

David Kirkpatrick Word Press

SculptCAD Rapid Artist – Brad Ford Smith

This post is the fourth in an ongoing series highlighting the artists behind the [SculptCAD Rapid Artists Project](#). (Hit this link for [all posts related to the project](#).)

Brad Ford Smith is a Dallas-based artist and a third generation Texan. His abstract organic forms focus on how the eye and mind translate information, and how that visual experience can be altered by the passing of time. Brad's works on paper and wall sculptures have been exhibited throughout Dallas and Chicago, where he resided shortly after earning his BFA in painting and printmaking from the Kansas City Art Institute.

In addition to making art, Brad is a professional member of the American Institute of Conservation. He specializes in the restoration of wooden artifacts.

How did you get involved with the RAPID Artists project?

Heather Gorham (ed. note: also a RAPID Artists project participant) introduced me to the folks at [SculptCAD](#) about eight years ago. I instantly saw how this 3D modeling program could open up a new world of fabrication options. It has been on my list of must do ever since.

Is this your first experience with 3D/digital sculpting technology and tools?

Other than that first introduction eight years ago, I have kept tabs on the subject, but this is the first time for me to use/learn the program.

How have these technologies changed the way you approach your process?

The challenge is learning how to use the tools, and then using those tools to create in an artistic manner. With each new tool there is the temptation to get carried away with all the new things that that tool offers. For example, the spin tool will take any wiggly profile and spin it on an axis to create a solid form. I played with this tool for an hour or so, creating some really wonderful shapes, but in the end, those shapes were only about using the tool and not about artistic expression. Managing the WOW factor has been tricky.

Are these digital tools a net positive, a net negative or entirely neutral in your artistic process?

I really love learning new processes. They always offer new ways to see and manipulate the world. The only negative is that this sculpture represents the FIRST work of art that I have made using this process, therefore it represents a large learning curve. Hopefully I will have more opportunities to use this

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technology in the future.

What are your thoughts on the SculptCAD Rapid Artists Project?

When Nancy (Hairston, SculptCAD founder) asked me to be part of this project, and I saw the list of artists involved, I was very excited and honored. Even though the artists in the SCRA project come from a wide range of artistic directions and disciplines, we are all connected by using/learning this technology. That has given us a common thread to build our conversations upon, which has lead to some great insight on the creative process.

Looking beyond the project, what do you have coming up in the near future art-wise? Do you have any shows or projects planned?

As soon as I get my 3D computer sculpture sent off to the printer, I am off to Italy to spend some quality time looking at sculptures made the old fashion way. After that I will be creating a book of my drawings using the iPhoto book program, and then looking for a venue to install a few wall sculptures in.

How can people interested in your work get in touch with you?

You can see more of my artwork as well as links to my blog and flicker site at www.BradFordSmith.us

Do you have any final thoughts on the SculptCAD Rapid Artists Project?

After seeing the first round of sculptures come back from the printers last week, I am really excited about how all the artwork will look when shown together. I am also very interested in the reactions of the people who will see this group exhibit at the RAPID Prototype and 3D Imaging Conference this May.