

— YELLOW SPRINGS —

New kid in town brings art that is energetic and powerful

GREENET
Greene County Network of Community Correspondents

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Way back, when a new kid moved to town, if it was a guy, before the moving van was unloaded we other guys checked him out every which way — his marble collection (yeh, it was that long ago), the wheel diameter of his bike, and whether he liked baseball. Notice, please, that our criteria centered on how we could integrate him into the neighborhood activities, not whether he would qualify for them.

If it was a girl, the criteria defaulted to our sisters, who alone were qualified to deal with the unfathomable murkiness of feminine sentience. It would be years before we guys would begin to grasp the gratitude we should have felt for this service or to realize the depth of our failure to learn to do it ourselves.

Fast forward, say, 60 years. The town is the village of Yellow Springs. It's 2008, and the new kid is in his sixties chronologically, astonishingly youthful in spirit. He didn't arrive alone; Brian Maughan is in a vibrant dyad with wife/partner/mover Dr. Marie Hertzler Maughan. I have met the newcomers, and I am theirs.

Maughan's marbles are bigger and better than mine, and he has lots more of them. Most of them are sculptures, though in counterpoint and harmony with these are many paintings and drawings. Maughan introduced himself to me as a sculptor, so there shall the focus be.

From David, with verve
A resident of North Walnut Street in Yellow Springs since 2006, Maughan still spends much time working in New York City, where he moved from San Francisco in 1968. He was born in Calgary, Alberta, Canada and grew up in the Alberta oil fields until the age of ten. His parents then moved to western Montana. At about the age of 20, Maughan hitchhiked around Europe. In that year, in Florence, Italy, he saw Michelangelo's David.

"David bowled me over," he says. "At that moment my life's direction was set. I was about sculpture."

Back in the U.S., he attended the San Francisco Art Institute, where he earned a BFA in 1966 and an MFA in 1968. He has since worked in various media, but sculpture has dominated his efforts. In the last 20 years he has worked principally in ceramic clay. The majority of this output has been cast in bronze.

In 1969 Maughan became Artist-in-Residence at the Studio School in New York City. Since then he has spent his time practicing and teaching sculpture in Virginia and New York. During the 1990s Maughan spent sever-



Maughan often works into the morning hours in his Yellow Springs studio or in his studio in New York City.

al years living in Charlottesville, VA. There he met his future wife "and muse," he says, Dr. Marie Hertzler, a teacher of French literature. In 2006 he accepted a position teaching sculpture at Sinclair Community College in Dayton. The couple moved to Yellow Springs permanently at that time.

Speak, and sing, and shout
Maughan's sculptures are intensely alive, brightly colorful — even those that are monochrome. The more abstract pieces virtually explode with joy and fanciful interpretations of life — human and animal. The sculptures of persons from life or two-dimensional portraits explode with expressions of life that refuses to be contained in material forms. All of Maughan's pieces speak, or sing, or shout.

"As a figurative sculptor, I try to capture the essential character and energy of the subject," Maughan says. "I work in earthenware clay for its tactile qualities, its responsiveness to touch, and its ability to capture emotional expression."

His words understate the energy that radiates from his work. During his manipulation, they somehow become livelier than life.

"For me, the goal of figurative sculpture is to imbue the abstract elements, lines, shapes, volumes . . . with emotional qualities of strength, joy, timidity, bravado . . . that not only look like the subject but demonstrate its character."

The process — lost sleep, lost wax

Maughan's work habits are as intense as the work itself. He usually works into the wee hours, using techniques he learned from the classical masters and from contemporary colleagues. After arduous but loving labor of conceptualizing, interpreting, defining, and refining, he finalizes the concept with the lost-wax process.

"My technique for creating my sculptures begins with making sketches, either on paper or in clay, of my general impressions of the finished work. I then make more defined models in clay, of which one is chosen



Maughan often presents nearly lifelike representations of animals but with cheerful, exciting exaggerations and colors.



Colorful life-size masks are among Maughan's expressions of emotion mixed with fantasy, joy, and strength.

to be the model for the final sculpture. The full-scale modeling is again done in clay, over a welded steel armature. I then have flexible rubber molds made, in which the sculpture is cast in wax; I then address any necessary changes.

"The complete wax sculpture is invested, most often in pieces, in a high-temperature standing mold. The wax is melted out and the bronze is poured in to recreate the pieces in metal. The pieces are assembled and welded together, then worked back into the final sculpture, which is then colored with an acid patina and waxed or lacquered for preservation."

Maughan's sculptures range in size from miniature, including masks and animal figures, to 7-1/2-foot high memorial sculptures like that of Green Bay quarterback Bart Starr and the similar figure of Henry Aaron at the Milwaukee Ball park in

