



The Armature

The Sculptors' Association of Alberta Newsletter

September 2021



"Neon" dog portrait, bronze.

This is one of the pieces I did at a lost wax bronze casting course this summer at Red Deer College.



"Un-Supportive" woman figure standing, bronze

Interview: Deb Laninga

Tell us about yourself.

My name is Deb Laninga and I am a sculptor living in northern Alberta. I sculpt in clay, mold the original and then produce either a resin or bronze casting. I work mainly in realism with figure and portrait, both people and animals.

Have you always wanted to be a sculptor?

No, although I have always been passionate about art, I didn't *find* sculpture until 2014 in a clay portrait workshop. It was my a-ha" moment when I realized although I can paint and draw - I am really a 3D person.

What is the best advice you have ever been given?

"You gotta try, you'll regret it if you don't and you'll always wonder 'what if'," said by my husband.

Why art?

It allows us to connect to viewers in a direct, visceral way without excuses, explanation or

apology. I want to create works that are based in real life moments of connection, love, joy, hope and humanity.

What mediums do you work in?

Various clays, everything from water (natural) clay to WED (Walt Disney) clay, polymer clay and plasteline (oil clay).

What inspires you?

I look at the work of someone like Norman Rockwell and how he was able to capture everyday life with such kindness, sensitivity and humor and I think about how those attributes can also be in sculpture.

What other work have you done besides sculpting?

I paint in acrylic and draw in pencil/charcoal; have tried lots of other art forms including stained glass, but 3D is my preference.

What makes you smile?

My dog mostly. A stupid joke (love Dad jokes). But you'll often catch me watching improv like, "Whose line is it anyway?"



What is your dream project?

I seem to envision series of sculpture more often than a single piece, but I guess my dream project would be one I've had in my mind for a long time - a half-scale woman in armor.

What is your outlook on life?

Balanced outlook, it's not all rosy, but it's not all bad. I do think things happen for a reason (even if I don't understand it all). My motto is "if others can do it, so can I".

How has your work evolved over time?

My paintings were more abstract, but always trying to achieve texture. In sculpture I find I want to be realistic, exacting, but tell a story through the content, pose and interactions of the subjects.

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President’s message – Ellie Shuster



To say it has been quite a year would be an understatement!

We had a late start with our first meeting online in October. Given the pandemic, we kept our expectations low – not really knowing what we could accomplish together online. As it turned out, the year was energizing, engaging and a roaring success.

Online meetings brought out members from beyond Edmonton whom we otherwise would not get to see. Our Christmas pot-luck morphed into a gift exchange – which I hope will become a new tradition. We managed workshops online and in person, a little snow and ice, enjoyed a stellar newsletter, had great meeting presenters, an online show/sale that supported both SAA and many sculptors, and – the pièce de resistance – a successful Art Walk!

We maintained our membership numbers while attracting some new members, and grew an invite list for future exhibitions. We even finished the year in the black(!) thanks to the volunteer efforts of a number of our members who worked hard to make our events so successful.

I’ll have details at our AGM September 7 – but let me say a huge THANK YOU to everyone who volunteered, donated, and pitched in – and especially to our dedicated Board of Directors.

Speaking of the Board... Most of our members have agreed to continue on to next year; however, Carroll Charest (Exhibition) and Shawn Olander (Workshops and Newsletter Editor) are stepping down this year. Both have done yeoman service to SAA over their tenures and I am grateful to them both. Thankfully, both have agreed to lend a hand where possible; however, not in leadership roles.

SAA needs YOU!

So... We have some positions to fill – and I implore you to consider where and how you may volunteer. This year, for the first time, we will create Member at Large positions on the board. These members will volunteer to help as needed, be part of committees, and will experience the camaraderie we enjoy as a board. These positions will provide insight into the running of the SAA and will be a gateway to a leadership role.

Please consider volunteering for any of the following roles:

- **Exhibition Chair** (with support from Carroll as Member at Large and me)
- **Workshop Chair** (with support from Maria)
- **Newsletter Editor** (a collaborative effort)
- **Member at Large** (two openings)

The SAA has been gaining momentum but can only be successful with the volunteer support of our members. Please give some thought to participating on the board! Contact me for more information and/or to volunteer. (ellie@shuster.com 780-729-3015)

See you at the AGM, Ellie Shuster

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, Sept. 7, 2021

Program: AGM + SOCIAL
Sharing summer projects and ideas

On Zoom: [LINK HERE](#)

Meeting ID:
840 2844 1497
Passcode: 160357

Agenda & Minutes from the last AGM have been distributed by email. Check with Maria Koulouris if you haven't.

Deb Laninga: con't

Do you have a favourite work of art or artist?

When I saw Van Gogh's "Starry Night" in person - I got tears in my eyes. I love Michelangelo's work as well. My favourite sculpture is the "Lion of Lucerne" monument in Switzerland.

What role does the artist have in modern society?

I hope people slow down, put their phone down, and actually look. Be in the moment. We are so distracted all the time. I think art can move us to a place of thoughtfulness.

What is the best thing about being an artist?

