

Mark Bava

Bava was born in 1954 and raised in a small agricultural town in the Central Valley of California among Italian peach farmers. Families that immigrated there as did his father and relatives. He was however raised with an artistic background. His mother was an impressionist painter and from the beginning he was interested in art and could cite the work and theories of various Impressionists at a very young age. He painted his first painting, an impressionistic still life, when he was nine years old.



His mother later remarried another Italian painter and moved to Capri in the late 60's where Bava visited as a teenager and further traveled seeing the art, antiquities and ancient ruins at Pompeii, Rome and Athens.

In the mid-70s he attended art school at CSU Stanislaus but whose instructors were largely from New York and at the time boasted a contemporary curriculum and art department to rival the SF Art Institute.

Through the school's art programs, some winter semesters were spent in New York under sculptor Ralf Parton which he cites as a major pivot point; "My knowledge of art at that time was pretty much only through the Impressionists that I was raised with, however contemporary art history along with studying in New York opened my eyes to post-war abstract expressionism as well as all the 50's and 60's movements in pop, op, minimalism, installation art, art happenings and all that. It was still a vibrant time for arts in New York, not only the whole Soho and uptown gallery scene, but also in theater and music. The whole CBGBs and Studio 54 thing was going on, Saturday Night Live had just debuted, the off-Broadway Theater Row playhouses were just starting up. I was glad to catch some of that.

Despite my mother being a painter and my interest in painting as a child, while there I somehow turned to sculpture rather than painting. I started working in plaster emphasizing surface textures and body language doing Giacometti/Neri-ish pieces but with my subject matter being statements on society. I did plaster studies of down and out street characters that I was seeing hanging out down on the Lower East Side and in the Bowery... however I was also always a history buff and loved Greek mythology and Biblical stories growing up...stories full of some of the same misguided characters...[laughs], and I also loved the ruins and the fragmented sculpture and bits that I had seen in Italy and Greece when I had visited my family on Capri, like those ashen and lava covered figures at Pompeii...

So I get this combination... I take my subject matter from both modern and ancient societies and myths but my work is somewhat conceptual in that it is statements on human character rather than form... I am largely trying to create some kind of static "modern relics" or icons. Mr. Bava also has considerable foundry and mold making experience working at Monterey Sculpture Foundries for 8 years.

He is noted for his surface textures complete with chips, hacks, tool marks and casting flaws. He cites his influences as Giacometti, Lynn Chadwick, Manuel Neri and Kenneth Armitage as a few examples. His work is sold in galleries in San Francisco, Carmel, Atlanta and New York. In addition, he is a musician as a hobbyist and is also well known for his productions of large multi media events in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Galleries:

Gruen Gallery-Chicago, Ill
Christopher Hill Gallery, St Helena, Ca.
Gallery 21, Carmel, Ca.
May Titus Gallery, Monterey Ca.
Del Jou Art Group, Atlanta, Ga
Bradford-Smock Gallery, San Francisco
Braico Gallery, Carmel, Ca.
Casa d'Arte, Shreveport, Louisiana
Sculpture House and Gardens, Carmel, Ca.
Objects and Images, Bronxville, NY
Phantom Galleries, Los Angeles

Selected Solo Shows:

Braico Gallery, Myths and Modern Legends 1997
Sculpture House and Gardens, Recent Works 1998
Bradford/Smock Gallery, San Francisco, Ca. 1999
Alvarado Gallery/Monterey Conference Center, Meditations 2000
Pacific Grove Art Center, Urban Myths and Heros 1999
Anon Salon Gallery, San Francisco, Ca. 2002
Mary Titus Gallery, Monterey , Ca 2009
Mark Bava New Works, Gallery 21, Carmel, Ca 2010

Selected Group Shows:

Beux Arts, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Tx 2002

Pacific Grove Art Center, Pacific Grove, Ca

Pacific Rim Group, Monterey, Ca. 1996

Autumn Lights, Los Angeles, Ca. 2007

Anon Salon, San Francisco, Ca. 2004

Seaside City Hall, Seaside, Ca. 2001

Braico/Lewis Gallery, Carmel, Ca. 2004

Asto Museum of Art/Hanseu University, Long Beach, Ca 2007

Asto Gallery, Korea, 2007 Sunset Cultural Center, Carmel, Ca 2009

Associations:

LARABA (Los Angeles River Arts Business Association) - Board Member

Downtown Artist Project, Los Angeles - Member

Pacific Grove Art Center, Pacific Grove, Ca. - Board Member

Siggraph, Los Angeles, Ca. - Executive Council