Descarte’s IPad

George Heath

Some years ago I read a short blurb about a device that could paint an image directly onto the retina. The resolution was poor but there were high hopes that would be improved. I never heard another thing about it but it got me thinking. Would come a day when you wouldn’t be able to tell the difference between physical reality and a computer generated environment? Descartes made the case that if you could without doubt think you existed that in itself proved your existence. Descartes didn’t have an IPad.

In a general sense one can say a computer system can define points in space. How many of those points can be defined, (resolution), and how quickly those points can redefined as is related the speed of the machines and the skill set of the programmer. Those factors have come to the point where that bit about not being able to tell the real world from a computer generated world is rapidly coming true. The Goodwill has lots of 3D Goggles. They cost $5 or so. Download the roller-coaster app. (it’s free), slip your phone in there and there you go. What’s this mean for sculpture? All kinds of fun things.

In a virtual world one can define their own laws of nature. One can redefine material properties. Weightless, magnetic marble? Winged kittens? How about a room full of creepy statues that respond to your emotional state. I am pondering all this and imagining entire constructed worlds when Andy Kennedy sends me a video. It is a real gallery with sculptures that can only be seen when viewed with a phone, tablet or 3D goggles. This is augmented reality, the real world with digital constructions superimposed upon it. Here was a way to focus on virtual sculpture without the distraction of having to construct the environment as well and the consequent problem of how one would move about in it realistically. Using the real world as the stage resolves that nicely. I’ve pasted some links below. InDesign does not render some of them as clickable so please copy and paste into your address bar if the link does not work by clicking.

I’ve included a link to this fellow before but his website was renamed in the meantime. His name is Maxim Zhestkov. This is an example of redefining material properties. I thought this was real till something happened that could only be digital.

https://vimeo.com/257761811
https://zhestkov.studio/
It’s always difficult to begin one of these president’s messages. Sometimes there is not much to write about. Then again sometimes there is too much. I am currently in the latter situation. I hardly know where to start. Best to just start.

Here’s a fun thing. I wrote a note to Michael Curry’s studio inquiring whether or not they would be interested in hosting a studio tour during the ISC conference. A week or so later I was talking to Mr. Curry himself and the answer was a gracious yes. He stressed that a tour during work hours would be best as there would activity. Hopefully that can be arranged. If not an after hours visit would also be possible. Personally I am highly curious as to what goes on there. Michael Curry, if you don’t know, makes giant puppets and sets for film, theater and other events. Clients have include Madonna, (Super Bowl 2012), Lady Gaga, Disney on Broadway, the Olympics and many more. As a cartoonist sculptor for the last 50 years this is stuff close to my heart. [michaelcurrydesign.com](https://michaelcurrydesign.com)

I am comforted the ISC has done this many times before such that tasks associated with the conference will be dealt with in turn efficiently and with the experience to deal with the any surprises along the way.

Thank you Woody for hosting last month’s meeting. That was a good one. People were having such a good time that I hated to interrupt with the official business but everyone seemed to be enthused about that as well. Conversation centered around progress towards the ISC’s conference of course. Lots to think about there. The food was tremendous. I could not stay away from those Friar Tuck’s jojos.

Thank you Olinka Broadfoot. We will see you on the 27th. Thank you for opening your house and studio to us. I am looking forward to seeing more of your work.

A separate committee has been formed by the International Sculpture Center, (ISC), to coordinate ISC sponsored shows. Many groups have expressed interest and to my thinking the ideal situation would be a large hall with areas for each group. That may or may not be possible. The committee has members that include Chas Martin, Carole Murphy, Carl Nelson (pres. of NWSSA), myself and representatives from other art organizations. The committee will first meet the week of March 11th.

I’ve attended 3 planning committee meetings so far. One of the first tasks was to determine themes for the panel discussions. That is done and the ISC has put out a call for participants. Here is a link to that call: [https://www.sculpture.org/ portland19/call.shtml](https://www.sculpture.org/portland19/call.shtml)

### Calendar

**March Board Meeting**

March 5th at 10:00 am  
George Heath residence
Remember all those people wandering the streets staring at their iPhones playing Poke’mon, peeking under bushes with their phones looking for little creatures? That was augmented reality and so is this:

https://www.facebook.com/AdrienMClaireB/videos/1759097424148719/UzpfsTEwMDAwmjM0NjQzMiQxn2oMDixNjAzOTc2-NjgwNTAzQQ/

In the above image only the little man is digital. The full video can be seen if you follow the link. The artists are Adrian M and Clair.

The argument can be made that such things are not sculpture because they don’t have a physical presence but isn’t that what a painting is, an image of a real thing? And does it matter anyway? The point here is that this is a new brush, a new tool.

Lake Oswego Reads
Shelly Durica-Laiche

I’m honored to participate in Lake Oswego Reads this year. This annual event is sponsored by the Lake Oswego Public Library and curated by Jan Rimmerman. In it, 20 artists read a novel then create one piece inspired by it. This year that book is, “The Book of the Unknown Americans”. It travels to 9 locations throughout the year, with month long viewing at each. Opening reception at the Lakewood Center for the Arts on February

“Woven”, 24”W x 11”H, steel

Shelly Durica-Laiche

29th International Sculpture Conference

Call for Panels closes March 14

Topics Include:
- The Art of Learning & Teaching Sculpture
- Makers in the Margins
- The Life of Public Art
- Technical Talks/Workshops
- and more!

