



Photograph by Michael Wilson

Artist Statement

Sense of place is a major concern in my work. Visiting a Chicago Aunt, who took me as a child to the Art Institute I recognized the drawings of Giacometti in which the bounding lines of figures and objects continue into so-called empty space. I realized that I saw in the hidden landscapes of rural Kentucky a history that pervaded every crack and seam – that I must develop a way to make visible what is beyond the bounding line.

Flannery O’Conner had an understanding of Place, though she recommended exile from that place to grasp it further.

I have been inspired and moved by many artists that pursued printmaking and drawing coupled with writing such as William Blake and Bruno Schulz. I have pursued a sense of narrative as part of the actual marks of physical work. For example, the practice of etched writing as a signifier of the physical world to bring that world into existence.



There is a public sculpture of mine on Main Street in Louisville, Kentucky – a fourteen-foot alternative version of the explorer and settler, Daniel Boone. I was inspired by an abandoned cement sculpture of him in Clark County, Kentucky surrounded by hurricane fencing and the ground full of trash.



There is a large, sculpted head in Cincinnati, Ohio inspired by a character in a song of mine.

There are many tools in a long-honed toolbox needed to invoke a world that expands the bounding lines. William Blake's invocation that ... "Imagination is not a State – It is the very Human Existence itself..." suggests the physical to me.

Growing up on a large working farm, I learned a great deal from the workers who were my neighbors, Black and Appalachian people, and immigrants from France – family members who had escaped from Nazi Europe and were still there in my childhood – all skilled, very dedicated workers to their purpose – welders, planters, strippers in the tobacco allotments. When I went to study at the Rhode Island School of Design, I found that their concentration and concern to perpetuate the livestock and the crops still inspired me and more than most of my teachers.

I have approached the work of making art in a similar way – simply that if you do not feed the livestock every day, if you do not tend to the crops every day, they die.