SE 11th, Portland, paintings and reliefs done in the Czech Republic this winter
- Ford Building front entry, 2505 SE 11th, Portland, paintings
- RiverSea Gallery, Astoria, paintings and sculptures

On January 28 at 6:30 p.m., Olinka will be reading her poetry in Czech and English at Niche, a wine and art bar, 1013 Main St., Vancouver, Washington.

www.olinkabroadfootgallery.com

Robert Foster: Show and Chairmanship
Robert H. Foster will show selected sculptures of his recent works in bronze at the Beaverton City Hall. His work will be on display for the month of March in the Mayor’s Lobby Gallery.

Foster has also been elected Chairman of the Public Arts Committee for the City of Lake Oswego. The PAC oversees the entire collection of public art owned by the city and the “Gallery Without Walls” street sculpture exhibit on rotation every two years.

Sara Swink: Featured in American Craft Magazine
One of our most valued member volunteers at PNWS who is instrumental in the production of our newsletter is currently featured in the December/January 2012 issue of American Craft Magazine. Read the online version at http://americancraftmag.org/article.php?id=12762.

Rip Caswell to Complete Wichita Cathedral Renovation
The Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Wichita, Kansas has commissioned nationally recognized artist Rip Caswell to create two heroic-size bronze sculptures as part of its cathedral renovation project. The two sculptures, Mary and The Crucifixion, will be positioned facing each other in separate east and west alcoves of the cross-shaped cathedral.

Installation in Wichita is scheduled for late August or early September.

Caswell was selected through a national artist’s search and after an extensive interview process by the Arts Committee of the Cathedral Church of the diocese of Wichita, in December, 2010.

The first piece, Mary, is actually a statue of Mary and Joseph together, depicting a pregnant Mary with her hand on her abdomen and Joseph as a supportive father figure and husband standing behind her. Mary is looking across the cathedral to a scene of the Crucifixion.

“We’ve made some bold departures with this piece,” says Caswell. He explains that traditionally, Mary’s pregnancy was hidden or portrayed as barely showing. Joseph has been characterized as older, almost benign and in the background. Caswell says he sees a wave in churches across the country now to tell the traditional stories but with a new angle, with fresh perspective.

“Culture and society have changed,” he says. “Churches still want commissioned works to be of the highest quality and to remain true to doctrine, but they want them to
My whimsical carving depicts Thomas Kendall reading his Bible in preparation for his next sermon. My great-grandmother Miranda is holding an umbrella to keep her absent-minded father dry while he studies. Miranda's sister and lifelong friend, Julia, who never married, is up front on the horse's neck, steering.

One side of the sign besides the puddle-filled road points west and says "Kendall's Bridge 5 miles." The other side points to the east and says "Miami University 2318 miles." In Oregon rainclouds overhead, it says, "Grandpa Kendall Rides Again."

Great-great-grandpa Thomas Simpson Kendall founded Presbyterian congregations in Oregon City, Oakville, Harmony, Kendall's Bridge, and Table Rock, Oregon. He traveled extensively between churches on horseback with his motherless daughters, Julia, in front, and Miranda, my great-grandmother, in back.

He wore buckskin clothing of his own making and was known to give sermons while still dripping wet from his ride to church. He was described as a tall slender man whose face bore the mark of many hardships. According to one contemporary, "He was a man of heroic mold."

Thomas Kendall was born in 1809 near Xenia, Ohio. He attended Miami University for one year, then went to a Presbyterian seminary, and graduated from Jefferson College, in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, in 1829. In 1833, he married his cousin Nancy Kendall. The following year, he graduated from Canonsburgh Theological Seminary and was ordained. Kendall was assigned to a church near Marysville, Tennessee. Almost immediately, he volunteered to deliver the Presbyterian Church's message against slavery in the Carolinas, and for this he was tarred and feathered.

In 1845, after the death of his wife, Kendall and his two daughters, Julia, age 7, and Miranda, age 9, left Illinois by covered wagon for Oregon. Kendall staked his claim near Shedd, and in 1849, he left his daughters in the care of a neighbor and spent two successful years in the California gold fields.

Wilson Blaine and Thomas Kendall formed the United Presbyterian Churches of Oregon, the world's first United Presbyterian Church, in 1852. The final union of the eastern branches was completed in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1858.

