

BOBACK

SCALE AND MEANING: THE MAKING OF WHOLESOME

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Sculpture Photography © 2010 Tabitha Deering

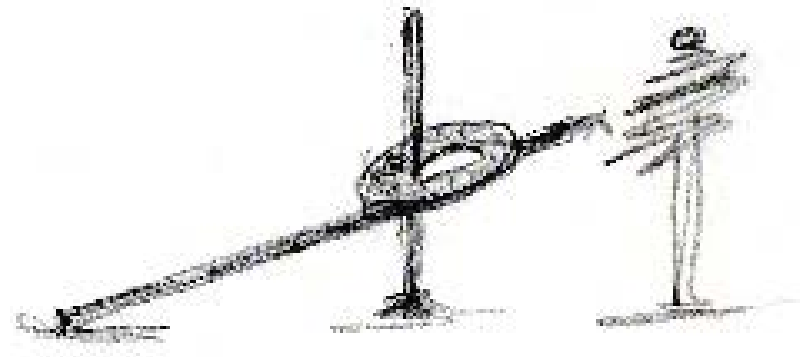
Sculpture Drawing © 2010 John Campbell



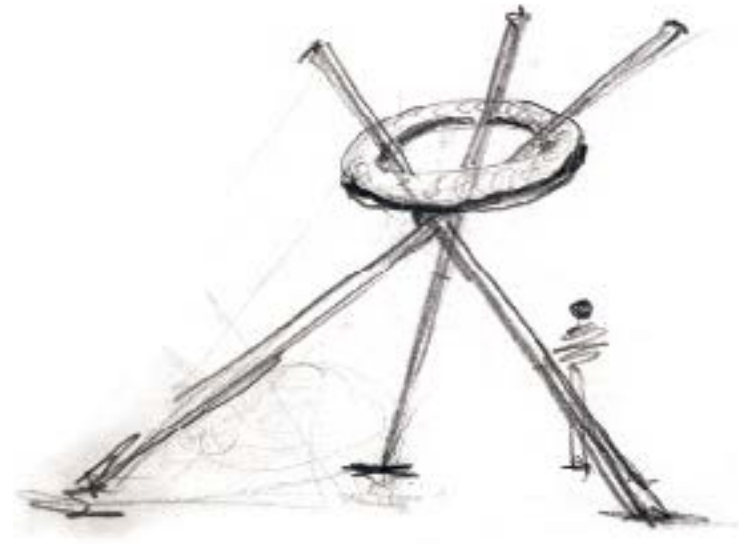
B O B A C K
SCALE AND MEANING: THE MAKING OF WHOLESOME

On June 9, 2007, Boback Emad's WholeSome was unveiled as a symbolic expression of place. It creates a gateway to the arts district of Santa Rosa, California.

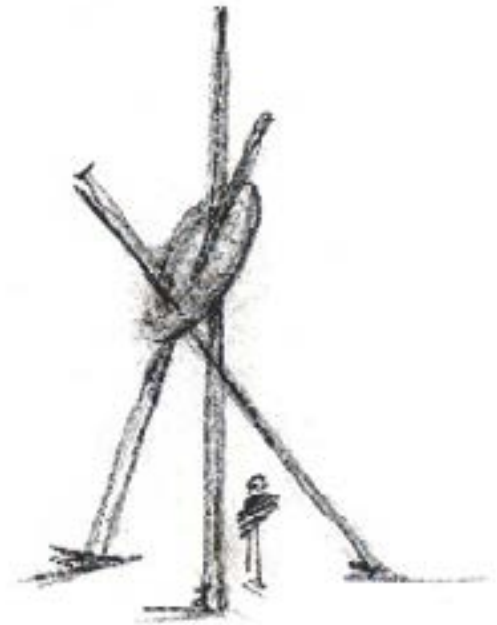
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TABITHA DEERING



...MOTION IN STILLNESS,



SPATIAL SYMBOLISM,



SYMBOLIC MINIMALISM.

THE AIM OF SCULPTURE IS TO ARREST MOTION
AND HOLD IT FIXED SO THAT OTHERS
MAY SEE OUR DREAM



The language of my work has developed with geometry that engages the viewer without alienating them. My work is simple but not predictable. It is bold without being overly intellectual and demanding. I want my work to be a bridge between what we know and what we see.

