

## Sandra Webberking - Bio



Growing up in the quiet Philadelphia suburbs of Glen Mills, PA afforded me plenty of time with nature. I spent my childhood hiking in woods with my best friend, Charna, my Labrador Retriever. The woods were a treasure trove where I spent my time hunting for objects that would whisper to me the names of the entities they wished to become. A nearby stream was full of clay, which I would dig and then form a plethora of creatures as my imagination and the material dictated.

As a Woman of 32, I haven't changed much. I still value the process of finding objects, listening to their story and then transcribing their reincarnation wishes into the form or creature they then become. Nature still is a profound source of inspiration to my work and me. I strive to emulate and build upon the spirals and fluid lines found within nature almost as an addendum or postscript to the process of life itself. In particular, I am especially inspired by the wonderful rhythm and lines of trees and their branches - they are fluid and purposeful with the space they take up. Trees seem to have an innate understanding of line and cause your eye to naturally follow their form. I am striving to attain that movement, that relationship, with the viewer and my work.

It was at Moore College of Art and Design, from which I graduated in 1997 with a B.F.A. in Sculpture, that I discovered metal which has remained my primary fascination ever since. After having tried my hand at many different mediums, I found a kinship with the process of bending, heating, hammering and welding that working with metal entails. I love the loud dirtiness of my work and also that I am breaking through perceived gender norms and working in an environment, mastering skills, using tools, that are predominated by and traditionally associated with men. For me, in drawing with the metal, it is of absolute import that the line looks simple, never labored. I live and work now from my house in Springfield, PA and being an avid gardener and appreciative of the function, place and necessity of all nature's flora and fauna, it seems natural that I gravitated toward creating whimsical sculptures for the garden I spend so much of my free time in.

I am a firm believer in preserving our natural resources, and it is for this reason that I recycle wherever possible. I bring this philosophy into my work by utilizing other peoples "junk". We live in such a disposable age and as a reaction against that, I am trying to show that the act of reusing is not only environmentally friendly, but is also fun, beautiful and enriching. For really, if we take our abandoned goods and bury them in a landfill, what are we creating other than a waste afforded only to the greedy? I think I love the process of finding the metal almost as much as making the sculpture. I revert back to my childhood and spend hours wading through Amish farm equipment yards as if on an archaeological dig, wistfully in search of the ancient carcass of something I will reincarnate. A snail, a bird, a bug, what are you?

