THE 4TH INTERNATIONAL SHOEBOX SCULPTURE EXHIBITION
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8 November - 15 December 1991

This exhibition, which was organized by the University of Hawaii Art Gallery, presents 70 sculptures by artists from around the world. As the title of the exhibition implies, each artist was required to create a sculpture that would fit inside a shoebox. Therefore, the small scale of the sculptures is perhaps the work's only common denominator, since each individual's approach is different.

In contemporary society, the sculpture medium is often associated with large scale, public works. In fact, an increase in scale has been a general tendency in contemporary art in all mediums. However, relating to large scale art work is an entirely different kind of experience than dealing with something done in small scale. While the viewer is required to stand at a distance to see a large scale sculpture in its entirety, the "shoebox sculptures" necessitate a much closer, more intimate reading.

Perhaps because of this intimate quality, many of the artists in the exhibition have made very personal statements which reflect their view of contemporary society. Ian White considers his work titled Fragment Rack to be a self-portrait. According to the artist, his works are very personal, "silent stories about memories and social frameworks and constrictions; about my love for written communication..."
John B. Wilson bases his work on interpersonal relationships, such as *Dreams: Marc's Reincarnation*, which is about the recurring dreams of the artist's friend. Although the sculpture is not a self-portrait, it reflects Wilson's social and political concerns in details like the handcuff that attaches the figure's wrist to his briefcase.

*A Toaster Dedicated as a Shrine to Quan Yin and the Blessed Virgin Mary* expresses Kit Cameron's personal fascination with miraculous visions and a concern with the banality of a housewife's existence. Her transformation of a common household object—a toaster—into a sculpture is called *assemblage*, the three-dimensional counterpart to the collage medium. Cameron's approach to sculpture is radically different from the more traditional methods of carving from stone, or modeling a cast that would then be translated into bronze.

More conventional approaches to the sculpture medium can be found in *John Buck's Forest City Forest* and Ernest Trova's *FM/12" Figure in Sloped Box*. Buck's piece has been carved from wood, and expresses his concern that the "time may come when we may no longer carve the city out of the wilderness, but rather carve the wilderness out of the city." Trova's choice of stainless steel seems to reflect his view of modern, mechanized society.

John Davis' choice of nontraditional materials (eucalyptus twigs, paper & cloth) in *Evolution of a Fish* reveals his personal environmental concerns: "Fish seem to embody many of our attitudes to nature, as victims (oil spills), as exploited (drift-net fishing)...This sculpture is about contradictions. While the three images appear strong, they are fragile; free but contained..."

Likewise, the materials used by James Drake hint at his art work's meaning. Drake's use of actual bullets and steel in the sculpture titled *Blue Bullets* convey his work's message about the violence of life on the U.S./Mexican border, where the artist has lived and worked for 23 years.
Mark Abildgaard and Scott Katano make statements about their own spirituality in their sculptures titled *Spirit House* and *My Jesus Cup*. Abildgaard's *Spirit House* shows "another side of our existence which had a connection to unchanging values. The figure with a halo represents the attainment of higher knowledge..." Katano says of his work titled *My Jesus Cup*, "[the sculpture] represents the personal choices I am faced with every day and the conscious decisions I make concerning them."

Environmentalist Helen Escobedo is the only artist who chose to use an actual shoebox in her sculpture titled *Nobody's Responsibility, It Floats*. The dumping of garbage in our oceans is a real concern for Escobedo, who lives in Mexico City, where she is the director of the city's Museum of Modern Art.

**RELATED PROGRAMS**

**Saturday, November 23: 2 - 4 p.m.**

A free workshop for children ages 8 - 12 will be led by Oklahoma City artist Cynthia Coulter. Participants will create sculptures from a shoebox-full of objects. Advanced registration is required, call 325-3272.

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**The Fred Jones Jr. Art Center**
The University of Oklahoma Museum of Art
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