

June 12, 2014

At Chaffee, art 'pulses' through sculptors' hands

By PATRICIA MINICHELLO
STAFF WRITER

Waking from a sleep state is Pat Musick's most productive time of day.

The artist — one of two sculptors with an exhibit opening June 20 at the Chaffee Art Center's gallery in downtown Rutland — said she pays close attention to images that appear to her in that early-morning haze.

"I'm coming from a dreamlike state and the ideas appear to me then," she said.

It's Musick's most effective unconscious way of conceiving of a piece to create.

She also explores a very conscious approach to creating sculpture, allowing ideas to surface as she goes through her day.

"Pieces emerge out of the material that surrounds me," she said.

The Manchester Center resident, who takes pleasure in exploring environmental themes, said her home — nestled amid natural materials such as stone and driftwood — inspires her to create.

After a disaster, Musick has a theory that the world replenishes itself to a sometimes more beautiful state. Natural occurrences such as hurricanes, earthquakes and forest fires can wreak havoc on the environment. But she said they can also create a more beautiful landscape than the one that previously existed.

"My major concern for 25 years is emphasizing the rebirthing process," she said.

Musick is no stranger to showing her work at the Chaffee. She won first place in a group show hosted by the organization about six years ago and one of her pieces is in its permanent collection.

Her new exhibit, "Pulsation," will feature four of her works made of natural materials — stone, steel,

sunglass and bronze — that all speak to the fragility of the Earth.

"Pulsation" will also feature 10 works from Eric David Laxman — a sculptor who resides in New York, but still maintains a strong Vermont connection.

Laxman was one of the original founders of The Carving Studio & Sculpture Center in West Rutland.

"I've been going there and teaching for the last 20 years," he said.

"I've been going there and working and teaching for the last 20 years ... I had my very first exhibit at the Chaffee. I sold my first piece of sculpture to a couple from Burlington who came to the show."

Eric David Laxman

"I had my very first exhibit at the Chaffee. I sold my first piece of sculpture to a couple from Burlington who came to the show."

He now lives in Rockland County, 30 minutes north of New York City, but said for years he would visit Vermont every summer for a week. Now with a 14-year-old daughter and a pretty active routine, he doesn't get the chance to come as often.

Despite less traveling, the Green Mountains are still very close to his heart and that's why this exhibit — complete with a human heart replica, made from found objects — means so much to Laxman.

"I sort of figured out a long time ago that to make a living as an artist ... the pieces have to be very personal to me," he said.

One of Laxman's sculptures is a torso with a stone heart and another piece called "Resilient Heart" is a combination of railroad spikes he found near the studio in West Rutland.

In the center of that is a heart; the railroad spikes are welded in the shape of a heart.

Summing up his work in two words, Laxman said, "self portraits."

"The themes relate to me personally — my own spiritual evolution as a human being on the planet."

Sculptors

Continued from Page B1

Meg Barros, director of the Chaffee Art Center, said she is very excited about these two sculptors.

"When I mention that they're coming, people are very excited and impressed that we have

them in a show together."

She is also thrilled to have sculptures return to Main Street Park and other places around Rutland this summer.

"There's a growing interest in art. Art has an impact," she said.

Last year was the first year that the Chaffee displayed outdoor sculptures. Despite some

controversial feedback, Barros said, she loved that a debate on art was taking place.

"The fact that the Chaffee and sculpture were the point of articles (in the paper) for eight or nine days in a row ... and there was actually discourse happening about art, for me it was positive," Barros said.



Eric David Laxman's "Protected and Invisible"



Eric David Laxman's "Saint Sebastian"

■ Chaffee Downtown
Chaffee Downtown presents sculpture of Pat Musick and Eric David Laxman June 20-July 18 at 75 Merchants Row in Rutland. Hours are: noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; call 802-775-0356, or go online to www.chaffeeartcenter.org. A public opening reception will be held Friday, June 20, 5 to 7 p.m.



Pat Musick's "Epilogue 12"



Eric David Laxman's "Resilient Heart"



Eric David Laxman's "Fetish Figure"