



Tania Garner-Tomas: Always an artist

Tell us about yourself and what you do.

Stainless steel shaped into sculpture. Fit, clamp, hold or tape it, then weld it into its created forms. I love working with this shiny flexible and strong metal.

Have you always wanted to be a sculptor?

I don't remember ever not being a sculptress. My first media was plasticene when a child, making deer, elephants and horses. It was a natural transition from plasticene to sculptor's wax, which casts into bronze. Sculptor's wax is strong and has several workable textures depending on its temperature.

What is the best advice you have ever been given?

The best advice I have ever been given was to stay fit, exercise and eat well, which has served me as my sculpture and equitation interests both require a high level of fitness.

Why Art?

Art has always been in my world. My mother plays piano and my uncle and dad both sang opera arias. My father, Ottawa's late Bruce Garner was a hard-working sculptor who created dozens of large art shows and over 30 public art commissions. My youthful years were spent around sculptors and painters. It was an amazing time. I remember earning \$3 an hour sanding marble sculptures for Robin Bell, best known for the bronze whale sculptures in WEM. I worked in Wallack's art gallery and framing shop in the 70's, where I saw show after show sell out. In the studio behind the house we lived in, I watched Bruce Garner build public art commissions in metal and saw them loaded on flat deck crane trucks for delivery and installation. Recently, to the distress of his family and many art lovers, his first sculpture "Joy" on Sparks Street mall was vandalized where one figure was actually torn right off the base and from its two fellow figures. Thankfully it will be restored.

What mediums do you work in?

I have tried most media, but chose metal for sculpture, and acrylics for painting. I like the strength, permanence and repairability that metal has. It doesn't explode in the kiln like clay can at times, or crack off like stone. However, it is a challenging media to arrange into new shapes and takes much planning and persuasion.

What inspires you?

I am inspired by some magical summers I had as a youth. With my siblings, father and his mistress, we spent summers in our log cabins beside the Muskoka River. The river ran the power dam, and flowed through the granite and treed landscape in Muskoka, Ontario. It was a dreamlike, almost fantasy world of sparkling fresh water swims, discovering nature, doing batik and other art. It was primitive, heated by a turn of the century fire stove, and water was carried up the hill from the river.

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In the Birches
Silver Birch Lodge,
Sherwood Park
6' x 4'
Stainless steel and bronze



Spirit of the Future
Stainless steel with
hammered bronze with cast
hands, face and feet
11'9" tall
Broadmoor Lake Park,
Sherwood Park



President's message

Sure signs of spring... deadlines approaching to submit for summer festivals, and preparing for Night of Artists. All of which are keeping some of us busy creating and planning, and looking forward to the warm months to come.

Night of Artists (NOA) will be really exciting this year; something unique for Edmonton. If you are not participating as an artist, please make sure you come to the gala or visit on the weekend to support your friends and fellow artists.

Also, please let everyone in your circles know about the event through your social media. We all have a vested interest to help make

NOA and our presence there a success! You will find details elsewhere in the newsletter. Please share the information from our SAA Facebook and Instagram pages - and watch for an email with material you can use.

A big thanks to Exhibition Chair Carroll Charest for herding the 14 sculptors participating in NOA. Her organizational skills and attention to detail are amazing. I am so grateful to her for all she does! Thanks also to the artists who are working with her to make it happen.

February at the Downtown Farmers Market has been slower, as expected, but the interest in our work has been high, with lots of people checking back to "see what is new". There was a Valentine's display of sculpture and art across from our booth all month, with the Art at the Market artists contributing their work along with ours. As of March, that space will be home to another artisan. I invite you to check it out.

As spring approaches, our Ice and Snow programming will soon wind down. This has been a huge undertaking for our Chair Barb Marcinkoski and I thank her for the time and energy she devotes to making sure our artists have work and our clients are happy.

I'm looking forward to our March meeting featuring Karen Klassen. I encourage you to attend at Harcourt House and take the opportunity to handle her work and visit with everyone in person. Zoom is great for those at a distance, but meetings are so much more satisfying when they are "live"!

Now... off to the studio to meet my spring deadlines!

- Ellie Shuster

Next SAA meeting

**Tuesday, March 7
7:30 pm**

HYBRID MEETING - both online and in-person

Harcourt House Annex 10211 112 St, Edmonton (ring the bell to be let inside)

OR

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84028441497?pwd=YWdKV3h4MGFYeFZFSmNrd1Fab1BUdz09>

Meeting ID: 840 2844 1497

Passcode: 160357

SAA meeting programs

Karen Klassen will be the presenter at the **March 7** meeting. Karen is a mosaic artist who is also experimenting with other media. She recently returned from Arizona where she attended a huge rock and gem show.

