

Two-part harmony in steel and clay



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS

THESE FOUR SCULPTURES are the result of the collaborative efforts of clay sculptor Chayo Wilson of Portland, Ore., and steel sculptor Bill

Leigh of Vancouver, Wash. The two PNWS members discussed their work at the group's October meeting at Leigh's home and studio.

Wilson, Leigh collaborate on cross-media sculpture

BY PAUL HAIST

Eighteen members and guests of Pacific Northwest Sculptors gathered Oct. 20 at the Vancouver, Wash., home of PNWS member Bill Leigh and his partner Terri Elioff for an evening of sharing, learning and schmoozing.

It was the monthly meeting for PNWS members and their friends, usually hosted at the home or studio of a PNWS member. This evening, participants could visit both Bill and Terri's home and Bill's adjacent 1,200-square-foot sculpture studio.

The event was co-hosted by sculptor and fellow PNWS member Chayo Wilson, who recently embarked on a collaborative sculpture project with Bill. After the initial get-acquainted period with lots of delicious potluck and beverages, Chayo and Bill talked about their new venture.

Chayo works in ceramics, Bill in metal and wood, opposite ends of



BILL LEIGH

the spectrum in sculpture. They met each other only recently, despite their respective memberships in PNWS. It was by chance that they both attended another PNWS meeting this summer at the Portland studio of the late Rick Gregg, where they first met, and again about a month later at the annual PNWS barbecue at Leland Waltuck's Standard Steel Companies.

"He asked me if I could make a face for him," Chayo told the meeting-goers. She said she could and she did. She made three mask-like faces for Bill to select from.

He selected all three and went on to create three mixed metal and clay



CHAYO WILSON

sculptures. They already sold one of those. Their goal is to continue to work together until they have enough pieces to pursue a gallery show.

The joint venture was something of a departure for both artists.

Chayo explained that she has been a hand-builder "making bread-and-butter pieces" (see her work online at www.ChayoCeramics.com). Bill—who allows that sculpture is "a new thing" for him, he began about six or seven years ago—said he was just now beginning "to get away from assembled found stuff and into fine art" (see his work online at www.BillLeigh.com).

See COLLABORATION, page 4

PAUL HAIST PHOTOS

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Good meeting; treasurer, board members needed; Newport group show considered

I see from our Facebook page that the last meeting went well. Thanks to Bill Leigh and his partner Terri

Elioff for hosting and to Bill and Chayo Wilson for their presentation. I wasn't able to make it so I hope to hear more about it. It's been suggested that we record such things if we can find someone to do it. Then it could be posted online so all could see it.

Speaking of volunteers, in March Diana Rogero will step down as treasurer since she has taken over the membership position which is much more complicated. The treasurer tracks our funds which includes writing checks and recording income. It's all done with a spreadsheet and not much different than maintaining a household account, though there is far less activity on the PNWS books. All records are coded according to the type of expense. A report is sent to the bookkeeper quarterly.

The treasurer also becomes a board member if not chosen from the board. I've done it. It's easy.

It is time to form a nominating committee for board elections in February. Most of us have been on the board for a long time. If we don't do some change up we're gonna get stale like old hardtack. We've room for 12 and right now we have seven which is not enough. It is not difficult being on the board and well worth it on a personal and career level.

Our show chair Dave Gonzo is working with the Newport Visual Arts Center and the Oregon Coast Council for the Arts in regard to a show for us

in September and October of next year. It looks promising. The Visual Arts Center is located in the Nye Beach area of Newport. Nye Beach is jammed with tourists in the summer. Several other galleries are there, a couple bookstores, one-of-a-kind shops and the Sylvia Beach Hotel which is a literary Mecca of sorts. Then there's the beach and whales and all that. My Nye Beach informant tells me an invitation to do a show there is very desirable. It should be good. Get in touch with Dave if you are interested.

Carole and Dave held an event last Saturday where they gave away Rick Greggs tools and some artwork to members as per Rick's request. There were some very interesting things. I wanted something I would see or use daily and even though the tools of the trade for Rick and I are wildly different, I came away with a few wonderful things and again touched base with some old friends.

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LOOKING FOR LIVING/WORK SPACE TO RENT

Longtime PNWS member returning to Oregon. Am looking for a decent living place, possibly with work space; modest is fine. Anywhere in western Oregon from Cottage Grove north to Portland. (My sculpting is small-scale figure work in plastilene clay.) Will rent first, then look to buy somewhere in Oregon. Lease starting December 1 would work great. Please contact Dave Cole at davecole100@hotmail.com.

An offer that could be hard to refuse

BY DAN KLENNERT

I have been practicing my craft for 44 years. Throughout my art life, I have been rejected from galleries and museums for what reason is unknown, but I figure it has something to do with the fact that I didn't spend time in a college to become an artist.

I took all the rejection and used it like pouring gas on a fire. I purchased a piece of property in the path of Mount Rainier where I can capture people from all over the world to share my art with. I now have a four-acre sculpture garden, a gallery, a metal-working studio and a driftwood studio.