For more information, visit www.sculpture.org/portland19/call

29th International Sculpture Conference
Portland, OR

Call for Panels now open

For more information, visit www.sculpture.org/portland19

Descarte cont.
Shelly Durica-Laiche
Functional and decorative steel artist
In “Watershed PDX”, on S.E. Milwaukie Avenue
https://www.indiometalarts.com

Greeting us while wearing a welder’s apron, Shelly Durica-Laiche said she’s a welder who designs and builds steel “functional and decorative steel objects”, such as furniture, trellises, fine art sculpture, and garden art.

“While I mostly work in steel, I also create art with brass and copper,” Durica-Laiche told THE BEE. While majoring in sculpture at Portland State University, Durica-Laiche recalls experimenting with any and all available sculpting materials, and eventually she turned to working with metal. “In a class with bronze casting and welding, I fell in love with metal; and, after graduating in 2005, this became my work.”

Now working as a full-time artist for the last six years, she says, “I enjoy creative design challenges; finding and looking at scrap metal, and being inspired to create something.

“Then, after I’ve made it, just seeing somebody else get really excited about a piece of art that I created – enough to buy it, so I’m able to sustain in my artistic practice – is really good!”

Craig Dorety
Light artist
S.E. Woodstock Boulevard
http://www.craigdorety.com

Working in a large shop hidden behind his modest Woodstock home, Craig Dorety welcomed us to his studio, which had been darkened to show off the illuminated and almost hypnotic sculptures that he creates.

“Although there’s a technology behind it, and involved with it, the easiest way to explain what I do is to say, ‘I work with light’,” Dorety remarked.

“While I create works of art that one could hang on a wall, the most important medium in my work is the lighting itself, the photons,” Dorety said. “Photons are intangible, you can’t touch them, squeeze them out of a tube, or paint or model them like clay.”

His workshop looks like a “makers’ studio”, replete with a huge computer-controlled precision router, a large industrial laser unit, and a small 3-D printer for making parts – all of it gear he’s gathered and upgraded over the past dozen years.

While it can be frustrating to get the lighting, controlled by computer circuits, to work just right, the artist commented, “I enjoy the entire process. And, I really like being my own boss!”

The best part of his creative arc? “It’s when I turn the piece; it lights up, and I can watch and enjoy it; and I often see a behavior that I don’t fully understand until after I finish it.

Member Discounts
Artist and Craftsman Supply
Firebird Bronze
Pearl Packing
Farwest Materials (See your membership packet for password)
ADX
Courtney Frisse Photographer
Fiberlay
George Heath Websites and Online Portfolios
Jenny Stoffel Websites and Online Galleries
Gateway Crating and Packaging Inc.
Southern Oregon Soapstone Co.LLC
Stephen Funk Photography LLC
International Sculpture Center
Georgie’s Ceramic and Clay Co.
Bronzestone

Contact information for the listed companies can be found at:
http://pnwsculptors.org/discounts.htm
While visiting in St. Petersburg Florida last week I popped into a new museum downtown, The James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art. It opened in November of 2017. Being from the PNW I was intrigued to find it in the Sunshine State.

For Tom and Mary James, it all started as a personal passion to purchase western themed art. Over the decades it became their life’s mission to support artists working in the genre and to create a well rounded collection. Not far from the Dali Museum and the Museum of Fine Art, St. Pete, they chose to add to the world class offerings in the city they love.

This brand new building was designed to house the entire collection when the walls of the Raymond James Headquarters became too crowded with their art. People came from around the world to view it there, but nothing tops this new facility to showcase it now. I love the architecture too and feel it’s as much a work of art. The stunning stone atrium is designed to resemble a slot canyon. On the second floor there are several angular balconies and a bridge. Each location allows for ever changing views of magnificent bronze sculptures framed in alcoves. As you make your way around from room to room you gain new perspectives, as if you were on the ridge of a canyon.

There are several rooms, each with it’s own theme. I really enjoyed the contemporary art by Native Americans, the jewelry collection and the modern art. There is also an event space for performances and music as well as a restaurant. Don’t miss it if you’re in town.

**Video from the Troutdale Fall Festival and a Call to Artists**

Dave Gonzales

One of the organizers got in contact with me about Fall Festival of the Arts in regards to last years event and this years coming up. I am working with her about having PNWS there again under the pavilion doing demo with selling the work demonstrators have on display. I’ve let her know that we are interested if the agreement is the same as previous years which is as follows:

- No fee to participate
- Demonstrating members can sell with event keeping 20% of any sales.

- We get to use the pavilion.

She was really excited with the video that they created for this years event and thanked us for helping make the video unique with our work/demos. Here’s the video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3TOSkG-Mlo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3TOSkG-Mlo)