Our **April 4** meeting will be held at the City Arts Centre 10943-83 Ave, and will include a tour of the venue. Keith Turnbull, Programs Director keithtur@telus.net

Snow & ice report



A one-block ice sculpture was carved at Edmonton Garrison on Family Day, Feb. 20 by Deb Laninga (left). Brian McArthur did a Fleur de Lis carving for the French-Canadian Association in Red Deer on Feb. 25 (below left)

At the Winter Festival of Speed in Lac La Biche, Feb. 25 - 26, we carved three 4-block ice sculptures and two snow sculptures. The ice sculptures we carved were a race car (Randall Fraser), a snowmobile (Christian Denis) and a plane (Jeremy McConville). The snow sculptures were an indigenous dancer (Ritchie Velthuis) and a semi-truck throne (Barb Marcinkoski). See p.7.

The snow carving workshop with the Alberta Craft Council was cancelled for lack of participation. I also had to cancel the ice sculptures for the Castor Winterfest on Feb. 10-11 as I was unable to find carvers who were available at that time.

At this time there are no more snow or ice sculpture commissions planned.

- Barb Marcinkoski, Snow & Ice Director, barbmarcink@gmail.com



Tania Garner-Tomas – con't from p.1

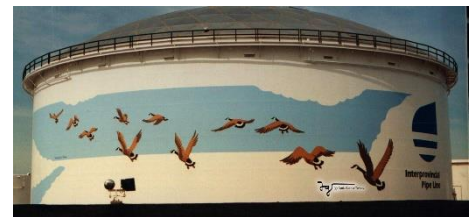
I regularly visited my friend Lu, an adopted grandfather whose farm had chickens, a garden, milk cows and horses. I rode the ponies that he had for us young people, and also once rode his Clydesdale plow horse Mike a few miles back to our cottage. Lu also plowed the garden with Mike, unthinkable to me as the rows between the vegetables were so narrow! After my ride, Lu would regularly drive me and my bike home on his pick-up truck, often sending me home with a dozen eggs and a gallon of fresh unpasteurized milk. The thick cream on top was enjoyed immediately by myself and three siblings.



Vantage Trailers gate
24' x 5'
Mild steel, zinc primed, powder coated
Lethbridge, Alberta

What other work have you done besides sculpting?

Sculpture cast in bronze was my first metal sculpture experience. My art school Central Tech in Toronto had a casting foundry where I learned to finish bronze castings using files and chisels. Later, fabricating bronze and steel was my next endeavour. Myself and husband Fernando, hired my brother and the three of us renovated our attached garage in to an indoor painting studio. The acreage we had bought also had a large unfinished building on it which we made into the car garage and a small shop for me to work metal in. It took me a while to accumulate the set up and the tools I currently enjoy; several decades. It would be much easier now though with the abundance of tools available to search out on the internet. I set to work making a career out of art, doing a few public art metal commissions, hundreds of paintings and almost as many temporary festival window murals. Over a dozen driveway gates were created, each one of a kind. My first big commission was the late Canada Geese mural on the tank at Enbridge storage facility near Sherwood Park.



Canada Geese mural on the tank at Enbridge storage facility near Sherwood Park, 1995-2015

What makes you smile?

The commission I am working on now makes me smile. She is so full of life that she looks like she might dance away at any time. She is hand formed stainless steel, well, hands hold the leverage tools that shape her, and hands hold the grinders that cut her pieces and weld her. She is a dream project, challenging, but exactly what I envisioned I wanted to build. Another dream project would be an athletic horse and stunt rider pair in stainless steel, life sized.

What is your outlook on life?

My outlook on life is much gratitude for my blessings and gifts.
Inspiration is my addiction.

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Tania Garner-Tomas – con't from p.4



Candy Sweet Moments
48" x 36"
Acrylic on canvas



Portrait of Slicker
Stainless steel and bronze
16" tall



The Ploughman,
Stone Barn Park,
Leduc Alberta

How has your work evolved over time?

While my earlier stainless-steel sculpture has lots of movement and energy, over time my work in stainless steel has changed from bronze inserts to sheet metal giving it a larger area of light reflection with less inner negative shapes. I also discovered wider flat bar and have been having a lot of fun with the flowing shapes I can make with it.

Do you have a favourite work of art or artist?

Favourite artist, Chagall. I love the whimsy of his work, and its diversity. Costumes, paintings, sculpture, he tackled many areas of the arts and branded it all with his delightful approach. My other favourite artist is Tamaya Garner, my dad's very talented wife.

What role does the artist have in modern society?