I spent some time in Santa Fe, N.M., and figured out that its Canyon Road with artist studios and galleries is what has made Santa Fe what it is today. My sculpture garden is located on what is known here as the Mountain Highway (SR 706); I have a dream of this road turning into a Canyon Road with artist

studios and galleries. I have tried with no success to convince other artists to locate their studios along this road.

My guest books are full of positive comments from people all over the world, and my wallet is full because the whole world is funneled down to this road to visit Mount Rainier National Park.

My sculpture garden has been featured in many news articles and a Disney documentary called "America's Heart and Soul," a television Evening Magazine and Backroads Magazine. Last month, KOMO TV news in Seattle featured the sculpture garden.

So, if there is any artist out there that would love to make money and live in paradise, come on up and join me on the road to paradise. If you want to take a tour through my garden, check out Recycled Spirits of Iron on YouTube.

Also learn more about PNWS member Klennert online at www.danielklennert.com.



DANIEL KLENNERT with his current nearly complete project from salvaged and found objects including countless horseshoes.

Upcoming Meetings

November Board Meeting

Friday, Nov. 4, 10 a.m.

Dave Gonzo Gonzalez residence
3354 SE 19th (red barn out back)
Portland, Ore., 503-270-9394

All members are encouraged to attend board meetings. This is where we figure out what we want to do. If

you have an idea, come and share!

Members may attend in person or via Skype. Contact PNWS President George Heath (gheath6006@msn.com) if you wish to Skype.

November Member's Meeting

Friday, Nov. 11, 7 p.m.

Alisa Looney's studio

Demo: Enameling
Potluck: bring a dish/beverage
Hosted by Alisa
5234 NE Multnomah St.
Portland, Ore.
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www.alooney.com

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THE PNWS MONTHLY MEETINGS are informal, potluck affairs for members and guests. At the center of the photo above are PNWS member Alisa Looney, left, with hat, another metal sculptor who will host the November meeting at her Portland studio, and PNWS Treasurer Diana Rogero, right, who emceed the October meeting.

COLLABORATION: 'I am blown away by all the creativity I see'

Continued from page 1

The consensus at the gathering seemed to be that Bill and Chayo had clearly moved on to fine art, if they were not already there.

Guests asked questions about technique and the creative mechanics of collaboration, the latter focusing on inspiration or the creative spark. Whose vision gets built?

Bill spelled out a straight-forward process. "She makes the face and then I conceptualize the rest," he said.

After the presentation, Bill led everyone across the yard in the dark, dry night for a tour of his ship-shape studio. A wall with a connecting door divides the spacious building, about one-third by two-thirds: the larger end for woodwork, the smaller for metal work, the idea being not to set the wood on fire with metal-burning tools.

Most of the tour was spent at the metal-working end of the studio. The guests included other metal sculptors who had plenty of questions about Bill's extensive collection of mostly salvaged metal-working tools, some of which he demonstrated. Outside, in a

Leigh in studio tour

Sculptor Bill Leigh will open his Vancouver, Wash., studio to the public Nov. 12-13 for the fourth annual Clark County Open Studios Tour. Studios will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. A preview exhibit and artists' reception is set for Nov. 4, 5-9 p.m. in Vancouver's Esther Short Building. Fifty artists are taking part in the tour. Details are online at www.ccopenstudios.org.

roofed but otherwise open-air space next to the studio is his collection of raw material—found or salvaged metal stacked almost to the ceiling.

The tour was an opportunity for members and guests to see what is possible with a luxury of space and some savvy about how to organize it.

When everyone returned to the house, it was time for a little more nosh and more in-depth getting to know one another. Members and non-members shared stories about their careers and why they were there that evening.

PNWS Treasurer Diana Rogero invited each person to tell their story.



PAUL HAIST PHOTOS

TERRI ELIOFF, left, partner of Bill Leigh, and PNWS Secretary Isabelle Johnston-Haist chat with sculptor David Kid, a non-member they welcomed to the Oct. 20 event at Elioff's and Leigh's home.

One non-member, Keith Wood, explained that in his career as a photographer he has traveled extensively around the world and always took time to visit museums, where he saw a lot of sculpture. That led him to begin experimenting with metal welding while also taking classes in clay work at the Multnomah Art Center in Portland.

"Sculpture turns me on," he said, but added that he is "a little stuck right now and that's why I'm here."

PNWS member and ceramic sculptor Sandy Visse commented on the monthly member meetings. "I am blown away by all the creativity I see in these group meetings," she said.

The next monthly meeting is set for 7 p.m. on Nov. 11 at member Alisa Looney's studio. Looney, who attended the October meeting, is a metal sculptor known for her public work and who just closed a show of enameled metal work at Portland's Guardino Gallery. At the upcoming meeting, she will demonstrate how she works. See the details about that meeting in the meetings box on page 3 in this newsletter. Learn more about Looney online at <http://alisaloon.com>.