

IRVINE

CONTEMPORARY

Sebastian Martorana

Baltimore MD

EDUCATION

- 2008 MFA Rinehart School of Sculpture, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD
- 2003 BFA, Illustration, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, Magna Cum Laude

EXHIBITIONS

- 2008 *Forthcoming, Artscape Festiva*, Outdoor Sculpture Show, Baltimore, Maryland,
Sculpture and Illustration, Glenelg Country School. As part of the Annual *Speaker Series*. Glenelg, Maryland
Mount Royal Tavern Erotic Art Show. Baltimore, Maryland
- 2007 *Flat Works*. Station North Arts Cafe. Baltimore, Maryland
Rinehart School of Sculpture Fall Show. Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, Maryland
Mount Royal Tavern Salon Show. Baltimore, Maryland
- 2006 *Rinehart School of Sculpture Fall Show*, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, Maryland
- 2005 *Feel Me*. Bar Rouge at Hotel Rouge. Washington, D.C
- 2004 *Recent Works*. Libertytown Arts Center. Fredericksburg, Virginia
- 2003 *Recent Works*, Six-twenty-three, Fredericksburg, Virginia
Society of Illustrators Student Exhibition, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

COMMISSIONS

- 2007 *University Protector*, Stone sculpture for retiring head architect, commissioned by Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, Limestone, sandstone
- 2006 *Virginia Lane Clay*, Marble bust of the deceased for the widower, Joseph Clay, Marble
- 2005 *Hands of Wang*, For Mildred Wang, widow of Dr, Ciao Jen Wang, Marble, Steel, Granite
- 2004 *Emergence*, for orthopedic surgeon Subir Joss, M.D., Marble
Captain Hendrickson for Mrs. Hendrickson, window painting

SELECTED STONework, 2002-2008

Iwo Jima Memorial, Quantico, Virginia, Carving & Restoration
National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, Virginia, Carving
Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge entrance sign, Virginia and Maryland sides, Carving
Max C. Campbell Building, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Carving

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National Holocaust Museum, Washington, D.C. Carving

SELECTED STONWORK, 2002-2008

Duke University, Perkins Library, Durham, North Carolina, Carving

Kennedy Center for the Arts, Washington, D.C. Carving

St. Regis Hotel, Washington, D.C. Carving

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Carving and Restoration

National Constitution Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Carving

Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, Carving and Restoration

Louisiana State Civil War Monument, Vicksburg, Mississippi, Restoration

Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. Carving and Restoration

AWARDS AND HONORS

2007 *The William M. Phillips Scholarship*, Maryland Institute College of Art,
Baltimore, Maryland

Outstanding Figurative Sculpture, student award

2006 *Nominee*, the Jack Kent Cooke Fellowship, Syracuse University
Graduate Student Grant Application

2003 *Bruce E. Arnold Memorial Award*, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New
York,

Outstanding Illustration, student award

1999-
2003 *College of Performing Arts Scholarship*, Syracuse University, Syracuse,
New York

Founders Scholar, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

2002 *National Society of Collegiate Scholars*, Syracuse University Chapter
Study Abroad Grant, Department of International Programs Abroad
at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

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Artist Statement

The two series included in my graduate thesis, Un-commissioned Memorials and Ode to Ice Cream, present two very different approaches to the same concept, memorialization.

My time as an industry carver served to instill a fascination with how we deal with memory and our physical representation of it. In the first series of works, Un-commissioned Memorials, I created memorials, in my own vision, to the loss and sacrifice of others. While in graduate school I was given the opportunity to pursue memorial works of my own design, un-beholden to any benefactor or committee, which was usually the case in my previous work as a carver. Through these works I seek to address acknowledgement and responsibility, as well as my own feelings of guilt regarding my comfortable place in society.

The more recent series, Ode to Ice Cream, serves as a counterpoint to the Un-commissioned Memorials. Instead of addressing traditional themes common in national memorials, I wish to commemorate the everyday. I asked myself, "Why not memorialize the moment of joy and anticipation of removing the seal from a new container of ice cream and taking that first scoop?"

These pieces are also about context and my exploration of what visually makes a thing a thing. Why do we believe ice cream is ice cream? Not because it looks like ice cream. It has no natural form and is put into an artificial container. We believe it is ice cream because it is in a container that says "ice cream" and it has a spoon stuck in it. This phenomenon is akin to the vast success of Häagen-Dazs's foreign branding. The use of a made-up, foreign-sounding name creates a false sense of the exotic which has served to enhance sales. In fact, Häagen-Dazs hails from the Bronx, its name being as artificial as the form of its product. This does not make me love Häagen-Dazs any less. I want to perform a similar feat, to trick the viewer into mistaking my stone for ice cream, if only for a moment.

Though Ode to Ice Cream alludes to greater issues of commercialization and commodification, elitism and exclusivity, it is admittedly a light hearted endeavor. It has allowed me to seek a balance between my sense of responsibility and my sense of fun. Somewhere between these two is my artistic voice, for which I am still searching. For the time being I see the Un-commissioned Memorials as the Ten O'clock News and Ode to Ice Cream as The Daily Show with Jon Stewart on Comedy Central. One cannot make up for the other, but it can try to put it into perspective.