

ENCORE!

The Oregon Daily Emerald's Entertainment Guide

EMU displays couple's artwork

By Julie Decker
Emerald Contributor

Eugene artists Paul and Kay Buckner are currently exhibiting their work in the EMU Gallery.

Paul Buckner's work is ceramic and wooden figural sculptures. "Sculpture is the real, tangible, touchable evidence of the artist without his social mask," Buckner said.

"Whatever artists may claim to imbue in their work, creating forms in space is for me a simple, sensual experience," he said.

Although he works with other materials, Buckner said he considers himself a wood-carver and prefers the intimacy of smaller works.

The forms which emerge from the chiseled wood are beautiful in their simplicity. Human figures float up from their bases, strong in their modulation, as contoured shapes blend and curve so that the viewer is surprised by the new beauty or areas of interest from every angle.

Elegant torsos, free-standing, or rising from their pedestals, express the artist's style, as arched shapes and abstracted parts become part of a final composition that makes the most of its three-dimensional format.

Buckner said he does not start his sculptures with a formulated plan. "If you know ahead of time what you're going to say, it is pointless to start. It almost always eliminates a good final piece," he said.

He does, however, begin with a careful process of drawings and models and will "chew at an idea for a long time" before beginning a work, he said. His works involve a gradual unfolding, developed from inspirations by the artist at every step. "The sculptures take on their own life in the final product," Buckner said.

Paul Buckner has been a professor of art at the University since 1962. He has degrees from the University of Washington and Claremont Graduate School, and studied at University College, London, as a Fulbright recipient.

Buckner's sculpture is represented in public and private collections throughout the Northwest and has been included in national and international exhibits. He also recently completed a commissioned sculpture for the entryway of the Oregon State Correctional Institution in Pendleton.

Kay Buckner is a Seattle native with a master's degree in painting. Her work currently being shown in the gallery is a series of colored conte

drawings of New York street people, titled "Urban Portraits."

This series is not characteristic of her work, which is usually oil paintings, but Buckner found conte to be a good, portable medium.

The body of the "Urban Portraits" series was done in 1987 while Buckner was living on the west side of New York City, an area with a lot of street vendors and homeless people.

"These arresting survivors inspired my respect with their dignity and fortitude," Buckner said.

Buckner said she started the work because she was always interested in the draped figure and the idea of carefully modeled heads, extremities and garments.

Buckner said people on the street were perfect subjects because they carry everything with them and wear many layers of clothing.

Buckner also found the homeless to be emotionally compelling subjects. "It takes so much imagination to survive that way," she said.

Buckner was drawn to the humanity in the faces of the people she depicted and realized they all had a routine of daily life.

"You can't help but begin to put yourself in that position," she said.

Buckner captures the drama of New York street life in her drawings. Candid portraits of subjects intense in their character are brought to life within each frame.

Buckner's strong sense of vision and skill in her craft create works so expressive and so immediate that they reveal the sensitivity of the artist, the subject, and the medium.

The use of color creates textures and shadows and enhances the dynamic compositions carried in the works. Buckner's work is not sentimental, but natural, depicting reality with raw sense and perceptions of the emotions and bitter existence of the people she portrays.

Kay Buckner's work has been shown in international, national and regional exhibitions, most recently in "Wood Works" at the Seattle Center. One-woman shows include exhibits at the Frye Museum in Seattle, Chetwynd Stapylton Gallery in Portland and Jadie Galleries in New York.

The works of Paul and Kay Buckner combine to form a unique exhibit of exceptional experience and craftsmanship. The exhibit will be on display in the EMU Gallery through Feb. 23.



Courtesy photo

"Breach" is one of Paul Buckner's small wood sculptures on display in the EMU Gallery through Feb. 23.

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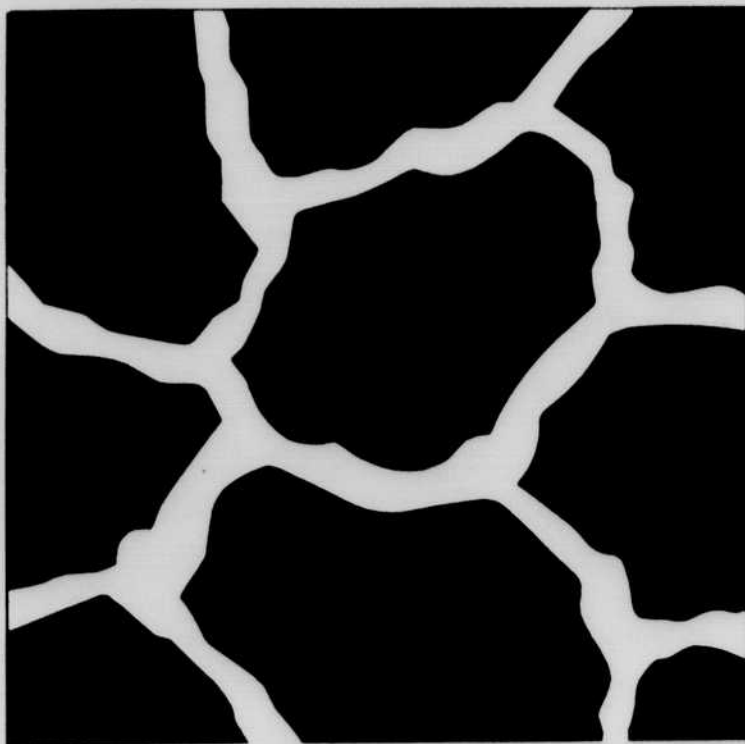


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