The ISC in PDX
the Players, the Public and You
Andy Kennedy

The International Sculpture Conference will be in Portland this year and Pacific NorthWest Sculpture members will benefit form this Conference whether we are directly involved or not. We can thank PNWS members, Marty Eichinger and Julian Voss-Andreae, for bringing the International Sculpture Conference to Portland this October. They have been attending ISConferences for years and getting very familiar with the organizers formally and informally. We can project that the upcoming event will be a mix of business and pleasure, performance and gamesmanship. But unlike a game ISC in October will be mostly a win/win. And unlike most games, the playing board is not a finite space. The Portland Art Museum will be the base for most official events, but I recommend that PNWS members consider stretching the playing field beyond PAM Oct 12-15. The more attention we bring to this event and the more we expand the time and space around it, the more we will raise awareness of sculpture generally, and feedback attention to our personal sculpture practice. ISC October 12-15 should be a tide that lifts all sculptures.

The event itself will likely host some big name artists. We’ll get to hear them speak, see their work, share our point of view with other art lovers. This will mostly happen at the Portland Art Museum, but there will be local studio visits and after hours get-togethers, with collectors, dealers, galleries and curators in attendance. No one can promise that you as an artist will hook up with an opportunity at one of these events, but do have all your PR in order and an elevator speech rehearsed. What’s more important at this point, ten months before the events, is that PNWS members be creating tangential sculpture experiences to augment the ISConference.

To illustrate my idea of going beyond the conference to experience sculpture, next time you are at the Portland Art Museum, stand at the corner of Park and Main streets. Winter Column, a sculpture by Hilda Morris, both foreboding and lyrical, is one of the best public works in Portland. Take the time to let Winter Column invade your dreams, then walk three blocks...
Well then, here it is upon us. Politics aside this will be an interesting year. The International Sculpture Conference will officially be Oct. 12 - 15. The location, the Portland Art Museum. In addition to a keynote speaker, panel discussions, workshops and more there will be offsite activities after hours and perhaps before and after the conference itself. Studio tours will figure large in that and we hope to put together something special for those. Something to get the attendees all worked up. Fun for us too. I’ve attended one ISC phone conference along with Marty and Julian. At this point it is a rather loose process as ideas are put forth for the various events, names for a keynote speaker and the like. The structure will evolve as the who and what is nailed down.

Membership is up 6% over last month. I’d not be surprised if the word about the conference has contributed to that. I’d also certainly give some credit to Shelly Durica-Laiche who has be working on our Facebook presence. Activity on our page increased by more than 1000% thanks to Shelly. Tis a good year coming and it has begun. The following link will take you to Sculpture Magazine’s notice about the 2019 conference.

https://www.sculpture.org/ portland19/

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Contact information for the listed companies can be found at:
http://pnwsculptors.org/discounts.htm

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East to 1100 6th avenue. The Ring of Time is waiting for you there. If attendees to the ISC take this suggested pilgrimage, they will be going beyond the programmed experience into the mysterious essence of Hilda Morris. I could describe many other fun and illuminating tours of this sort, but take this as a metaphor of expanding the ISC October events, building a bridge to another world.

A more involving example of building a sculptural bridge to the ISConference is the PNWS collaboration show* at the Multnomah Arts Center (Sept 6-Oct 1). Conceived and lead by PNWS member, Chas Martin, this show will be designed to describe the process of collaboration between “untested pairings”. Sketches and notes will be displayed along side the final combined form as well as artwork made by the artists alone. This is going to be a unique show, a synergy of strangeness, and perfectly timed for raising consciousness about sculpture’s vitality, leading up to the ISConference.

International art world attention will be on Portland and local folks will be asking, why does sculpture matter? I believe that PNWS can give them a good answer. Our members are uniquely positioned to facilitate sharing our city, it’s art, and the character of the people here. We are both representatives of the Portland populous and the aspirations of the art world. PNWS members are the embodiment of what can make this event bigger and better.

*As of this draft, word is that the Call for PNWS Artists interested in developing a piece for this MAC show will come out soon.

Sculpture and Dance
Patrick Gracewood

My comment, “Sculpture and dance are closely related” puzzled some at the last meeting. I see dance and sculpture as a continuum of movement and stillness, the ephemeral to the eternal. Most everything we know of early civilizations comes from sculpture. If it’s lasted thousands of years, it’s sculpture. But sculpture can also encompass the ephemeral, everything from a gallery installation to Andy Goldworthy’s nature work.

I’ve been a sculptor for 43 years, and celebrate 30 years of dancing contact improvisation in 2019. Often what I learn from one discipline transfers to the other. Dance requires that I show up several times a week, fully present, emotionally and physically. That is always good training for making art. Moving mindfully became my physical therapy, an antidote to the exertion and repetitive motion of carving. That kind of awareness gradually shifted my focus from the object to the space surrounding it.