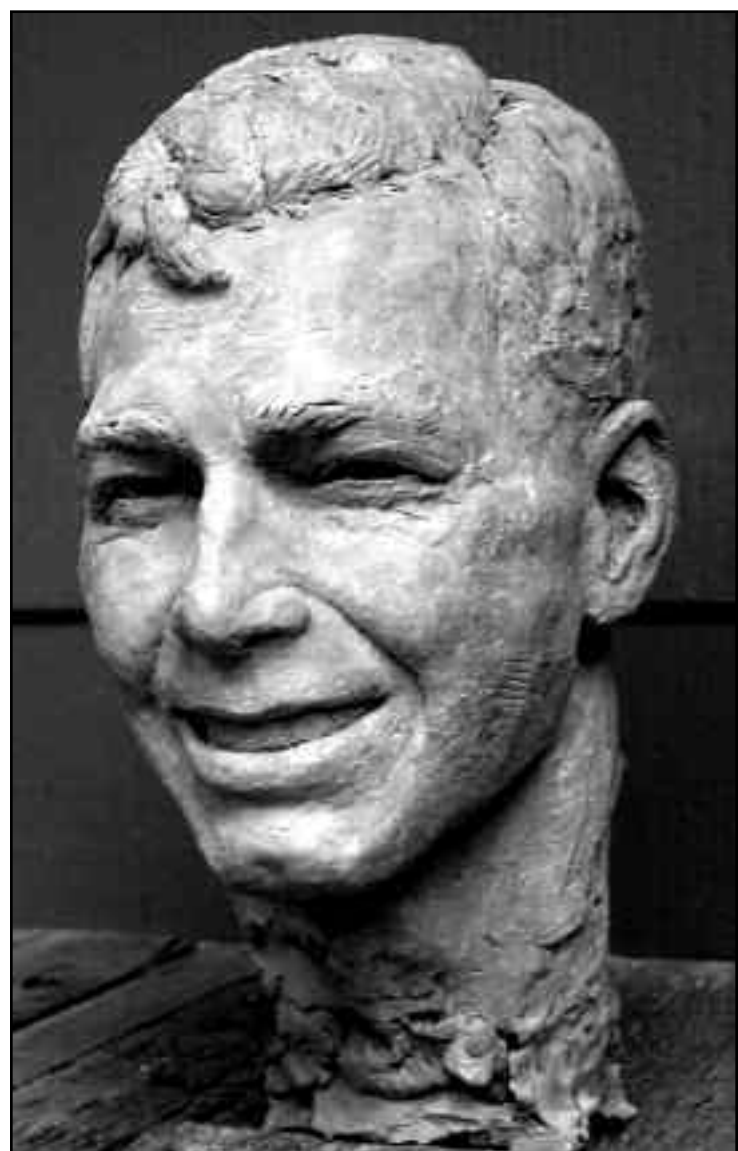
Wisconsin. He also has done miniature and life-size figures of horses and other animals, all displaying the energy and tension that characterizes his work.

Exhibitions available in this area

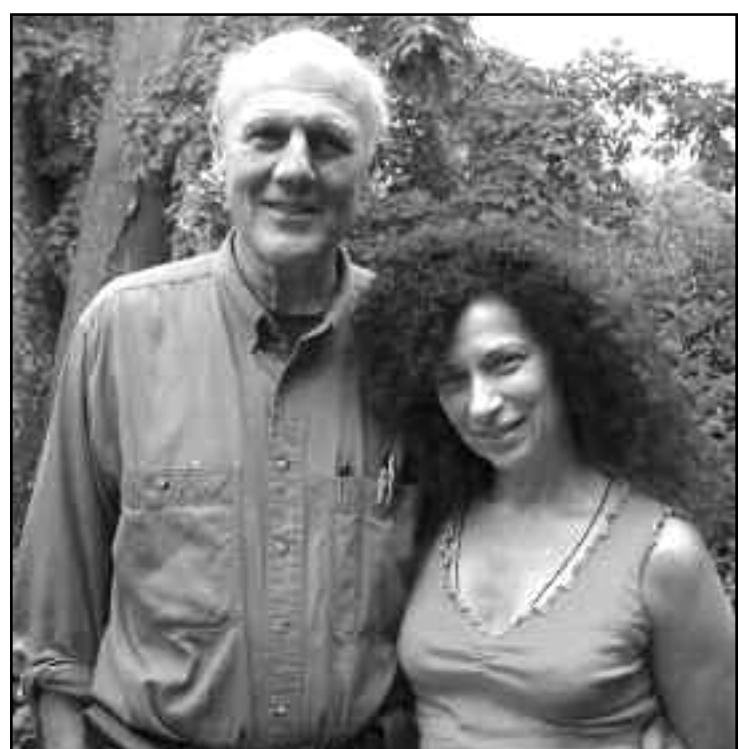
Many exhibitions and permanent installations are on display around the U.S., including the Yellow Springs area. Locally, exhibitions include The Chamber Pot Gallery, Yellow Springs, June 2008-June 2009; and "Peaceful Earth Works," Gallery St. John, Dayton, March 29-Apr. 27, 2008. Maughan's work can be viewed also in the Village Artisans Gallery in Yellow Springs and on his web site at www.maughanart.com.

Ron Siemer writes about Yellow Springs each Thursday.

Deadline to submit information to Ron is 4 p.m. Monday prior to publication.



An almost-life-size head of Bart Starr, legendary quarterback for the Green Bay Packers, is one of several sculptures of the athlete created by Maughan. Another is a 7-1/2-foot figure of Starr that stands in the Resch Center in Green Bay, Wis.



Brian and Marie Hertzler Maughan take a break outside his studio at home in Yellow Springs.

Rompers 'N Stompers program at Greene County Parks

Greene County Parks is proud to provide local parents a free night away from the kids by offering Rompers 'N Stompers, a monthly program for children ages 4-12. On select Friday nights from 6:30-9:00 p.m., Rompers (age 4-6) and Stompers (age 7-12) can

join the qualified and trained staff of Greene County Parks for an evening of fun games, crafts, nutritious snacks and much more. This is a great opportunity for busy parents to have a couple of hours to themselves for a movie, dinner or even some shopping! Friday,

The cost is only \$7.00 per child for Greene County residents and \$10.00 for non-residents; Advance registration with payment is required. For further information or to find out how to register, please call 937-562-7440 or visit the website at www.co.greene.oh.us/parks.

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Grandma & Grandpa Downey

PET OF THE WEEK
These adorable short hair kittens, one male and one female, only 9 weeks old, are ready for adoption. Stop and visit the Greene County Animal Shelter located at 641 Dayton-Xenia Road or call for information at Xenia at 562-7400 or in Fairborn at 754-3073.
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