I believe the role of an artist in modern society is either the gadfly, or the muse. Many artists choose to point out the need for change in the world.

What is the best and worst thing about being an artist?

Best thing about being an artist; being in the zone. Listening to music, especially painting is good for this. With sculpture, the best thing about it is how long it lasts and how it can withstand the outdoors and add to an environment created by nature. Metal always astounds me how it can be tucked into a shape with enough fiddling.

Worst thing about being an artist; art competitions. The maze of smoke-and-mirrors guesswork of trying to provide for a client I never meet, the theme which is requested often appearing to change within the competition from entry form to whatever ends up being produced and installed.

What advice would you give your younger self?

Advice to younger self: you are a child of God and very loved, be good to yourself. Do the art you feel the most. Insider tip, invest in Apple stock. Don't enter too many art competitions. Money doesn't solve everything, but it solves many things. Be kind to people, make lots of friends and acquaintances. People are great. Help them out whenever you can, including by caring and listening quietly. Have shows and invite your friends, family and client community. People always want beautiful and meaningful art, but they don't always know where to find it. Get it out there as best you can.

To see more of Tania's work, visit www.taniagarnerstudios.ca

Inspiration

"Creativity takes courage." - Henri Matisse

"Every artist was first an amateur." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Whether you succeed or not is irrelevant, there is no such thing. Making your unknown known is the important thing." - Georgia O'Keeffe

- Lisa Wilkinson

Exhibitions

I hope you have stayed warm during this last cold spell. Anyway, we have 14 of our members participating in the **Night of Artist Gallery Artwalk** from March 17 to 19. If you would like to attend the Gala, you can [purchase tickets online](#). They are \$25 each. Otherwise, come on by during regular mall hours to see what our members have been up to.

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, the next exhibition after NOA will be at the **Allied Arts Council** in Spruce Grove. The theme is "It's A Tactile World" and they are accepting wall-hung pieces to help fill the gallery, but the pieces must have a texture or dimensional component. Please see their [call for submissions and details](#) required (password is sculpt). There will be a \$10 submission fee paid directly to the Allied Arts Council, plus a 25% commission on sales. Please send your information directly to the Allied Arts Council at the link above and copy me, Carroll, at SAAexhibitions@gmail.com and Maria at sculptorsab@gmail.com so we can create our own promotional media. This show is April 11 - May 5, in conjunction with the International Sculptors Day, April 29. It would be nice to know how many people are interested in this show to ensure we will have enough of our members representing the Sculptors Association of Alberta, so please send me a quick email to let me know your intent by March 10.

After that show, we will be in St. Albert at **VASA Studios and Gallery** for June. There is no particular theme to this show as of yet, and will most likely just be along the lines of "sculpture" or the "Sculptors Association of Alberta" and will include wall pieces too. VASA has a variable scale to their commissions, if you are a member, it is 25%, if not, then it will be 40%. If you join now, you will be eligible for their members show in April and December. If you think you will be interested in this show, please let me know by April 15.

The only other confirmed show is with **ASA** in November/December, starting in Calgary. I will share more details once the other shows are out of the way.

- Carroll Charest, Interim Exhibition Director

Sherwood Park Highland Games opportunity

The Strathcona Highland Society (SHS) is moving forward with the planning of the 2023 Highland Gathering and there will be a designated area for artists. If you are interested in this opportunity, request the application form from Maria at sculptorsab@gmail.com and return it with payment. You can pay by e-transfer using the sherwoodparkhighlandgames@gmail.com e-mail address. A password is not required.

If you are a returning artist, you will have had your artwork adjudicated in 2022. If you are a new artist you will have to have your work adjudicated. Your contact to set this up is member Kay McCormack and she can be reached at artworkbykm@gmail.com



Member Lucy Cook with her cool ice sculpture at Ice on Whyte in January.

Snow sculptures by SAA members



Left to right, top to bottom

1. Indigenous dancer - Ritchie Velthuis, 4'X4'X8'
2. Banana split - Barb Marcinkoski, Christian Denis, Randall Fraser, 8'X8'X8'
3. Gnome among mushrooms - Lucy Cook, 8'X8'X8'
4. Semi-truck throne - Barb Marcinkoski, 4'X4'X8'
5. Puffer fish - Annique Comeau and Andrea, 8'X8'X8'
6. Giant submarine - Christian Denis 12'x8'x8'
7. Mermaid - Barb Marcinkoski, 4'X4'X8'
8. Sea sanctuary - Randall Fraser, 4'X4'X8'



Tania Garner-Tomas: Stainless steel

I am currently working on an exciting stainless-steel commission and would like to share:

Studio visit

Sunday, March 12, 2023, 2:00 - 3:30 pm

Maximum 10 participants - three spots remaining. My studio is two miles east of Sherwood Park. Note: please do not wear light shoes/sandals to the workshop. Heavy winter boots would be appropriate. Reserve by contacting shawnolander@gmail.com.

