

# FEATURED ARTIST

BY THEA HALL

## JUD TURNER RESURRECTS THE DEAD

When Jud Turner looks upon a scrap metal yard he sees more than the rusted-out refuse of industrial machine technology. He sees a graveyard of creatures and souls just waiting to be given new life. Furthermore, he senses a connection between even the most unsightly of manmade objects and the beauty of nature that surrounds us.

Turner lugs the scrap pieces home where he observes them. He begins to form a picture in his mind of the life they hold. Wielding an acetylene torch, he sets out to give the metal objects added form and congruity. He labors intensively, and deliberately, shirking off the tedium the best he can until the piece is exactly how he sees it in his mind's eye.

His sculptures could be called organic. He is fond of the repetition of shapes that occur naturally whether it is a spinal column, a segmented creature, or branches of a tree. Probably the premier examples of this are found in his series called the Fossil Gallery, where Turner has constructed entire skeletal frames of fictitious, fish-looking creatures with legs.



*untitled welded steel sculptures*

Furthering his exploration of the organic, the sculptor is noted for incorporating textural dichotomies of hard meeting soft, and warm meeting cold. Turner expresses the sensuality of these ideas most clearly in his Main Gallery series, where many of the pieces resemble some aspect of the female – male anatomy.

The sculptor's work, however, is incredibly diverse both physically and conceptually, from perfectly-anatomical sculptures of humans and animals made entirely of pieces of small metal rods, to the series of abstracts in the Main Gallery series. Recently, the WSU Tri-Cities, Digital Technology and Culture Department purchased one of Turner's anatomical renderings, called Heron.

Turner's sense of character comes through in every piece. Even the most grisly-looking sculptures possess a lightheartedness and certain intellect that is a direct transfer from the artist himself. One, in particular, on display at Richland's Tri-Art Gallery, is a pre-historic-looking bird with a sharp menacing beak, beady eyes, and saw blades for wings. And just to keep the bird from entering your nightmares, Turner has given the creature two pliny forks for legs, making it seem more endearing than threatening.



*new welded steel sculpture by Jud Turner*

Whether he is inspired by a dream, a hallucination, an animal, or a walk on the beach, all of his objects capture a Taoist principle that 'all is one, and one is all'; that life is, in essence, metaphorical. And through his work he has come to understand that everything, whether living or non-living, embodies life.

His latest work is on display and being sold at Tri-Art Gallery, an outdoor gallery located along the river off of Van Geisen in Richland. Jud Turner, himself, is from Eugene, OR. He went to school and studied painting, but afterward found sculpture to be his true calling. He works as hard as he can, whenever he can. But during the day he puts in his time at Lane Community College as a vocational coordinator for adults with developmental disabilities. He invites everyone to take a walk through his many galleries on-line: [www.judturner.com](http://www.judturner.com)



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