In 1870, Kendall traveled to Pittsburgh where he was unanimously elected moderator of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church. Then he returned to Miami University where he received an honorary Doctorate. Kendall died on December 5 of that year in the home of his daughter Miranda, and her husband, James Wilson Williams near Shedd, Oregon.

The house in which Thomas Kendall died and where my grandmother Mary Williams was born was purchased from Thomas Kendall's good friend and neighbor, Thomas Condon. Thomas Condon was Oregon's first state geologist. The primary visitor center at the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument and Condon Hall at the University of Oregon are named for him.

I taught geology at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio from 1968-1996. In 1976, I discovered by complete accident the connection between Kendall and Miami University.
Ken Patton, from page 1

inspiration for the Mesmerometer is the steam-punk genre,” Patton said. Steam-punk art, literature and fashion is inspired by an alternative view of the Victorian era, in which gadgets and vehicles of today operate with analog and steam technology. The art and fashion of the genre features plenty of polished brass, dark leather, gears and goggles. Inside the clock-like Mesmerometer, layers of arrows, half-moons, and gears twist and turn in a myriad of fluid movements—all pieces hand-cut by Patton. The piece won the Chair’s Choice Award at the Lake Oswego Festival of the Arts this June.

Patton also makes steam punk inspired jewelry from small cogs, gears and repurposed pieces of metal. But the kinetic art remains his passion and focus. “I just love motion,” Patton said. “Some art is edgy, my art is not. I like my art to be very comforting, very mellowing. I like people to be able to look at my art and feel good, and the motion is just part of that. People who do static work try to put motion in their work, and I just went ahead and put in the motion.”

Now age 60, Patton said selling his pieces is certainly “validating.” but he really just enjoys the process of creating art. In fact, he said, “it costs more to make the art than I sell it for.”

From an article written about Ken by Seward Whitfield, the owner of Wild Rain Gallery in Tillamook, where a lot of Ken’s unsold work is currently:

I spent less than four hours with Ken on this earth, in three or four short visits. Then he was gone. Anyone who knew him knows what it feels like to lose him, but to us he was such a shooting star....

At his memorial I came to know in some small measure many other facets of this amazing human being. Hundreds of thoughtful words were used to line the nest of that group memory, but one of the best was “exuberance.” He seemed to me like a puppy who could barely contain himself for all the new things to explore. He asked me several times what I thought he should start on next—a sensually rotating gyroscopic tourbillon for display inside the gallery or a razzle-dazzle deep-sea fish for the wind to play with at the roadside. You could tell he wanted to do both at once, with plans for others crystallizing inside that remarkable inquisitive head.

But for all this, he was quiet, reserved, humble, and generous with his time, and never seemed to be in a hurry. He touched me in a way I would have thought next to impossible in such a brief time. Who we touch and how we touch them is really who we are.

He continues to touch people every single day when they stand for a time in front of his masterpiece, Mesmerometer, then slide around behind it, smiling. His Waltzing Hammers (which someone really wanted to purchase yesterday, which would have pleased him, but now is not for sale) and other pieces, kinetic and static, bring delight and amazement.

From PNWS President Carole Murphy:

Ken has been an active member of PNWS for a number of years and was on the Board of Directors and Secretary of PNWS for the past three years. Ken was family. Ken’s passionate love of art and the merging of that art with his engineering skills simply lit him up. His ability to imagine and create grander designs continued to escalate throughout his short career as a sculptor and held enormous promise for the future.

Ken was quick to offer his support to so many PNWS projects or shows, and he freely offered his help to many artists, myself included. His camaraderie and his quick and easy humor will always be a treasured part of his memory. A few weeks before Ken died, I had the occasion to once again visit his amazing workshop and spend a bit of time listening to his next adventure into his imagination. He spoke of his love for his wife and the trip they had just taken as he showed his newest maquette for his next piece. Ken’s workshop resembled his way of being in the world: It was a wonder of excellence in use of space, invention, and creativity that was almost as beautiful as his art. Ken was a genuinely humble person, so humble that it took a while to understand the breadth and depth of this man. I feel as though I was still in the process of finding out; we all were as he continued to bloom right in front of us. He inspired us all. For a closer look at his art, you can still visit his website at www.kenkinetic.com.

