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Visual arts

BY SUZI STEFFEN

Warthog #5: The Draw Hog



Bones of Steel

Jud Turner shows strength at Maude Kerns

Delicately welded organic forms and quirky assortments of found objects mix with occasional political commentary in the terrific if scattered exhibit "Steeling Space: The Sculpture of Jud Turner," at the Maude Kerns Art Center.

Turner, a 1995 UO graduate whose work should be familiar to local audiences, displays a diverse array of forms in this powerful show. That power doesn't stem from the occasional bluntly political or cloyingly spiritual piece. Instead, the repetition and formal beauty of created skeletons and welded animals combine with oddly gestural organic forms to leave the impression of a wildly productive artist mastering several media.

Turner knows how to work his material, weaving steel strands for a lovely *Heron* or casting aluminum bones that shine in *Spire #6*, a piece that smartly contrasts the rough-surfaced found objects with the compelling sheen of the femur-like metal to seem both vaguely medical and vaguely menacing even within its beauty. *Surveillance-Bot*, like other small figural assemblages in the show, compels a second glance at its alternate-world *Toy Story* components and all-seeing lenses.

Though the centerpieces of the show might be the various large *Warthogs*, some made of found objects, one drawn (a tender graphite rendering of a wistful animal, milder than her sculptural counterparts) and one collaged from the Patriot Act and

various war images, Turner's light, skillful recreations of fossil or bone carry the most weight. From *Prehistoric Fish #6* to *Trilobite Abstraction #3*, the mix of contemporary material and ancient life delights the eye and fascinates the pattern-loving brain. The most striking of this group is an Ouroboros figure, *The Beginning is the End is the Beginning*, in

which a created snake skeleton forms a circle, its tail in its mouth. The image — each tiny vertebrae exquisitely detailed, the almost mischievous skull taking its tail in its mouth, shining in a perfect circle on the wall — lingers long after one leaves the show.

Yet another category of works is more rounded, fuller, like plant or animal flesh. And some of those organic forms take on a distinctly erotic sheen without specifically referring to or replicating any body parts. *Ficus'* long tongue and *MV's* rounded chrome mounding between steel lips suggest more than they state. The Seussian *J+M* elicits appreciation for Turner's whimsical depiction of gentle Tim Burtonesque forms gazing at each other with curiosity and affection.

Though the show contains more variety than is necessary or wise for focusing on Turner's best work, this explosion of mostly metallic creativity deserves attention and applause. Maude Kerns is open 10 am to 5:30 pm Monday to Friday and noon to 4 pm Saturday; "Steeling Space" is up through May 11. **EW**



She bathed you, she fed you,
she held you; sometimes all
night long. She cheered for
you, she cried for you, she
always made it all better....All
she really did was love you.
It's pay back time. Mom
deserves something
special. Celebrate *Her*.

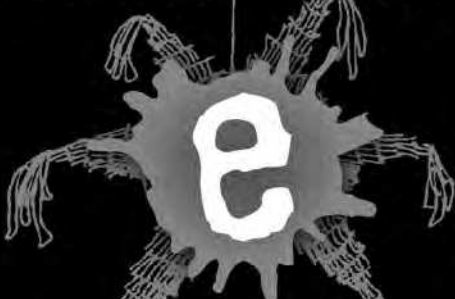


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BOOK NOTES So many things going on this week; so little space! Yes, we even ran out of room on the What's Happening page, so here's how to get your literary on: First up is the Young Writers Association's **Glitterary Word Festival** Saturday, April 28, at the Downtown Library. There's a circus in the morning, a writing workshop with Oregon's poet laureate at noon and a hands-on mix of crafts in the early afternoon. Glitterary ends with young award-winners reading their work. And for those of us who like our childhood stories told with cynical hilarity, **David Sedaris** comes to the UO's Cultural Forum Sunday, April 29 in a spendy ticket event that's billed as "an intimate evening." Um, does Hugh know about us, David? Finally, although they told us about it *really late*, we'd still like to mention that LCC's cool Reading Together program brings author **Dan O'Brien** Wednesday, May 2 to Tsunami Books to read from his *Buffalo for the Broken Heart*. Check the Calendar for more details.