



Highlights & Shadows

Society of Minnesota Sculptors

WINTER 2012-2013

On display at Brookgreen Gardens, SC



Carving Out Your Own Destiny— A Provocative Idea, Copied

One of our members who was vacationing in Florida last winter told me about an interesting museum in Winter park—the Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Gardens. The museum’s art collection focuses primarily on American representational sculpture and has over 200 works by Czech-born American sculptor Albin Polasek, N.A. The museum itself was his retirement home on scenic Lake Osceola.

The Idea Remains

The first sculpture you see upon entering the museum grounds is *Man Carving His Own Destiny*. It is Polasek’s iconic work, and he made several copies of it, including the one at Brookgreen Gardens (top left). And its concept has been copied many times and given various titles by various sculptors. But the idea remains the same. You can see a bronze adaptation of *Destiny* in front of Chipotle’s on Excelsior Boulevard near the intersection with Lake Street in Minneapolis. This version, called *Self Made Man* is by Bobbie Carlyle. It is much more realistic than Polasek’s, which was carved in a Art Deco style in 1908 when he was a student.

Polasek’s Impressive Career

Born in the Czech Republic, Albin Polasek apprenticed as a wood carver before immigrating to the U.S. in 1901. He later attended the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia and the American Academy of Art in Rome. During his influential artistic and educational career, Polasek won many awards for his works and was commissioned to create numerous public sculptures that are now found throughout Europe and America. He was elected to the National Academy as an Associate Member in 1927, receiving full academician status in 1933. Polasek dedicated his life to encouraging the study, appreciation and furtherance of representational art. Polasek retired to Winter Park, Florida in 1949 after nearly thirty years as the head of the Department of Sculpture at the Art Institute of Chicago. Shortly thereafter he suffered a stroke and was confined to a wheelchair. Even then, he continued to sculpt, completing eighteen major works until his death in 1965.

In 1961, the Albin Polasek Foundation was formed at the sculptor’s request, and his gallery was opened to the public as a museum. Since then the Foundation has contributed to the culture of Winter Park and Central Florida in many ways. Contributions include the donation of sculptures to the City of Winter Park and scholarships for collegiate art programs around the country.

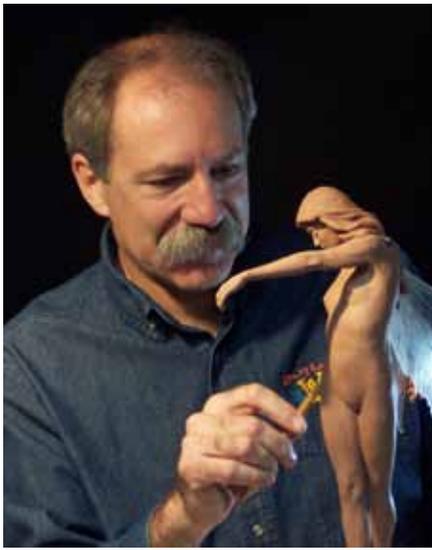
Dick Poey

See this bronze at Excelsior and Lake in Minneapolis.



Bill Hueg

sculptor profile



Putting finishing touches to *Frolicking Before Dawn*

Ever since he held his first Crayola, it was evident that Bill Hueg had artistic talent. At two his parents noted that he had keen powers of observation. And by the seventh grade he announced that he wanted to be an artist—“whatever that meant.”

Bill Hueg was born near the Finger Lakes area in New York and was reared and educated in St. Paul, Minnesota. During his high school years, he focused on poster and set design and Pop Art. At St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute he studied commercial art, lettering and billboard design. In 1973, he began studies at Atelier Lack, a traditional fine art school in Minneapolis. In 1978 he started an apprenticeship at Master Craft Sign Co so he could concentrate on large-format billboard art.

In 1984 Bill founded Signs of Distinction and focused on the billboard art as well as classic, high-end gold leaf lettering and design. He also became an active participant of the Letterheads, a group dedicated to keeping traditional sign making techniques alive. Throughout his career, Bill has received several national design awards for his work.

