Roland Kulla
Painted Steel

Celebrate the ordinary, the passed over; the everyday unnoticed structures of Chicago. Bridges simply painted, abstracted from context, with hard-edge realism. The beauty and majesty of utility that can only be seen when we stop and look.

Kemper Room Art Gallery
Paul V. Galvin Library

through January 21, 2006

artist reception:
Thursday, November 3, 4:30 - 7:30 pm

Bilhenry Walker
Jagged Vectors

Lines drawn in space. Sculptural calligraphy. Abrupt changes in direction and force. A visual interplay of two and three dimensions. A new series of smaller sculpture inspired from previous work at a monumental scale.

Paul V. Galvin Library

through December 24, 2006

artist reception:
Thursday, November 3, 4:30 - 7:30 pm

Bradford Hansen-Smith
Folded Circles

The folding, reforming, and joining of simple paper circles. Complex organic geometric constructions that reflect on the simple process of folding a circle as a step towards the discovery of Wholeness.

Paul V. Galvin Library

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Roland Kulla
Painted Steel

Kemper Room Art Gallery
Paul V. Galvin Library

November 3 - January 21, 2006

Artist Reception:
Thursday, November 3, 4:30 - 7:30 pm

Exhibition Hours:
Monday - Thursday: 12 noon - 10 pm
Friday: 12 noon - 5 pm
Saturday: 8:30 am - 5 pm
Sunday: 2 - 10 pm

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Curator:
Robert J. Krawczyk, Assistant Professor,
College of Architecture

Exhibition Coordinator:
Mindy Sherman, College of Science and Letters

Sponsored by:
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Roland Kulla
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Kemper Room Art Gallery and the Paul V. Galvin Library
Illinois Institute of Technology
35 West 33rd Street, Chicago, IL 60616

Opening reception and gallery talk:
Thursday, November 3, 4:30 - 7:30 pm

Exhibition hours:
Monday - Thursday: 12 noon - 10 pm, Friday: 12 noon - 5 pm, Saturday: 8:30 am - 5 pm, Sunday: 2 - 10 pm

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312-567-5293

Decoy V by Roland Kulla, Mirage by Bilhenry Walker, and Hole to Oppa by Bradford Hansen-Smith
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Roland Kulla
Painted Steel
Celebrate the ordinary, the passed over; the everyday unnoticed structures of Chicago. Bridges simply painted; with hard-edge realism, abstracted from context. The beauty and majesty of utility that can only be seen when we are given the opportunity to stop and look.

Since 2000, Roland Kulla has focused on the engineering ingenuity that created Chicago's many bridges and the structural elements that highlight the monumentality of the forms and the creativity necessary for their existence. He works from photos taken on-site and frequently develops smaller-scaled black and white pencil renditions before transferring the subject to canvas. Although people are not the subjects of these paintings, they are integral to it. The structures stand as proxies for the human experience. He creates places and moods that invite the viewer to enter into the work and form a relationship to it.

Roland writes:

My creative path to an art career has not been a direct one. I spent ten years in the seminary before making a lateral career move into social work. Social work was my occupation for more than 30 years as a caseworker, administrator, researcher, teacher and consultant. Artistic pursuits were a constant theme during this period. I was a choral singer for a decade in symphony, opera and musical comedy, also designing sets and costumes. My interest in architecture resulted in award-winning restorations of an 1890 Victorian house and my 1907 apartment in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. As for visual arts, sketching and drawing led to watercolors in college which continued as my principal medium until I took an eight-session course in oil painting in 1989. Since 1996 acrylics have been my primary painting medium. In 2002 the shift to painting full-time was complete.

I'm fascinated by the built environment. I reflect on what the structures tell about their builders, as well as their interaction with nature. I reflect on what the structures tell about their builders as well as their interaction with nature.

