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A Woman's Touch, II – page 216

In the second of this two-part series, columnist Richard West profiles women helping sculpt today's perception of the medium. This month, it's Chris Mikulasek and Myra C. Weisgold.



Sculpture Celebration Weekend – page 228

Photos from The National Sculpture Society's annual Sculpture Celebration Weekend at the Brookgreen Gardens in South Carolina.

FEATURED SCULPTORS

- Béla Bácsi
- Gonzalez Beltran
- Michael Bergt
- Chris Mikulasek
- Elliot Offner,
- Laura Orchard
- Jim Rennert
- John Sisko,
- Myra C. Weisgold

Made Men

Sculptors who revisit the classic male form in stone and bronze

By John O'Hern

Daedalus was a successful inventor. Among other accomplishments, he designed the Labyrinth to contain the feared Minotaur. When Ariadne, daughter of King Minos of Crete, wanted to help her lover Theseus slay the dreaded beast, Daedalus gave her a flaxen thread that Theseus tied to the front door of the Labyrinth to find his way out after his heroic feat. Minos, understandably upset, confined Daedalus and his son Icarus in the Labyrinth. Daedalus, of course knew the way out and later fashioned wings of feathers and wax for him and his son to flee Crete and the ire of Minos. He didn't count on the hubris of his son who flew too close to the sun, melting his wings and plunging to his death in the sea below.

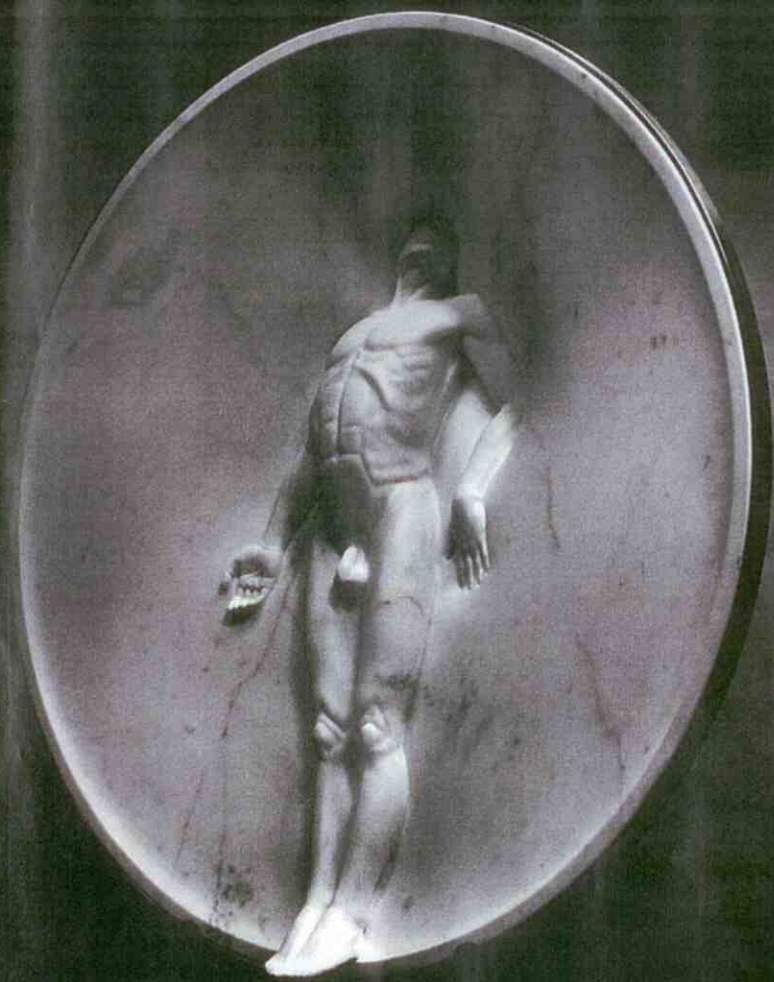
Most often, the dramatic death of Icarus is the subject of artistic interpretation. Elliot Offner, however, a supremely inventive sculptor of birds and other animals, has chosen to depict Daedalus. From any angle, the awesome power of the wings seems to overwhelm the inventor. Ill-equipped to control the wings on land, Daedalus becomes wrapped in one while the other catches the wind and pulls him back. The struggle to control the wings and the drive to flee the island would exhaust any other man. Offner captures this energy and the beauty of Daedalus's manufactured wings in a sculpture of moving intensity.

The figure in Béla Bácsi's *Driver of the Wheel* falls back into a circle of soft fabric belying the fact that the entire work is Italian marble. The solid corporeality of the figure and the flexibility of the fabric are entirely believable and invite us to suspend our disbelief, to borrow a phrase from the theater. He fled Hungary with his family in 1956, leaving behind four uncles and cousins who were stone carvers in the family monument

company. Isaac Walton, who took fishing very seriously, wrote "As no man is born an artist, so no man is born an angler." Bácsi, who is self-taught, may well have been born an artist. For that we should be thankful.

More falling men appear in Laura

Orchard's *Falling Frieze Relief*. Based on her exquisite drawings of blindfolded male figures tumbling through space, the sculptures add dimension to her concept that men are blind to one another, incapable of reaching out and helping, ignorant and alone in their deadly



Béla Bácsi, *Driver of the Wheel*, marble, 44 x 12" COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



John Sisko, *The Four Elements: Fire and Earth*, 2003, Forton or Bronze, 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 32 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1"
COURTESY JOHN PENCE GALLERY, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