I work in steel for its permanence and its freedom. The limits of the material are wide open and they work well with my sensibilities. There is a quickness and directness that other materials, like stone and bronze, do not have.

Using natural material I am able to extend the texture and color of nature. Textures absorb and reflect the smallest amount of light or color, becoming part of the composition. Immense scale and juxtaposing shapes and patterns “talk” with each other, and interact with their environment, space, light and shadows.

I get a great deal of inspiration from my children Sophia and Dario. They possess a freedom and fluidity of thought and movement that seems limitless. They approach each moment with endless exuberance.

My 18-year career reflects my passion for creating dynamic large-scale sculptures. I am always searching for those moments that connect us in our common aspirations. My work explores beauty through an abstract expression of relationships.

— Boback Emad



Concepting WholeSome

Creating silence in the chaos



THE CHALLENGE WAS TO CREATE A DRAMA USING
A DELICATE BALANCE OF MASS AND VOID
TO UNITE THE COMMUNITY THROUGH
A COMMON EXPERIENCE.



Each of my sculptures is unique and the process of creating them never the same. Often they start with feelings about something. Then out of nowhere I'll see a shadow or a groups of things, it could be anything, that will trigger a gesture or an emotion which captures that idea. It can happen in an instant or I might have to spend hours drawing and searching for it. But when I find it, it hits me like ton of bricks.

A sculpture for the community

VOIGT FAMILY SCULPTURE FOUNDATION

Boback Emad's 2008 sculpture, WholeSome, is a sophisticated piece that dramatically reflects our city's transition from a small, northern California farming community to a world-class destination for art and culture.

As the winner of one of Santa Rosa's first public art competitions, The story of WholeSome begins with our community. In the spring of 2007, the City of Santa Rosa asked us to join a committee of local artists, arts professionals, educators, business owners, and citizens. Our task was to commission a work for one of the city's busiest intersections — a triangular corner of College, Mendocino, and Healdsburg avenues, at the northern entrance to Santa Rosa's downtown arts district. Our first challenge was to narrow a field of more than 23 prominent sculptors down to a select few. The finalists were then invited to submit a detailed proposal for this very challenging site.

The criteria for the winning piece were numerous. It needed to be a significant and distinctive work of art that would serve as a landmark, welcoming visitors into the center of town. It needed to positively reflect the vibrancy of a diverse and growing city, and enrich the lives of its citizens. It needed to address practical considerations such as safety, scale, durability, and resistance to vandalism, while requiring minimal maintenance. Finally, the winning proposal needed to fit within a modest budget and meet a very demanding schedule for installation. Of the five project finalists, Boback Emad's WholeSome soon emerged as the frontrunner.

What struck us immediately was the artist's passion for the project. As a longtime resident of Santa Rosa, Boback had studied the site and recognized its importance as a gateway to the city. Meanwhile, his training as an architect gave him the know-how to address the many practical demands of the commission. After reviewing a series of models that Boback presented, which showed incremental increases to the scale of his proposed sculpture, we were convinced that Boback's design was the perfect solution for the space.

We were not disappointed. WholeSome — like the community it represents — is a dramatic piece that brings together a variety of textures and materials into one, unified whole. The Corten steel embraces the earth, while the stainless steel speaks to the sky. Its bold geometry exhibits a tension in balance on a monumental scale.

Strong enough to captivate the drive-by viewer, WholeSome also invites pedestrians and other passersby to experience its visual and tactile delights up-close. Further, its materials mirror those of Charles Ginnever's Hangover II at the district's southern gateway and Ned Kahn's Digitized Field to the west, subtly tying the three pieces together.

What is most impressive is that Boback delivered this ambitious project within the time and the budget constraints set forth by the city. Santa Rosa is extremely fortunate to have this landmark sculpture by Boback Emad in its public art collection, and to have such a dedicated artist as part of our community.

The Voigt Family Sculpture Foundation commends the City of Santa Rosa for sponsoring this project and for allowing us to play a small part in the process. We believe that the world is a better place with art.