Nuts and bolts - two of the most common and mundane elements. A vernacular reference to the basics. Something we take for granted. And yet, these most ordinary items, coupled with human ingenuity and skill can be transformed into amazing structures. The nut and bolt of the bridges are the basic elements examined in detail. From there we build. We take the basics and explore what can be done with them. The variations can be simple or elaborate, ranging from limited themes of a few notes to grand, fugal extravaganzas.

The subjects appear “real”, but this is a deliberate illusion. The painted forms have been abstracted from much of their context. What is “seen” in the paintings is an idealized version of reality. This approach permits a focus on the structural design. The hard-edged forms of the bridge-subject remain the same, but the interplay of light and color give each painting a very different mood or feeling.

The work also reflects a deeper reality. Much of human experience involves the use of mundane things that we take for granted. These pieces present one example of the amazing forms that grow from the simplest elements. It also reminds us of the creativity and expertise that lie behind the use of these elements. Without the contribution of each person, the shape and form of society would not exist.

Roland has shown his work nationally the past last ten years, in over ninety exhibits with pieces in both private and public collections. He has a Master of Arts from The School of Social Service Administration, The University of Chicago, and a Bachelor of Arts from Bellarmine College, Louisville. He resides here in Chicago, in the Hyde Park area, with a studio and gallery in the Fine Arts Building.

Roland's studio can be reached at: 773-324-2549 or kulla@ameritech.net
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Bilhenry Walker  
Jagged Vectors

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ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Lines drawn in space. Sculptural calligraphy. Abrupt changes in direction and force. A visual interplay of two and three dimensions. A new series of smaller metal sculpture inspired from previous work at a monumental scale.

This series of work is constructed from fabricated aluminum lengths which are attached end to end, forming powerful shapes in space. The shapes are full of optimism and hope and are a celebration of idealism. They speak of the order of mathematics, solid geometry, physics, and employ modern engineering techniques in his construction.

Referring to the lines drawn in space, the third dimensional reality of the work always undermines the static character of the second dimension. This is especially true as the viewer walks around the piece. What appears to be one sort of shape or figure turns out to be something else from another vantage point, bringing the element of surprise and visual intrigue to each sculpture.

Bilhenry writes:

My outdoor sculptures are made of either structural aluminum or fabricated aluminum. The various elements are mitered, welded, and bolted end to end, so as to create a continuous line of material in space. The size of the material relative to its length seems to make a large difference in what it appears to be. The thinner the strut, the more the sculpture takes on the appearance of just an armature onto which something would normally be hung. In my sculptures, what the armature describes is inter-penetrating planes and volumes which create an entire visual entity, much as a drawing would describe in two-dimensions. On the other hand, when the material is thicker, the material becomes the sculpture itself and is more self-referential without necessarily describing other shapes.

I began making the type of sculptures shown in this exhibit as monumental sculptures fifteen to twenty feet tall in 1990; however it was not until 2000 that I was able to perfect the technology for making them pedestal size. The techniques for building the materials for the two types of sculpture are completely different. I have developed several methods for making the strut-material smaller. The first relied on the use of a brake-press to fold the material to my specifications. This resulted in not quite square material that not only gave me imperfect miter-connections but was incredibly time-consuming. I next designed the profile of my new material at 2" x 2" and 3" x 3" and had it extruded by an aluminum manufacturer. This had made it possible to make as many sculptures as I in a timely fashion and with the level of perfection which my work demands.

The shapes that are created are more closely attuned to a calligraphic presence in space. They are three-dimensional in their physicality but maintain the two-dimensional character of drawing. Each piece can be read as a whole describing an abstract "something" or each can be read as an armature of a sculpture moving from one end of the sculpture to the other as if it were being down in space.

The actual sculpting begins with cutting of half inch pine stock to make maquettes, then the piece is reproduced in one inch material before cutting anything out of the aluminum stock. The final building involves putting the finish on the material; the elements are cut and deburred; the end pieces are cut to size and welded to the ends; then the mated end-pieces are bolted together with small stainless steel bolts and acorn nuts to give the sculpture a more "industrial look". Finally, the piece is either bolted to a granite base or is presented free-standing on stainless steel disks; simulating of the sculptures would look as monumental pieces.