In 1993 as computer technology became more dominant in the sign industry, Bill began to think about sculpture. In his past work, he had been creating the illusion of the third dimension, and going full 3D sounded intriguing to him. In 1994 Bill moved to the Denver area, not far from Loveland, CO a sculpture mecca. Loveland is noted for its large sculpture-related community and the largest sculpture shows in the nation. It was in Loveland that Bill began to study sculpting by taking workshops by nationally and internationally known sculptors. After taking his first of two classes with De L’Esprie, he finally got the direction he was seeking.

Bill primarily enjoys working with the figure in oil/wax-based clay, but will create other life forms when necessary. Most of his figures are quarter scale in size and are sold by direct sales and the Loveland’s *Sculpture Invitational Show*. Almost all of his daily work—both sculpture and murals—are by commission.

In 2005 he and two other sculptors were asked to design six 1½ times life-size figures—one for each of the branches of the Armed Services—to be located in the *Armed Forces Tribute Garden* in Westminster, Colorado. The artists commented that all of the figures to be sculpted were men and that at least one female figure needed to present in this series of sculptures. Bill mentioned the concept of *Grieving Friends*, and after further discussion; *Grieving Friends* became an additional

sculpture that was installed on the fountain. Bill sculpted the female figure, helmets and boots while Elliot Summons created the male figure and rifle. Dave Parvin sculpted the sand bags and was responsible for obtaining the commission. The original 6 sculptures have been designed and are waiting sufficient funding to proceed.

The years of 2011 and 2012 have been very busy for Bill as a sculptor. Bill was commissioned by the Rotary Club of Saint Paul to create an 8-foot replica of Carl Milles’ *Vision of Peace* that resides in Saint Paul’s City Hall. The sculpture was given to the Nagasaki Rotary Club, Saint Paul’s sister city, and dedicated in October 2012.

Another over life-size sculpture for the Douglas County Veterans Foundation, located in Castle Rock, Colorado, entitled *Freedoms’ Keeper* was installed this November, but will be dedicated in the spring of 2013.

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The St. Paul Rotary Club commissioned Bill to create an 8-foot bronze replica of Carl Milles’ *Vision of Peace*, which is an icon in St. Paul’s Ramsey County Courthouse. Bill’s piece was dedicated in October 2012 in Nagasaki, Japan.



Grieving Friends is located in the Armed Forces Tribute Garden located in Westminster, CO. This collaboration of three sculptors was installed in May of 2008. Bill did the female figure.



The bronze eagle, *Freedoms' Keeper*, will be dedicated in the spring of 2013 at the government center in Castle Rock, CO.



This bronze replica of Augustus Saint-Gaudens' *The Puritan* is in a private collection in New York.



Bill's first bronze was *Jennifer* (top right). Below are other nudes that reflect his classical training: *Terpsichore* (Muse of Dance), *Diana* (the Huntress) and *Awakening*.



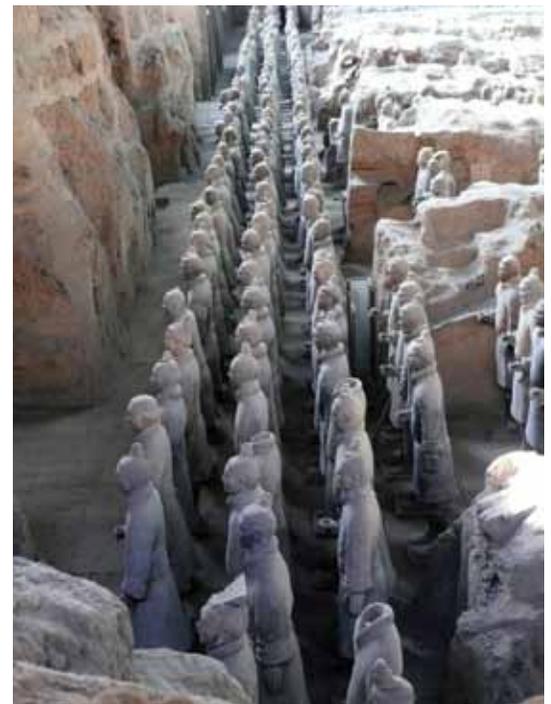
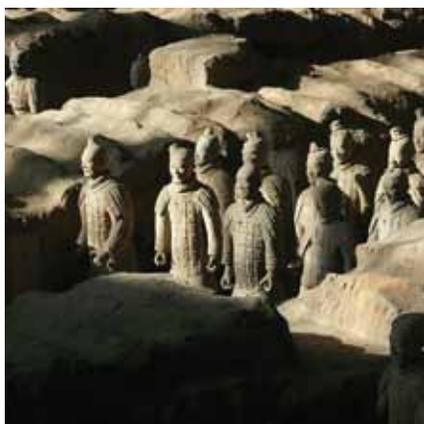
6,000 Terra Cotta Soldiers— A Manufacturing Miracle