Some of Ken’s other passions included hiking and bicycling the Oregon coast and kayaking the Willamette River. In the past few years, he and his wife Dionne took several trips and returned from a two-week hike only a few weeks before his death.

Ken passed away on December 20, 2011, at his home in Tigard. A blood clot suddenly ended his life of 60 years.

Ken’s wife Dionne Bradley survives him along with his mother Veta Patton; his sister Karen DeSeve; his four children Gabrielle Harder, Levi Patton, Christopher Patton, and Andrew Rutter; and nine grandchildren, Emma, Riley, Max, Sam, Jane, Claire and Kevin Harder, and Bella and Owen Rutter.

Ken, you leave such a large whole to fill. The remaining question for all of us seems to be, “What are we going to do without Ken?”
Offered by PNWS Members

Garden Art 201, Concrete and Mosaic Sculpture
We will be creating sculpture for the garden using specialty cement mixtures (including Milestone), steel mesh, and mosaic embellishments. Super easy, super fun, and everything you need to know to continue creating at home.

From beginner to master-level, everyone works at their own pace and skill-level while creating an original work of sculpture, a Garden Masterpiece.

Ongoing weekend workshops
Sat. and Sun. 12-5 pm
$160 + $35 materials
Class size limited to 6

Private and small group classes available too. Classes are held at the sculpture studio of Dean Hanmer on Vashon Island, just a few minutes from Seattle and Tacoma.

Contact Dean: (206) 567-5778
dean@gardenart201.com
www.gardenart201.com

Sculpting Classes with Carole Murphy
Sculpt in Pozzolanic stone, a form of aerated cement that begs to be sculpted. Create in a material that is considered “green” by the construction industry and is new to the United States, although it has been around Europe for a century.

Follow your own vision or have that vision awakened in you. The class is kept small enough to make it viable for each student to follow their own personal direction.

To see a video of Carole Murphy’s classes and for more info on classes and student works, go to www.carolemurphy.com/workshop.htm

Three classes will be running at her studio at 1405 SE Stark. Contact Carole at (503) 235-7233 or Sculptor@CaroleMurphy.com.

Sculptor Tips: Drawing into Sculpture Projects
By Lance Dooley

One of the most important things a sculptor can do is create a drawing of what it is they want to sculpt. As random thoughts pass through your mind and form into possible ideas, create sketches and then refine the sketch so you can look at it and understand it at a later date. From the pool of sketches you create, one or several may begin to stand out as being aesthetically pleasing. Commit the idea to a fully developed drawing of the form and how it is to be anchored into a base or pedestal. Create the drawing the exact size the sculpture will be, using larger matt boards or butcher paper if the scale is large. This way, as you create your sculpture, you can use the drawing as a template to compare with.

The two drawings here show an idea that has been bouncing around my head for a long time. I made the smaller sketch many years ago. I created a fully developed 30” x 30” drawing of the figure, and drew how the base will be integrated into the composition. Since this is a clay sculpture project and will need a metal armature, I can simply slide my sculpture stand right next to the drawing and more easily create the armature.

Lance Dooley is a graduate of the Florence Academy of Art. He teaches Figure Drawing at Wenatchee Valley College. His most recent show was at the Moses Lake Museum & Civic Center.

www.lancedooley.com
Sculpture in Florence? Prague? No! This pillar and its lovely classical capital décor is located right here in Portland. It’s part of the Old Town open-air Victorian architecture exhibit on SW Ankeny (Saturday Market site) where it intersects with NW Front Ave.

—Jim Ayala

Tamae Frame

I use the female body as a vehicle to convey the inner dimensions of our psyche. I see the sacredness in its curvy lines and voluptuous body, and it is my attempt at expressing the female spirituality and her life force in the world.

This is my newest piece, which I sculpted after the tsunami happened in Japan this year. The title of this piece is *Trepidation*. I also made another piece with the same title and style. This is not my usual style. My work usually gives a more peaceful impression, but the event impacted me so much that I had to express my feelings within my medium.

View Tamae Frame’s work at www.tamaeframe.com

*PNWS Sculptor Spotlight*

**Tamae Frame**

*Trepidation 2, 16.5” x 11” x 17.5”, glazed stoneware*

Sculpture in Florence? Prague? No!