Bilhenry has been exhibiting his sculpture since 1973 nationally, including Chicago's Navy Pier Walk; has completed a number of large scale public commissions, and is in numerous corporate and private collections. He holds a degree in art history from Wheaton College and advanced degree from the Fuller Theological Seminary. His studio and gallery is located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Bilhenry can be contacted at: 414-332-2509, bilhenry@execpc.com, or www.bilhenrygallery.com/bilhenry
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Bradford Hansen-Smith  
Folded Circles

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The folding, reforming, and joining of simple paper circles. Complex organic geometric constructions that reflect on the simple process of folding a circle as a step towards the discovery of Wholeness.

Wholomovement is a uniquely new and comprehensive approach to understanding patterns fundamental to geometry and mathematics, by folding circles. The sphere and circle are the only forms we know to be inherently whole, and at the same time function as parts. Nothing is arbitrary or ambiguous about folding circles. The order and organization of proportional relationships are structural, generative, and have origin in the first fold. The circle reveals a spatial language of in-formation requiring physical interaction and forming a dialogue with the circle; feeling the movements of the creased lines, observing similarities and differences, reflecting on what the circle wants to do and being able to follow, and to know how and when to initiate. The circle is a comprehensive, multifunctional tool that engages the body, stimulates the mind, and touches the creative spirit. The pieces in this exhibit highlight the advanced concepts that can be explored by combining and joining such a simple shape.

Bradford writes:

The sphere and circle are the only forms we know to be inherently whole, and at the same time function as parts. Spherical division/multiplication is basic to patterns of formation and organization in our spatial universe. Compressed to a flat plane nothing of the sphere is lost, it is simply compressed to a circle. Folding circles decompresses spherical information in both 2 and 3-dimensional forms. Every part of the circle is in-formational to the nature of the circle whole. The nature of patterns and spatial arrangements of transformation are basic to understanding interrelated functions, generalized theories, and formulas that have been developed in mathematics. The forms and systems folded into the circle can be abstracted into workable mathematical functions, developed to individual artistic expressions, and give demonstration to what we observe in the natural sciences.

Folding and joining circles reveals traditional and many non-traditional polyhedra, systems of organizations, and forms of structural beauty observed throughout our universe. Proportionally folding, reforming and joining the circle in multiples reveals a process principled to circle/sphere unity, which isn’t possible with any other shape or form. Everything is generated within its own context, and its transformation demonstrates total interconnectedness. The simplicity of this folding process makes geometry and mathematical understanding accessible to students and teachers in a direct experiential way.

The word geometry can be defined comprehensively as Wholomovement. Geometry means “earth measure”. The earth is spherical; the sphere is the only form that is Whole, while measure is about movement. Geometry is about Wholomovement; the self-referencing movement of the Whole.

Bradford, who began as a traditional sculptor exhibiting in Santa Fe, has since relocated to Chicago for the past seven years. After the completion of his third book on the art of circle folding, Bradford has been concentrating on exhibiting constructed pieces from his publications and giving educational workshops nationally and internationally. Bradford has studied art at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Peter Cooper Union, New York, and University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Bradford's studio can be reached at: 773-794-9764, bradhs@interaccess.com, or www.wholomovement.com

Publications:

The Geometry of Wholomovement: folding the circle for information; comprehensive process of folding and joining circles.
The Hands-on Marvelous Ball Book: story and how-to activities about folding circles for 5 to 10 years and older.
Folding Circle Teteahedra: truth in the geometry of Wholomovement; an in depth exploration of the nine creased folds to make a tetrahedron; geometry, math, art, and early education.

On the cover: Helix to Spiral, Bradford Hansen-Smith