I love working from home, in my own studio. When I am sculpting everything else stops, goes away. It's a weird place of peacefulness with intense concentration and focus. I always feel better after I have been sculpting.

What is the worst?

Selling my art - that is hardest part; letting go of it, valuing it, and finding a buyer for it. UGH

What advice would you give your younger self?

Just let life your life evolve, don't try to

control it or direct it or worry so much. You aren't headed where you think, not even close. There are lots of good things in front of you, and some really tough ones, but you'll grow and learn from them. Be open to love, it's the key to everything.

Where can we see your art?

I have Instagram and a website and my work has been at the galleries in Spruce Grove, Multicultural Centre in Stony Plain, and in Sept. 2022 at the Federation Gallery in Vancouver (Granville Island). Virtual show of ACACA too.



"Dash" – dog portrait in cold cast bronze resin casting with metallic wax



"New Vocabulary" – female figure sitting with caution tape

Membership renewal time

Membership fees are due for the 2021-22 fiscal year. Please send \$40 via e-transfer to sculptorsAB@gmail.com or by cheque to:

Sculptors' Association of Alberta
PO Box 11212 Stn. Main
Edmonton, AB T5J 3K5

Membership entitles you to participate in all our activities – especially Ice & Snow and exhibitions, which are opportunities only available to members in good standing.

If there are artists in your networks who do work that is sculptural, or who have an interest in sculpture, please tell them about the SAA and invite them to a meeting and/or to join. The more diverse our membership, the more dynamic our organization becomes!

Fall meeting programming

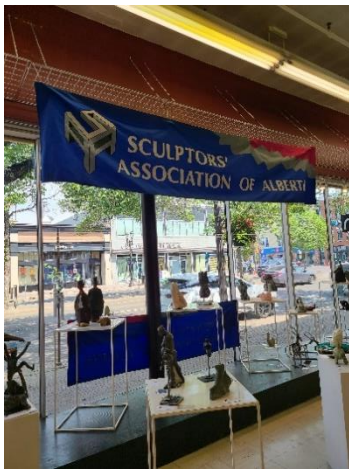
Sept 7, 21 Annual General Meeting

Oct 5, 21 Program: Sculpture "Hot Seat Round Table" (tentative)

Nov 2, 21 Program: Photographing 3D items (tentative)

Dec 7, 21 Social: Christmas ornament exchange / On-line or in person TBC

Exhibitions - Carroll Charest



This past year had us hoping of everything opening up on schedule and being a busy year for shows, again.

Alas, things did not work out as planned; Night of Artists cancelled again to rebook in 2022, the **Jasper Guild co-show** postponed, date to be determined; **Studio Yeg**, date to be determined.



However, thanks to a great committee (who worked very hard and who put together and created wonderful advertisements/posters for us to share), we did have a fairly successful online show with the **Pivot Point Show and Sale**.

Following that, we had a great first showing at the **Art Walk on Whyte** (thanks to Ellie and her hard work and persistence in working with the coordinators on this). I think it was a great success for our organization and wonderful exposure to many people who were not aware of us. It was wonderful to watch people walking down the street and all of a sudden stop and look in at our display in the window, and not just a quick glance either.



So, overall, for the circumstances, it was not that bad of a year. With that in mind, the coming year is looking brighter. With things opening up and no signs of lockdown again, after

our successful adventure with the Art Walk at the Army & Navy Building, we were invited by Wild Heart Collective to partake in the **Christmas Market** to be held at the same location on Whyte Ave in the window showcase again. Another great opportunity for sales for our members and to promote SAA. Details to come.

I also just heard from the **GM Western Gallery** in Drumheller and they are starting to rebook from submissions that were accepted from previous. YEAH! We do not have to resubmit! So it looks like we are scheduled for June 2022 there. What a wonderful place to help spread our organization's great talent! The theme is "Creature Comforts," and it is whatever brings you comfort, what moves us to feel safe and secure, what soothes the body and fills the soul, what makes us human. We now have a deadline to start working on pieces for this show. Details on how things will get there if you are unable to travel will be shared closer to the time frame.

I have been in conversation with **VASA** and they too are rebooking their exhibitions from previous accepted submissions. I do not have a clear date on this and should hear very soon, but hope it will be either May, July or August to be part of

St. Albert's Art Walk. This theme is "Trans-dimensionality: What moves you." This is based on us asking the public of St. Albert to submit photographs of what inspired them or "moves" them, to submit their photograph. We, artists of SAA, then interpret that photo into a creative, tactile piece of art (3D from 2D). If anyone is interested, please let us know and we will share the album (on Google pics) to look at the available photos we received.

We will wait to hear from **Night of Artists** and will have to reapply for a possible spring show (March 2022).

With that, I wanted to let you all know that I will be stepping down as the exhibition coordinator. It has been a great experience and I was able to work with some very wonderful people on our board of directors. Your SAA board is still working diligently on finding ways to promote the organization and its very wonderful, talented members. I hope that one or more of our members will step up and try this position and/or create a committee.