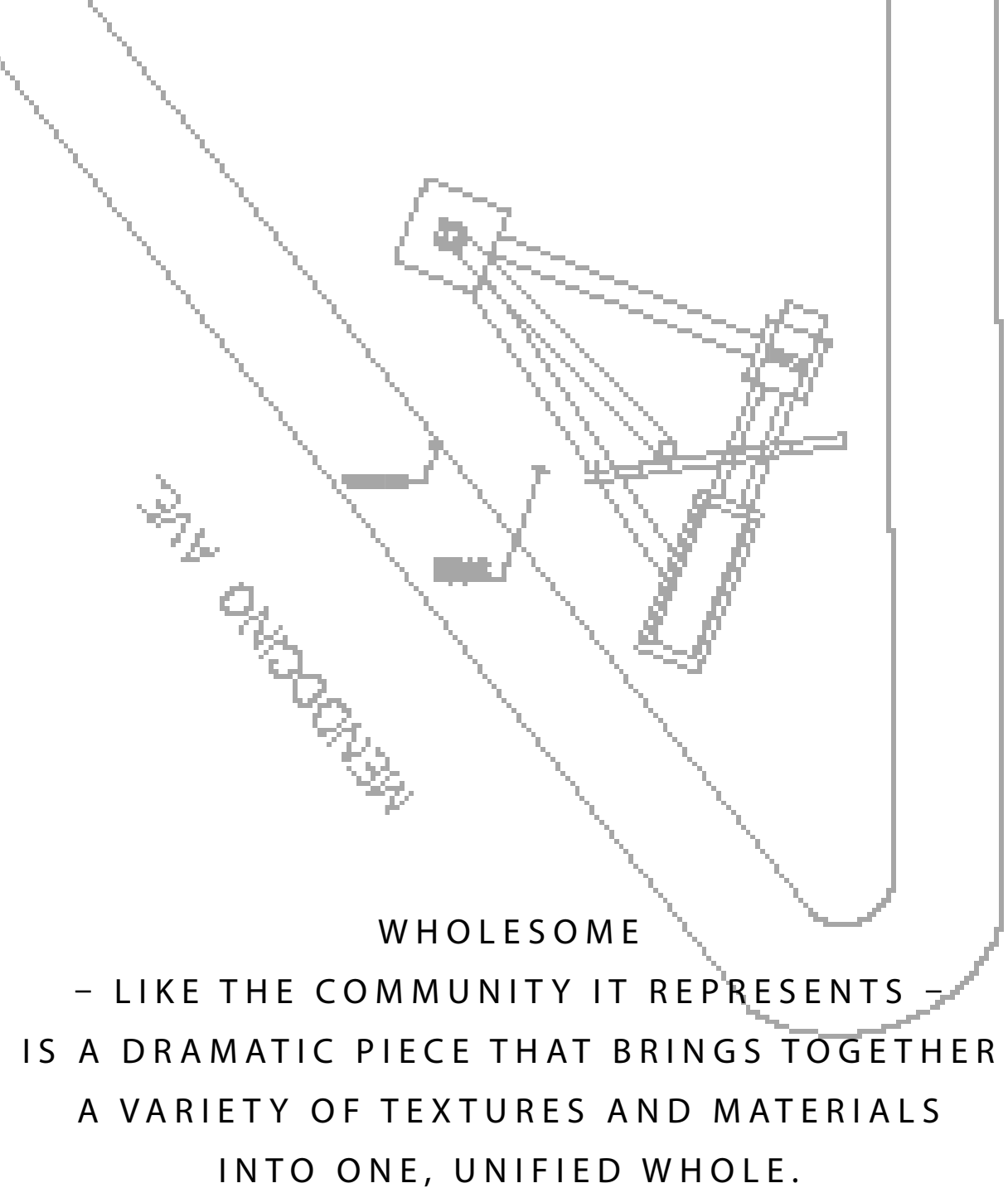
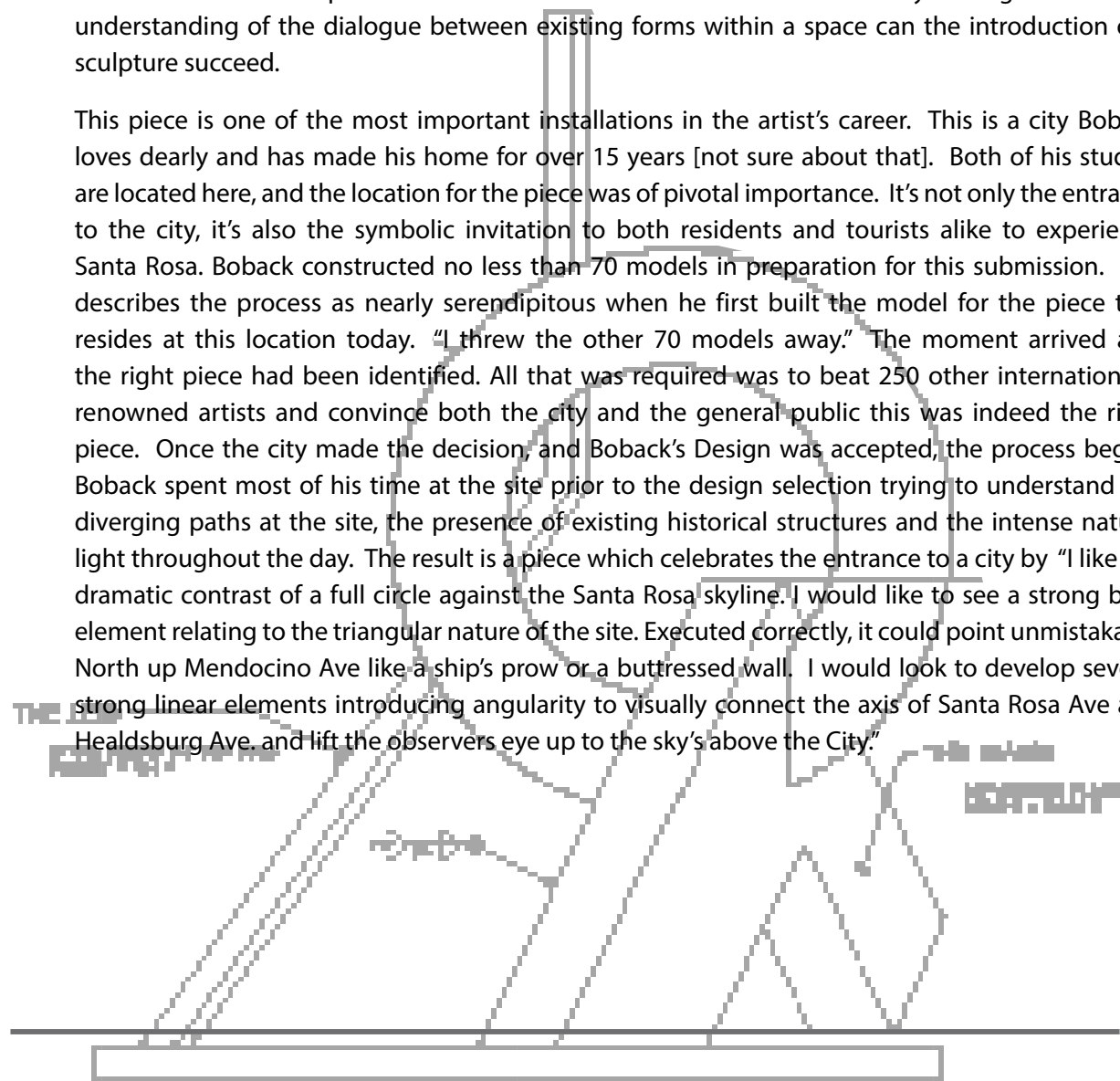
Judy Voigt
Co-Founder, Voigt Family Sculpture Foundation

