

Artist Statement 2014

by Lynette Power

I want to create art that inspires awe and wonder with life and the world in which we live. My life experiences and learning opportunities lead me to creating sculptures that are sensual, sensitive, tasteful, and unique. My most treasured moments are when I see a patron awestruck by my work.

I have been a professional artist for nearly forty years, primarily working in clay. After a series of sculpting workshops I began having my pieces cast in bronze. The years of working with clay has enhanced my development as a classical sculptor and learning the lost wax bronze casting process. Ten years of anatomy training and practicing massage therapy has anchored a deep understanding of the body and how we move. Through my studies in dance and a four-year program in Feldenkrais Movement Studies, I learned structure and movement principles that are important in figurative sculpting. The understanding of structural integration and body awareness along with my accumulation of technical skills, helps me make the clay come to life.

For the past eighteen years I have taken many workshops in figurative sculpting with master sculptors throughout the country, meeting other sculptors who share this passion for figurative sculpting. The enjoyment of working in my studio culminates as the forms, fluidity in design, and textures come together into a successful piece. Rhythm, texture, and contrast are key elements of my design. An instructor once showed me how pushing the clay to its limits created a very dynamic tension. Stretching, thinning, distorting, pushing, and pulling the clay is how I create fluidity and the feeling of movement in my pieces. I like to work with many different elements in each piece, creating a textural collage. These elements are assembled with hand-building methods to create a unique style.

I began working with clay in 1976 making hand-built coil pots to put into my hand-tied macramé hangers. I started out with a small electric kiln on the back porch and the throwing wheel in a tiny spare bedroom. I worked on pottery while my toddlers were napping. Today, my electric wheel occupies a corner in my kitchen . . . but the kitchen door opens into a large studio with a large, walk-in gas kiln. I once had five employees in 1989 to now doing all the work myself. I rebuilt my walk-in gas kiln in 2008 and am still working at streamlining my studio production to fit my current needs.

In 2009, I won a grant by public vote for my River Otter design titled, "Clean Water Bring Life". It was the beginning of a calling to use my art to express my concern for environmental issues



and the need for conservation of our earth. This project was the refurbishing of a decrepid drinking fountain by Lake Winona. This was part of a year-long celebration of our water, organized by a collaborative effort between the City of Winona, Winona State University, Saint Mary's University, and Southeast Technical College, and environmental group, and the Heart of the Beast Puppet Theater.

Later in 2009, I was asked to create a memorial for an outstanding community leader who was dying of cancer. His work in land stewardship and local sustainable agriculture was outstanding. I was pleased to sculpt my first near life-size human sculpture to honor this man's life and work. The image is of a man holding a handful of dirt and the caption is: Honor the Earth, Protect the Soil, This was an especially important piece for me because I am a cancer survivor. In 2013, I received a grant through the McKnight foundation from the Southeast Minnesota Arts Council. The bronze sculpture was finished in January 2014 and shown at the Frozen River Film Festival. We are in the process of deciding where in the community it will be placed.

In 2010, I began a memorial sculpture of one of Winona's early historical figures. John Latsch was responsible for donating vast acreages of riverfront property to the city of Winona and the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin to be used for public recreation. He did not want people to be denied public access to our rivers and streams. I have completed a 24inch model of the sculpture called "A Meeting with Destiny". It is being considered for a one and a half-life scale monument for Winona's Levee Park.

The winter of 2013, was a memorable winter because I spent ten weeks in Scottsdale doing the Arizona Fine Art Expo, showing my bronze portfolio. There were a hundred artists working there every day and it was "living the dream" to be amongst so much art and in such inspiring company every day.

I taught my first sculpture class, "Sculpting the Head", in March 2010 at Crossing Art Center in Zumbrota, and I'm looking forward to doing more teaching in my studio and for other centers. The methods and processes that I have developed are unique. There are many great teachers to thank for giving me pieces of the puzzle needed to accomplish my dream of being a ceramic artist and a bronze sculptor. I have brought my own individual personality, interests, life experiences, dedication, and exuberant energy together in my work to share my passion, my love for life.

In June of 2013, the City of Winona commissioned another water fountain design for the Visitor's Center. We decided on another sculpture of otters. This sculpture is schooled for the foundry in early March with installation plans for late spring or early summer of 2014.

I have exhibited my clay work at art shows throughout the country for the past thirty years, including:

- Uptown Art Show in Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Art on the Square in Madison, Wisconsin
- Numerous Chicago mall and street shows
- Loveland Colorado Sculpture shows

- Arizona Fine Art Expo

I have been in many cities where sculpture parks with permanent and/or revolving sculpture collections are highly prized feature attractions, free for the public to enjoy. It is my vision to bring more great sculpture to our area. Sculptures with educational and social issue messages are especially meaningful to me as they serve as day-to-day reminders as we live with them in our midst.