Workshop

Saturday, April 8, 2023

The workshop will either be an "Introduction to metal sculpture." Or, if those interested are already experienced with metal, (such as NAIT welding course or RDC metal sculpture) then the workshop will be "Metal shaping and fitting for sculpture." PPE for metal required. 2-4 students (Two spots now remaining.) The cost is \$240.

Contact shawnolander@gmail.com if interested in either opportunity.

More information about Tania's work may be found here:

www.taniagarnerstudios.ca



Laval Bergeron - Carnaval de St. Isidore, Que



The theme was "the magic of Harry Potter." The four sculptures were done by professionals, which were judged by the public. The other two are mine (which are judged by me) ha ha!! Great weather, awesome turn out! - Laval



Introduction to moss art with Jennifer Lang

Calling all nature lovers! Get hands-on experience with preserved moss and learn about its various applications. You will be guided through the creation of two mini frames (5x5 inches) filled with moss, tree bark, and driftwood. Please note that hot glue is used in this workshop and therefore requires adherence to all safety guidelines outlined by the instructor. Age: 12+

Leduc Civic Centre Atrium
Saturday, March 25, 1:00 - 2:00pm
Price: \$85
[Link to register](#)



Fire sculpture by Ritchie Velthuis



Created by SAA member Ritchie Velthuis with the assistance of his brother Bernie and niece, Sabrinna, this fire sculpture was built and ignited at the Silver Skate Festival on Feb. 12. All the materials were deadfall, willow and scrap wood from the family acreage north of Gibbons.

Photo taken by a friend, Tonya Gariepy, reminded her of a Phoenix rising with others thought it looked like a dancing figure.



Lost Wax Bronze summer course

The Red Deer Polytechnic (formerly college) the Bronze Casting and the Lost Wax Process course again this summer:

Experience the art of lost wax bronze casting using the Red Deer Polytechnic Foundry. This is a hands-on course where you take your ideas from sketch to wax to bronze in two weeks. You will experience all stages of the casting process up to and including pouring bronze. After the bronze is poured, you will finish and patina your work to take home. No previous casting experience is required.

Instructor: Robin Lambert
Course Dates: July 10, 2023 to July 21, 2023
Course Cost: \$1200.00 (Bronze by weight is additional)
Additional course info can be found [here](#)

From engineers to artists to scientists to crafters, Maker Faire is a venue for "makers" to show hobbies, experiments, and projects.

July 21 - 23, 2023 (K-Days)
Edmonton Expo Centre
Market hours: Noon - 10:00 pm.

The cost is free or \$200 if you are selling something. To submit an application click on this link: [Call for Makers 2023](#) The first round of approvals is April 15 and they will only be accepting applications until space is filled.

Newsletter submissions

We are always looking for submissions to the newsletter. If you are showing your work, teaching a workshop, working on something special, have an update you'd like to share, or any story ideas, please contact me. Also, please keep the photos coming, they are greatly appreciated.

Submit your items to shawnolander@gmail.com by the 25th of the month and contact me with any questions!
-Shawn Olander



McMullen Gallery - Call for submissions

Opened in 1986 and situated in the University of Alberta Hospital, McMullen Gallery has approximately 1700 visitors per exhibition, including patients, medical staff, hospital visitors and members of the general public.

McMullen Gallery aims to explore art's potential to positively affect patients, family, and staff as they navigate life's challenges - health or otherwise - and strive towards wellness. The Gallery seeks proposals from practicing artists, curators, and organizations for its 2024-2025 exhibition season. They are looking for exhibitions that engage their diverse community in ideas of hope, perceptions of wellness, stories of healing in an ailing world, or fostering environmental, emotional, and social sustainability.

Read the information provided by clicking [here](#). Submission deadline is April 14, 2023 11:59pm.

Custom stands by Wes

SAA member Wes Leonard is offering custom steel stands to SAA members for \$20 each for most sizes. Contact Wes at wleonard@hotmail.com or 780-984-6703.

Chicken wire workshop with Laura Ouimet

May 13, 2023 - 9-4 pm

At Laura's South Edmonton studio

Dragonfly, bee, gecko or hen, All supplies included

SAA members \$150, Non-members \$160

wemetwirework@gmail.com

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

Sculptors' Association of Alberta PO Box 11212 Stn. Main, Edmonton, AB T5J 3K5 P:780-668-6300
www.sculptors-alberta.com