Debra Lehane
Curator, Voigt Family Sculpture Foundation

Site specificity Gateway to the city, Santa Rosa California

In a recent lecture Boback explained his unique thinking on creating work that's site specific. While initially it's presented as a challenge to the Artist, Boback explains the traditional thinking of "constraints" accomplishes little other than to constrain the artist. Only through an intense understanding of the dialogue between existing forms within a space can the introduction of a sculpture succeed.

This piece is one of the most important installations in the artist's career. This is a city Boback loves dearly and has made his home for over 15 years [not sure about that]. Both of his studios are located here, and the location for the piece was of pivotal importance. It's not only the entrance to the city, it's also the symbolic invitation to both residents and tourists alike to experience Santa Rosa. Boback constructed no less than 70 models in preparation for this submission. He describes the process as nearly serendipitous when he first built the model for the piece that resides at this location today. "I threw the other 70 models away." The moment arrived and the right piece had been identified. All that was required was to beat 250 other internationally renowned artists and convince both the city and the general public this was indeed the right piece. Once the city made the decision, and Boback's Design was accepted, the process began. Boback spent most of his time at the site prior to the design selection trying to understand the diverging paths at the site, the presence of existing historical structures and the intense natural light throughout the day. The result is a piece which celebrates the entrance to a city by "I like the dramatic contrast of a full circle against the Santa Rosa skyline. I would like to see a strong base element relating to the triangular nature of the site. Executed correctly, it could point unmistakably North up Mendocino Ave like a ship's prow or a buttressed wall. I would look to develop several strong linear elements introducing angularity to visually connect the axis of Santa Rosa Ave and Healdsburg Ave, and lift the observers eye up to the sky's above the City."