That helped me site my sculpture in client’s gardens. Too many sculptors think their job is finished when the art is finished and sold. If you have sited your work outside, you know what happens. It shrinks radically as it contends with the chaos of the rest of the world. Siting sculpture requires shifting focus from the art object to creating an environment that includes art. Blocking some views, framing other sightlines, defining a clear approach, you choreograph how people move through space to better appreciate the art and the entire space it occupies. My concept of what sculpture is got much larger……

My earlier art was often overly polished and careful. There’s a valuable skill in banging out “working class sculpture” aka stage sets and props for performances. Cardboard is free, and quickly fabricated. I’d never made cardboard models for my own sculpture before I started dancing. Now I make them all the time. Often they act as physical embodiment of an idea, a place holder that haunts me until I have time to make it in a permanent medium. Working in a throw away material encouraged me to work fast, go for big shapes, deep shadows, and lots of bright color. The results are often very engaging on their own. I now make damn sure that same fun and energy makes it into all my sculpture. (cont.)
So my question to other PNWS members is “What enriches your creative practice?”

Famous sculptor/dancer pairings: Isamu Noguchi and Martha Graham.


Riiipppp

Joe Cartino

Northwest Sculptors named Chas Martin offered a creativity workshop I was ready.

Riiipppp…. It was the sound of a watercolor painting ripping and a world of possibilities opening up. During his workshop Chas had provided a day full of inspiration and he encouraged us to be open to new ideas. When he accidentally tore his painting trying to free it from his sketchbook my years of improvisational acting training kicked in. We were taught to treat everything offered as a wonderful gift. I took that torn painting back to my studio and continued to tear and twist to create something new. The curious creatures that emerged were the genesis of my new series of sculptures I call Dada Dodads.

A Dada Dodad is not a product, but a process. A humble scrap of paper becomes a medium for imagination and exploration. Junk mail, doodles, inflight magazines, virtually anything can become one of these playful creations once they are liberated from their 2-D rectangles. The photos of the evolution of a Dada Dodad document its life cycle. In the Fluxus tradition I encourage people to shape and display Dada Dodads however they see fit. The velvet ropes are gone. The boundary between artist and viewer is transformed into a partnership of co-creation.

See more of Joe’s work at: playpopworkshop.webs.com
MY ORACLE…the ocean
Michele Collier
A lot of my work draws heavily on ocean wave-forms for inspiration. I have spent many happy hours sitting on beaches all along the west coast from San Diego, California to Long Beach, Washington just watching and letting the power soak in to my bones. I call this visiting my Oracle….I ask questions and (usually) I get a few answers. There is nothing better for resetting your sense of self than watching several tons of water crash against the rocks.

My sculpture medium is paper clay. It has a high water content and I have found that I can slam a slab of it against a “rock” that I set up in my studio and the effect is very like what I observe at the beach. I manipulate these slabs to support human figures. I follow this sculpting method for a while like a person in a fever. But, after several new pieces, the fever will leave me and I will step away from the ocean waves for a time. I now know that at some point, I will have to return to the sea for information about my life and my art (aren’t they one and the same?). My Oracle will always be there.

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Member Events

Chas Martin
Chas has two pieces, “Ghost Bird” and “Whisper” in “Winter In America,” the current juried show at Gallery 114, 1100 NW Glisan St. in Portland.

[Image of Chas Martin's pieces]

Chas is also presenting “Meet Your Spirit Guide,” a workshop at The Lowe House in Tubac, Arizona January 18-20. The workshop combines sculpture techniques with discussion of your other self through archetypal imagery.

Unmatched Pairs
Upcoming PNWS Show: The Call for Entry is now available for “Unmatched Pairs” at the Multnomah Art Center. The show will run from September 6 through October 1, 2109 It will feature collaborative work by pairs of PNWS members along with individual piece from each of the participants. Members, see your January Calls for Artists that you received by email for details.

Carolyn Nelson
“Carolyn Nelson: BetweenMemory and Imagination” opened at the Yakima Valley Museum September 14, 2018, and will be up through March 9, 2019. It includes 15 ceramic sculptures and 13 oil paintings. The exhibit is the culmination of a one year grant sponsored by Doug and Laurie Kanyer. The grant provided funds to the museum for the exhibit and publishing of a catalog, and to me for materials and a small stipend. The sculptures are built from clay, range in height between 2½ and 4 feet and are all saggar fired using various slips and minerals to provide the surface color and texture.

[Image of Carolyn Nelson's sculptures]

Note:SW 61st is very narrow. Please park on 62nd Ave.

Portfolios welcome. Non-members are welcome to attend a meeting to give us a try.
Jerry builds sets for amateur theater. See images below.

Calendar
January Board Meeting
January 11th at 12:00 pm
George Heath residence

January Member Meeting
Jerry Woodbury Residence and Studio
January 24th at 7:00pm 8131 SW 61st Ave. Portland, Or. 97219.
Remember to bring tasty eats and drinks. Also, if you like, bring an example or portfolio of your work.