Emperor Qin (221-207 B.C.) was a man of many accomplishments, not all of which were done humanely. He was the first emperor of China, having united the seven warring states. He standardized a common script, codified a legal system, centrally appointed the country's administrators, built roads, encouraged agricultural reforms and supervised the construction of the first Great Wall. He did all this at the sacrifice of thousands and thousands of laborers.

As soon as Qin ascended the throne, he began to make preparations for a safe and elegant after life. It's estimated that he conscripted 700,000 workers to build his elegant tomb and the terra cotta army that was to protect him.

Until 1974 there were only hints that the massive earthenware army existed. It was then that some farmers who were digging a well near Qin's burial mound unearthed fragments of a clay figure. This led to an extraordinary archeological find—the Terra Cotta Warriors, 6,000 strong. This underground army in full battle regalia stands in military formation in parallel trenches to protect Qin's tomb. A system of brick walls, rafters, matting and wooden roofs piled high with six to nine feet of earth hid the army from view. Over the centuries, the roofing

Photos taken at the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor near Xi'an, China in 2011.



system collapsed, breaking most of the clay figures. Putting the army back together is a continuing project for Chinese archeologists.

Assembly-Line Creativity

The life-sized officers, infantrymen, archers and cavalrymen and their horses were made in assembly-line fashion in workshops by government controlled laborers and craftsmen. Unlike the ancient Greek artists who carved their figures "whole," these statues were created in pieces—heads, arms, legs, torsos, etc. Legs were made solid so that the figure could stand up without support. The rest of the body was hollow. The various pieces fit together like drainage pipes. Clay slip was coated over the basic body parts and individualized by rank and with unique hairstyles, moustaches, noses, ears, clothing and shoes. After firing, the soldiers were assembled and painted for added realism. Then they and their weapons were placed in the pits in precise military formation. Today, most of the coloration has flaked off and the weapons either deteriorated or stolen shortly after the pits were sealed.

See eight of the Terra Cotta Warriors and two of their horses on display at the Minneapolis Institute of Art through January 20th.

21st Century Icarus Amongst the Ancients



What more perfect place for *Icarus, Fallen* to rest than on the grounds in front of the Temple of Concordia in Agrigento on the southern coast of Sicily. The temple, built in the 5th century B.C, is actually one of many temples that ringed Agrigento, which in its time was larger than Athens. Today, only the remains of seven doric temples on the east side of the city remain, and this UNESCO Heritage Site is called the Valley of the Temples. The Temple of Concordia (shown here) is the best preserved of the group and is an outstanding example of ancient Greek architecture. *Icarus, Fallen* was created by Polish sculptor Igor Mitoraj and installed in front of the temple in July 2011.

Mitoraj (born 1944) studied painting at the Art Academy in Krakow, had several exhibitions, moved to Paris in 1968 to continue his studies. He was fascinated by Latin American culture and took a year off to travel and paint in Mexico. It was there that he became enchanted with sculpture. He returned to Paris, had a combined painting and

sculpture exhibition that did very well, and it was the success of that show that convinced him to devote his art career to sculpture.

