

David Price

SCULPTOR

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Artist Statement

Growing up in the Low Country of South Carolina, I spent my childhood on the ebb and flow of the salt marsh and in the pine forest of the coastal plain. It was there that I formed an appreciation for nature as an inspiration for art and began painting, sculpting and teaching myself art techniques. As a young boy I was inspired by the heroic sculptures of Donald De Lue and Michelangelo at the New York World's Fair as well as many visits to the sculpture collection at Brookgreen Gardens near my childhood home. This convergence of interest and inspiration led to a degree in botany (from Clemson University) and a 33 year career in the public gardening field. Since 1994, I have been sculpting human and animal forms in stone or bronze. My work is allegorical in nature; starting with the idea of a human characteristic or story and culminating in use of the animal form to represent a thought or idea. The study of the subject is as enjoyable to me as the sculpting process. Through my art I seek to represent the highest human qualities and characteristics; to portray the vitality and dignity of the subject but also to evoke a feeling or an emotion from the viewer. I find solace in nature and believe in the healing power of being out in nature. Studying nature for my art puts me in the present and makes me mindful of the beauty and organization of life in harmony. I reflect on Emerson and nature, in that he felt the relationship between man and nature is sacred, comforting, and vital for survival.

Sculpture is about the masses as well as the voids (what is there and what is not there); emotion is represented in the gesture and movement of the design. My mediums of choice are stone and bronze because of their permanence and versatility; stone because of its demand to conform and bronze for the freedom of execution. Both materials are earth materials that lend warmth and life to the art. Artists that have influenced me include Donald De Lue, Henry Moore, Auguste Rodin as well as the Arts and Craft movement with its tenets of simple design, inspiration from nature, use of natural materials, and studied mastery of material and technique.

I begin the creative process with interpreting the form of my subject in geometric shapes in concept sketches. At this point, mass and balance are worked out. With studies of a subject through drawing and photography I note the flow and movement of the body. As I flesh out my sketches I am conscious of the voids and silhouette created in the piece from different angles. With sculpture, the viewer's vantage point creates different interpretations. My work is meant to be viewed in the round from different angles, with equal emphasis on all sides. I model the sculpture in clay and often return to nature to work out problems of movement such as how the bones press to the skin and how the muscles flex. In the case of birds (a favorite subject), feathers give mass, movement, emotion, and expression to the subject.

I sculpt in clay, and then through a series of molds and castings, the finished bronze is made. Castings are done using the lost wax method at an art foundry. My bronze sculptures are created in limited editions, with the edition number written next to my signature. I inspect each step of the casting process to ensure quality and fidelity to the original model. My works are represented in public and private collections with sales through commissions, galleries and juried shows.

Besides my interest in art and gardening I volunteer in various environmental conservation organizations. I am President of the Board of the Green Horizon Land Trust. The Trust is dedicated to saving environmental lands and has protected over 5600 acres in Central Florida over the last 26 years.

VEVIE

Genevieve Lykes Dimmitt

Artist Statement

“Storms make trees take deeper roots.” - Dolly Parton

My Florida roots are deep in clay of the Red Hills, the rich muck of the Everglades and the sugar sand of the Gulf Coast. I come from an old cracker family of pioneers in agriculture, cattle and shipping. One of five children, I grew up outside, roaming the shores of Ballast Point in Tampa under the ancient live oaks and riding with the cowboys on a cattle ranch on the headwaters of the Everglades.

We were taught respect for all living things and the earth, water and sky that supported life. Later, my husband and I shared this deep love of place with our family. As a mother of four living in Dunedin on the shore of St. Joseph's Sound, canoes and windsurfers allowed the exploration of this rich estuary with its mangrove islands, as well as local rivers and lakes, with minimum disturbance of the wildlife. I delighted in the whimsical and spontaneous influences of the ever-changing colors and shapes of the surrounding sky, water and abundant plants and animals. My early work captured these experiences in Batik textiles and paintings.

As I witnessed Florida grow from a wilderness frontier to the third most populous state in the country, the loss of wild spaces and wildlife was painful. Art became the space where I expressed my deep feelings of sorrow and suffering as well as hope and faith in the goodness of humankind.

I've participated in numerous exhibitions advocating for the environment and its protection and conservation. A 1970s exhibition with the Fiber Artist League called *Fragile Florida* was mounted in the Capital Gallery in Tallahassee. A second show at the Capitol was entitled *Vanishing Florida* and traveled to the Museum of Natural History in Gainesville and Florida Southern College in Lakeland. My art work as well as my advocacy gained momentum over the years as I partnered with organizations such as The Nature Conservancy of Florida. I was a featured artist at the Telluride Mountain Film Festival presenting a body of work created after experiencing and volunteering in the cleanup efforts of the BP oil spill in our beloved Gulf of Mexico. My work was also chosen for the Everglades Conservation Atlas. Additional Florida themed works have raised funds for organizations including The Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

Seven years ago our family's hearts were shattered from the death by suicide of our beloved son, Lawrence Hundley Dimmitt, IV. Following this tragedy, my art became my uncensored voice. With dark despair, I incorporated glass, black mica and mementos from Lawrence's youth in a series entitled *I WISH THAT I HAD TOLD YOU THEN, I AM TELLING YOU NOW*. I began writing and painting and layering my grief, sorrow, pain, guilt and anger, as well as my love, admiration and sweet remembrances. The deep love and acts of human kindness from family and friends and my gratitude sustained me as I poured out my wails and whispers and cried into the canvases. Gradually, the works took the form of icons* or windows and became my personal *WINDOWS TO HEAVEN*.

These *windows* reflect and suggest landscapes, symbols from nature, and the wild things that Lawrence so deeply loved. For me, nature provides views of heaven. I believe that we are all connected and that sacredness exists in all of us and in all things. Heaven surrounds us in nature. For me, scenes of trees, water or clouds are a view of heaven. The natural world, that we often take for granted and even abuse, is our own wondrous heaven on earth and it is fast disappearing. I treasure the sense of awe in each glimpse of a found moon shell, feather, leaf or new born baby of any species. In each is Mother Nature's magnificence and in each is my hope and solace.

*Icons are hallowed Byzantine art that made their way to Russia following its conversion to orthodox Christianity in AD 988. At that time, Icons were literal windows to heaven for a population that could neither read nor write. Icons were spoken of as having been "written" because the word *pisat* means both to paint and to write.