Creating WholeSome

A balance of scale

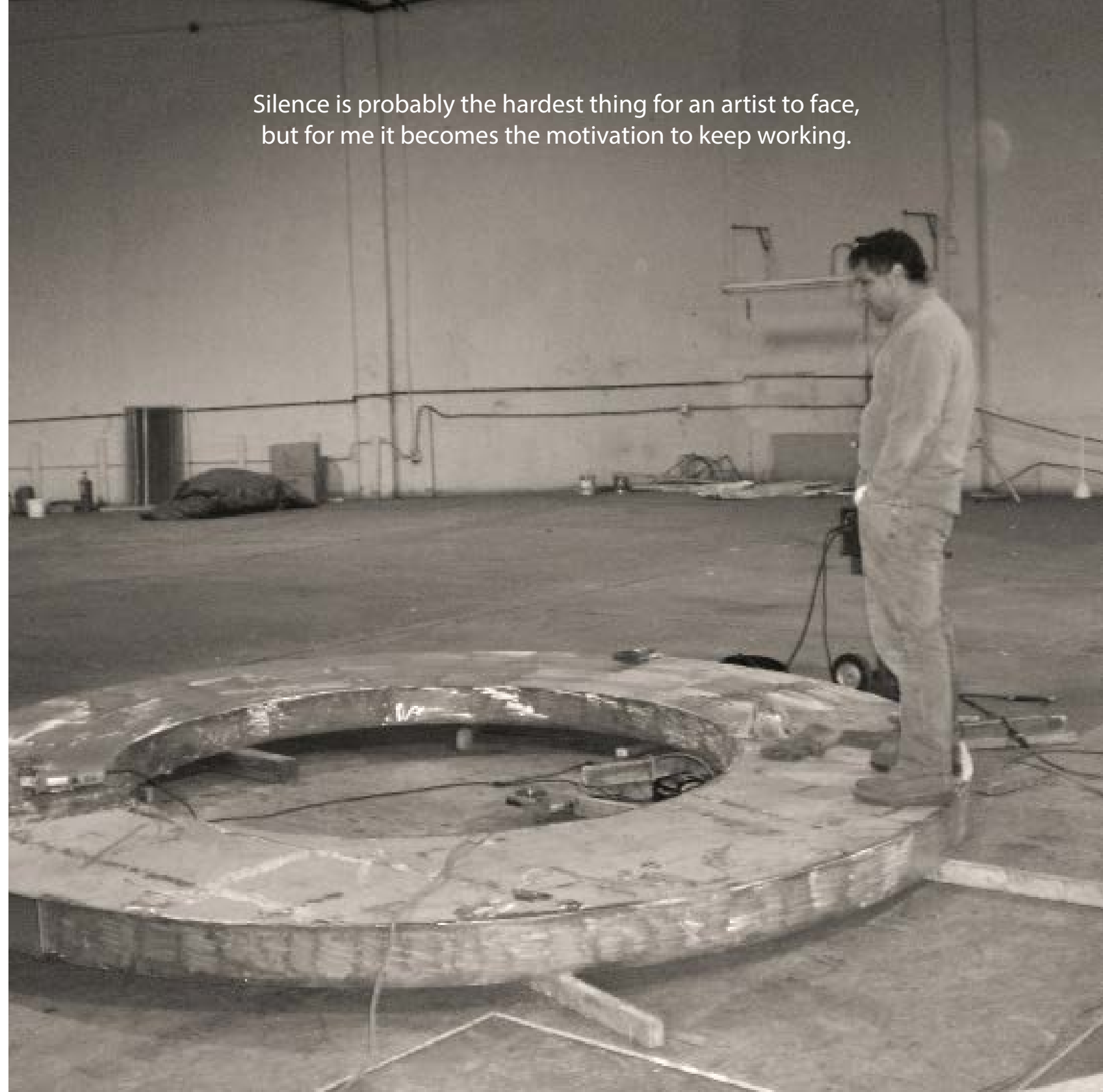


April 28, 2008, 4am

In a blaze of kinetic sparks, David Seymour grinds down the welds and the structure begins to take form.



Silence is probably the hardest thing for an artist to face,
but for me it becomes the motivation to keep working.





This is the largest piece I've ever done



Sculpture is a dance of forms that is governed by gravity and physics, but when guided by the artist's spirit becomes art.



7000° F

Seven tons of steel meet seven thousand degrees of heat.





I SEEK A
CONTEXTUAL
INTIMACY
BETWEEN THE
SHAPES I CREATE
AND THE WORLD
AROUND THEM.





In this way I simplify the conversation in order to broaden its content.



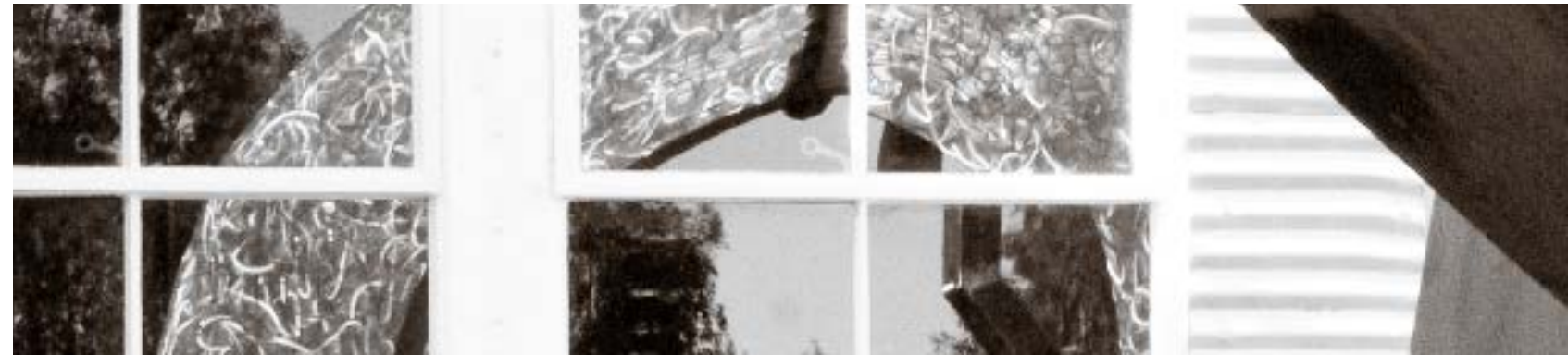
Ultimately they become questions and answers in steel.

AS I CREATE
I CONTINUALLY
REDUCE AND COMPRESS
RELATIONSHIPS



UPON COMPLETION
THE SPIRIT OF THE ARTIST IS ALIVE,
LIVING WITHIN THE REALM OF WHAT IS
AND WHAT IS NOT.

SHADOW
REFLECTION



VOID WHICH THEY CREATE

Moving WholeSome

The dance of forms



EMERGING FROM THE DARKNESS
OF ITS CREATION, THE STAINLESS
REFRACTS ITS FIRST RAYS OF
SUNLIGHT.