Originally, Mitoraj worked exclusively in bronze, but after a trip to Carrara, Italy, he switched to marble. In 1983 he set up a studio in Pietrasanta, Italy and splits his time between there and France. His style is highly classical, particularly emphasizing male torsos and heads. He is probably best known for his gigantic, often fragmented and partially damaged heads that seem to be just “there,” lying on the ground or sidewalk for you to interact with.

In 2000 I first saw one of the heads in the backyard of a studio and also one of his marble pieces in Pietrasanta (below right and center). I was intrigued by the enormity and precision of the piece but didn't know who the sculptor was until I started researching this article about *Icarus*. Then it became obvious.

Dick Poey





Rodin Bumped By Balloons

The “Rodin Gallery” was built in 2008 as part of the Cleveland Institute of Art’s \$350 million dollar renovation program. It’s a magnificent gallery with floor-to-ceiling windows, perfect for showcasing sculpture. But this September, things changed. All the Rodins were moved to the Impressionists Gallery or put in storage.



The space was half filled with 11-inch purple balloons. Described as an “epic/sculpture/installation/happening,” the exhibit by British artist Martin Creed is called *Work No. 965: Half the air in a given space*.

Says Creed of the installation, “It is important to me that the situation is normal, that, as usual, the space is full of air; it’s just that half the air is inside the balloons.” Visually and literally, the balloons occupy

only half the gallery’s volume, making it easy for people to co-exist with the art. No matter what you think, Work No. 965 is truly experiential, fun and playful. Adults and children alike enter the closed space and frolic through the room. Balloons fly everywhere. For those who get claustrophobia, there is a path installed on the floor that leads you to the exit.

The Cleveland Museum of Art, like the Minneapolis Institute of Art, is encyclopedic— little bit of everything. The timing of Creed’s work just happened to coincide with the completion of the nearby Museum of Contemporary Art’s new building.

Martin Creed was born in 1968 in Wakefield, England. From the age of three he lived in Glasgow, Scotland. Between 1986 and 1990 he studied at the Slade School of Fine Art, London. After art school he lived and worked in London until 2001 when he moved to Alicudi, Italy. In 2001 he was the winner of the Turner Prize. He specializes in making the commonplace uncommon. He creates installations, furniture, poetry, music, videos, even restaurant environments.

Some of the “Bumped” Rodins



Clockwise from left to right...

- *The Thinker* (from *The Gates of Hell*)
- *Portrait of William Henley* (detail)
- *Heroic Head of Pierre de Wiessant* (One of the *Burghers of Calais*)
- *Balzac* (detail of study)
- *Fall of the Angels*



Thinking In Quantum Leaps

The sculpture to the right is called *Quantum Cloud XXXIII* by British sculptor Antony Gormley. It was photographed in a gallery of the new Denver Art Museum. It's one of a series based on quantum physics that Gormley did in the late 1990s. As with most of his work, the center of attention is a nondescript human form. Here he had his assistants make a mold of his body to get the proper gesture and shape. The interior of the sculpture's shape is made by densely layering dark stainless steel bars, giving the body form without specific definition. Positive and negative energy bars randomly emanate from the body in all directions. The name "Quantum" suggests that the body is composed of subatomic particles and "Cloud" suggests the space around the atoms. His sculpture treats the work as a place, not a specific body, with the space around the figure tracing a real event in time.

Gormley likes to think big... And always out of the box.

Check the Internet for photos of these amazing sculptures.

Sound II (1986) is located in the crypt of Winchester's ancient cathedral, which is frequently flooded. It is perhaps the most realistic of Gormley's pieces.

Asian Field (1991) is a collaborative installation of 350 people. Together they created 180,000 palm-sized clay figures. Each figure has deep eye holes, giving the impression that the figures are watching the viewer. *The Field of the British Isles* is a similar installation, but created by Englishmen.

Havmannen (1995) is a 36-foot, 60-ton granite sculpture standing in the fjord of a Norwegian city on the Arctic Circle. Today, it is considered the ambassador of the town and has inspired a festival in May each year.