Stay tuned....and keep creating!
Sincerely,
Carroll

Laura Ouimet



Heron Garden Sculpture, made with galvanized chicken wire.

Gordon Pengilly



Two abstract figures, part of an abstract series I'm currently working on.

Susanne Scheers



Kitsch: Craft so bad that it's good



I am delighted that some of my COVID sculpture has been chosen for the Kitsch exhibition at the Alberta Craft Council. Afterall.... if my Covids aren't kitschy – I don't know what is!

Ellie Shuster

Kitsch: Craft So Bad That It's Good

Kitsch: Craft So Bad That It's Good is a group exhibition of Fine Craft created by Alberta Craft Council members from across the province.

Kitsch subverts the rules around good taste, and crosses the line, making you laugh and cringe all at once! The resulting exhibition is exciting, curious, challenging, eccentric and hilarious!

Alberta Craft Feature Gallery
10186 - 106 Street NW, Edmonton, AB

August 14 - October 30, 2021

Free | Everyone welcome

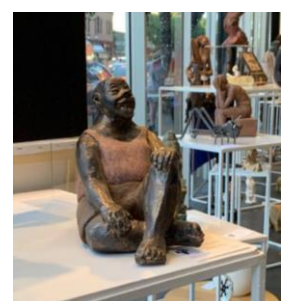
www.albertacraft.ab.ca



Art Walk on Whyte 2021



Art Walk was a great success this year with 16 members participating and 37 pieces sold.

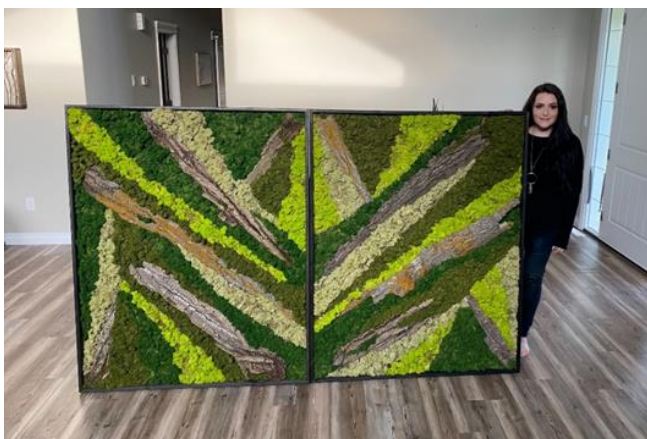


Daniel Wiebe



In preparation for the wedding of my eldest son and his lovely bride at the end of July, I was given the task to create a guest registry. I built a tree (36" tall) with leaves for guests to sign and hang. It was a good challenge for me to build something I have never done before. I made the leaves of clay and I constructed the tree of steel. It was received well by everyone who attended.

Jennifer Martineau



Summer accomplishments

Kay McCormack



Leila Bjerland



It's been a very busy summer with my son's wedding, gardening and renos but I get time to sketch and draw, making studies for future art work.

"The Burning of St. Jean Baptiste" mixed medium, 9" x 12" pastel

"The Carpenter" graphite, 9" x 12"

Ellie Shuster



I have been playing with relief lately. Here's a few results. Gurdeep Pandher is cold cast bronze. The others were photographed while still on the board.

I'm also working on a series I call "Random Acts of Yoga".



Darcy Hoover



Elf church and bothy

Keith Turnbull



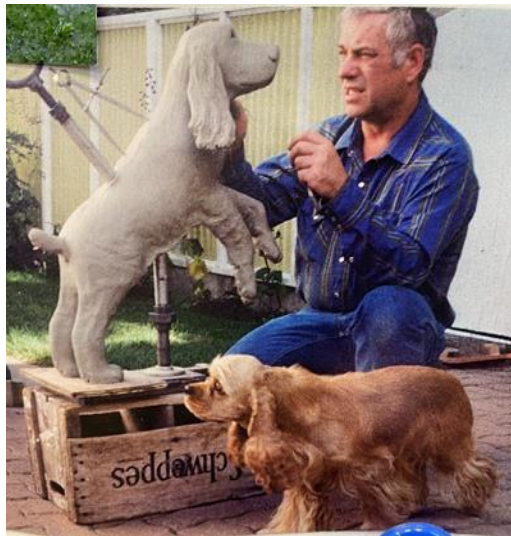
I made this little group of rabbits this summer. The ukulele bunny and the reading bunny sold at the Whyte Ave Art Walk.

Barry Kostiuk



The first and third are works in progress. The vase with the wire dandelions is carved from black chlorite and the bear is green/brown soapstone. The angel wings with a cross is complete. The wings were carved from pink soapstone and the cross is white alabaster.

Karen Begg



Doe, cast bronze, by Don Begg

The Armature is published by the Sculptors' Association of Alberta. Images have been supplied by artist members and may not be reused without permission of the artist(s). For more information contact Maria Koulouris, SAA Administrator at sculptorsab@gmail.com.

This newsletter was prepared by Shawn Olander and edited/formatted by Barb Marcinkoski. If you have anything for the newsletter, please contact Shawn at shawnolander@gmail.com

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