The dazzling interplay of light
breathes animate life and spirit
into the once cold structure.





7 tons of solid art



The Corten steel embraces the earth,
while the stainless steel speaks to the sky.

Elevating WholeSome

...THIS WAS SUCH A MAGICAL MOMENT
TO SEE WHOLESOME IN THE AIR.
SUDDENLY THE RULES CHANGED AND ALL 7 TONS
BECAME FREE LIKE A GEOMETRIC CHERUB
SPINNING IN THE SKY.



It made me want to work bigger!



Delivering



while the city slept...



1:00 am

2:00 am

3:00 am

4:00 am



Installing



Unveiling

By morning it was covered



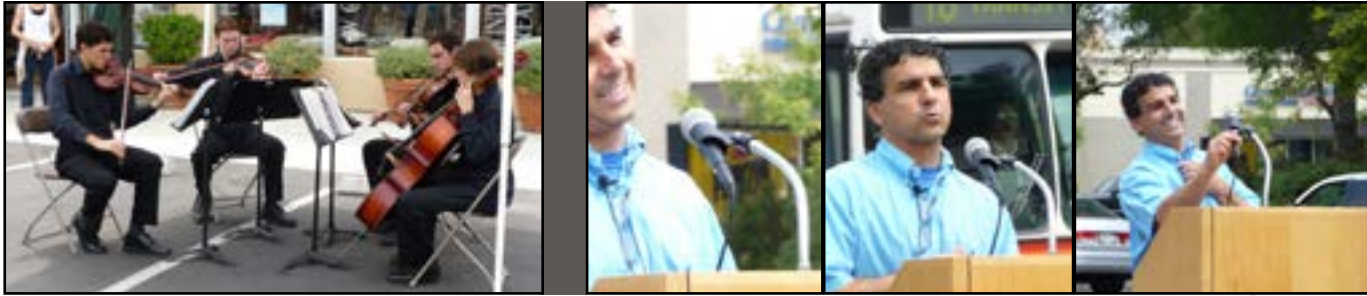
6:00am, June 2008



THE
REVEAL



Celebrating WholeSome



The concept or meaning of an artwork is truly in the eye of the beholder. There is never one right answer. The artist's intent is built into the integrity of the artwork, however, the door for interpretation is always open and each viewer is encouraged to discover meaning for themselves. We would like to hear your take on WholeSome -- what does it mean to you?

I GET THE GREATEST SATISFACTION WHEN I HEAR PEOPLE TALK ABOUT MY WORK IN WAYS I HAD NOT CONSIDERED OR SEEN. THAT TO ME IS MAGICAL.

What was the artist's concept?

Earth's anchor, an L, two parts of a whole working together to support the circle, the whole, the continuum, flanked by energy of up, reaching toward infinity. ART is the Answer — Brent

It's a jumbling of the word LOVE. — Randal

This is a sacred symbol and a unifying element to our dynamic Downtown Arts District! — Marc

The earth, the sun and water united. — Evelyn

Unity of Divergences. — Brad

A calming circle in the midst of an exciting intersection. Beauty and Peace. — Amy

The idea of wholeness is a very important one for a community. This is the perfect piece for the entrance into the downtown area. Wholeness speaks to me of inclusion and reaching out to all members of the community, and what does that more than Public Art. — Steve

The circle is NOW. All or nothing completeness. — Mario

Purity, oneness mindfulness. — Liz

It's a grand gateway to our Art conscious city! — Laurie

It feels like it welcomes, and I would love for my grandson to climb on it. — Debbie

The piece is beautiful! The name depicts a solid foundation with the circle describing how all in life is a circle in some form or other. The vector is like hope, change, innovation. — Milton

This sculpture means unity and collaboration, the line, triangle & circle all existing and moving in the same space as one fluid being. — Ellen