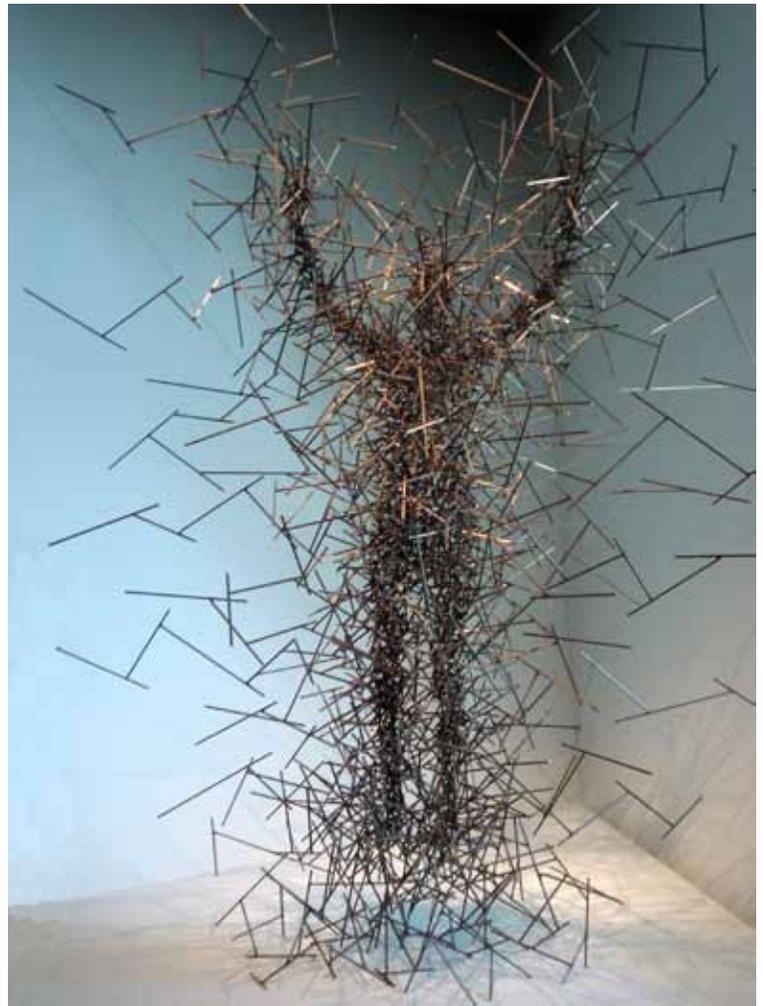
The Waste Man (2006) was made of 30 tons of waste material for an art movie, *The Margate Exodus*, which retold the story of the Book of Exodus. The sculpture was set on fire for the film and burned to the ground in 35 minutes..

Event Horizon (2007) consisted of 31 life-size iron and fiberglass casts of his body that were installed on top of buildings in London's South Bank. And later the figures were moved to New York City near Madison Square Garden. The idea was to stimulate people to look around and re-assess one's own position in the world.

One & Other (2009) was a living sculpture. He got 2400 Londoners each to stand on top of a plinth in Trafalgar Square for one hour. The performance was taped and broadcast, giving viewers a unique interpretation of the British people.

Another Place (1997) is on a 1.8 mile stretch of beach near Liverpool. One hundred cast iron figure (each 11 feet high) stand facing the water, and when the tide comes in, they are partially submerged.

Iron Man (1993) is a large bound body in Birmingham commissioned by a bank. When the bank moved, the community wanted the sculpture to move with the bank, but the government decided to keep it where it was.



Inside Australia (2002-3) sits on a barren salt lake flat near Perth Australia. It was made to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Perth International Arts Festival. It consists of 51 modern iron figure made from body scans of local residents. Like *One & Other*, these pieces were intended to find the human equivalent of a specific place.



Angel of the North (1988) is a figure standing over 65 feet high with a wingspan of 177 feet and cost \$1.5 million. It is made of 2-inch thick plates of Corten steel and weighs 200 tons! It overlooks a main rail line and two highways leading into Gateshead, UK. At first the sculpture drew a lot of criticism, but now is a popular icon of the north country.

THIS CHAIR MAKES A SERIOUS STATEMENT

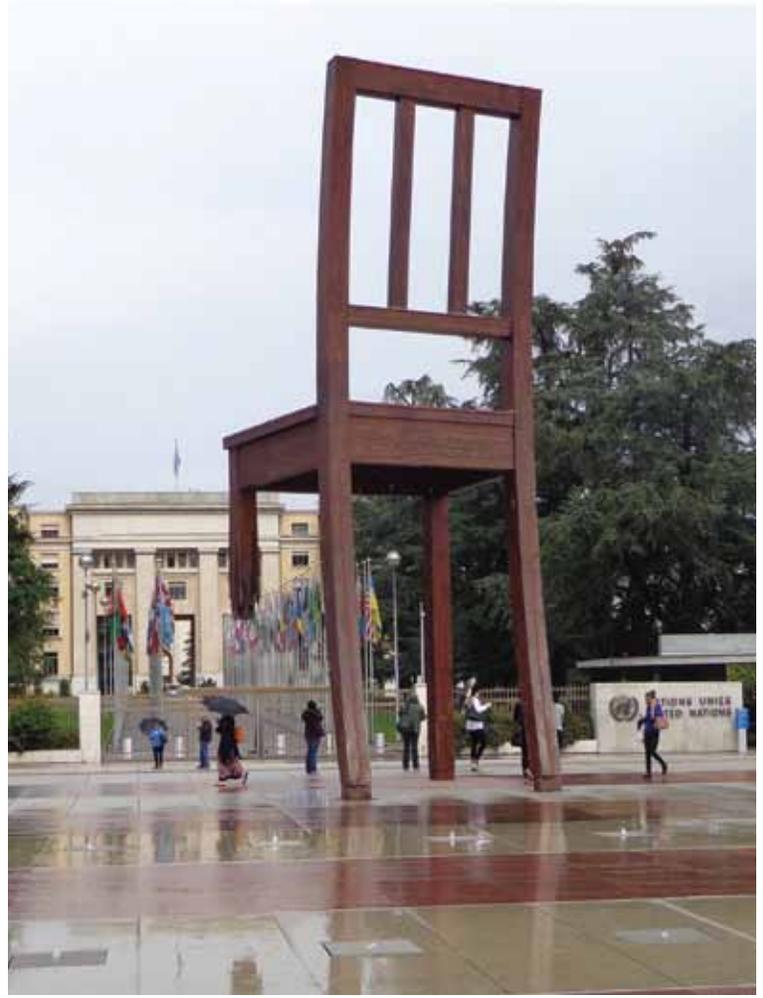
In the water-jet plaza across the street from the U.N. Palace of Nations in Geneva, Switzerland stands a giant straight back chair. Aside from its enormous size, it stands on only three of its four legs. The fourth leg is completely shattered—a grim reminder of the horrors of land mines and cluster bombs.

Broken Chair was a project of Handicap International and was created by Swiss sculptor Daniel Berset. The chair is constructed of 5-1/2 tons of wood and stands 39 feet high.

It was erected in August 1997 when the Ottawa Treaty was being negotiated. Originally, it was to remain in place for only three months until all the nations signed the treaty in Ottawa, Canada. But this didn't happen. Because of the public's strong opposition to the fact that not all countries supported the treaty, the sculpture remained in place until 2005. It was temporarily removed while the Palace of Nations was being remodeled and was reinstalled two years later and was dedicated by Handicap International to support the ban on cluster bombs in December of 2008.

Located in front of the main entrance to the Palace of Nations, it remains a daily reminder to U.N. employees to urge all governments to help victims of these wartime munitions.

Dick Poey



NOTICE

Richards (Dick) Poey has recently retired from the Society's Board of Directors and his vibrant service in the revival and nurturing of the organization will be deeply missed.

Within the next few months the Board will be reviewing our organizational needs and will develop a broader member participation plan for publication, exhibition and organization growth for the coming years. Keep tuned in and thank you for your continued support.

Tom Zahn, President

**Tom Zahn, President
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