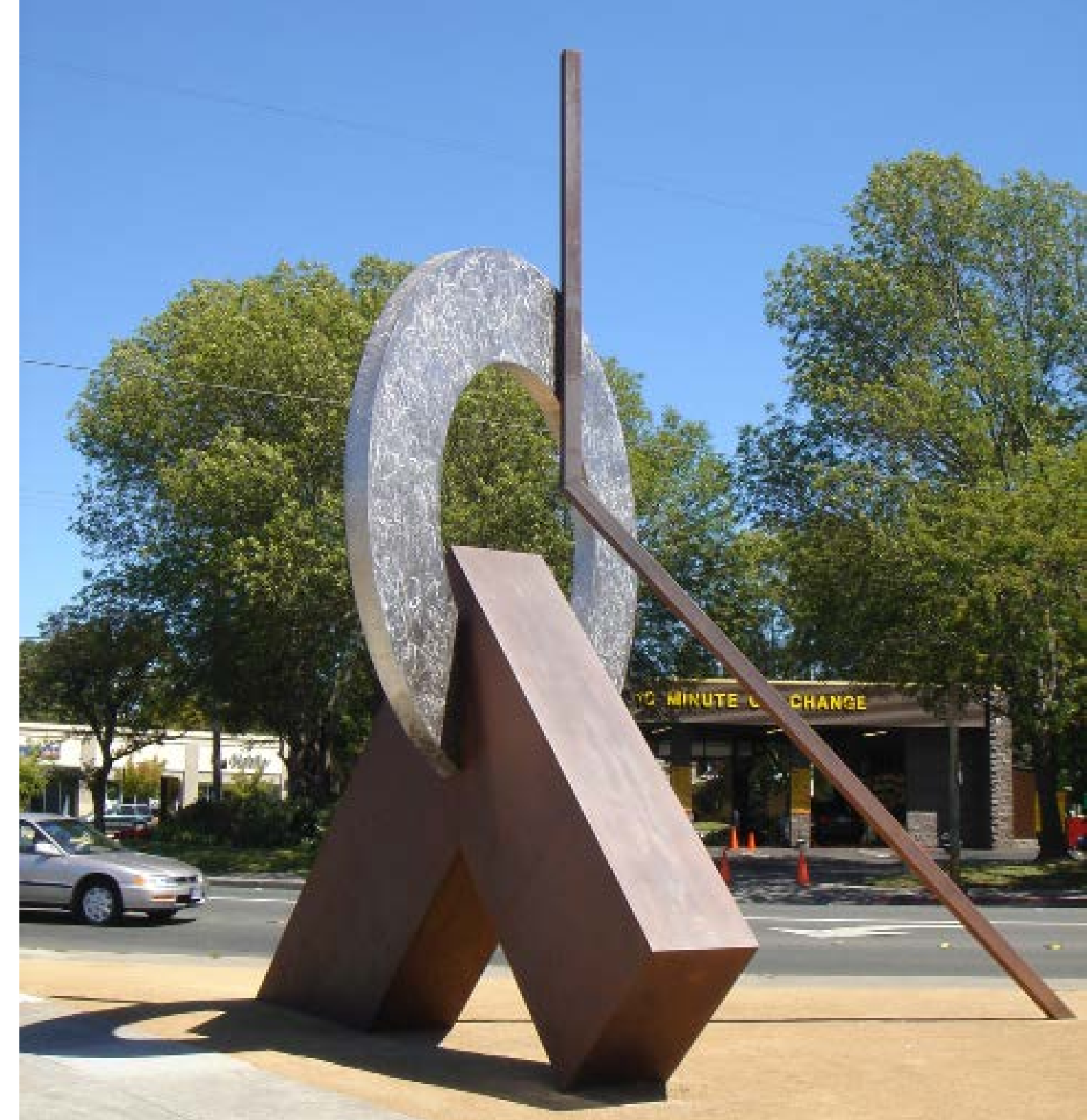
The sculpture creates a portal to our Arts District. A gateway that creates greater unity in our community — Elizabeth

A bendy straw is giving a donut a hug before it is swallowed by a slide rule. — William

The lines, the design and the shapes say, "enter all of you and fill your spirit and your body with all that you desire, and then some!" — Michael

The Circle represents the city of Santa Rosa. The arrow pushing up from the ground represents the upward potential for the city and the angular piece represents time moving forward. — Kris



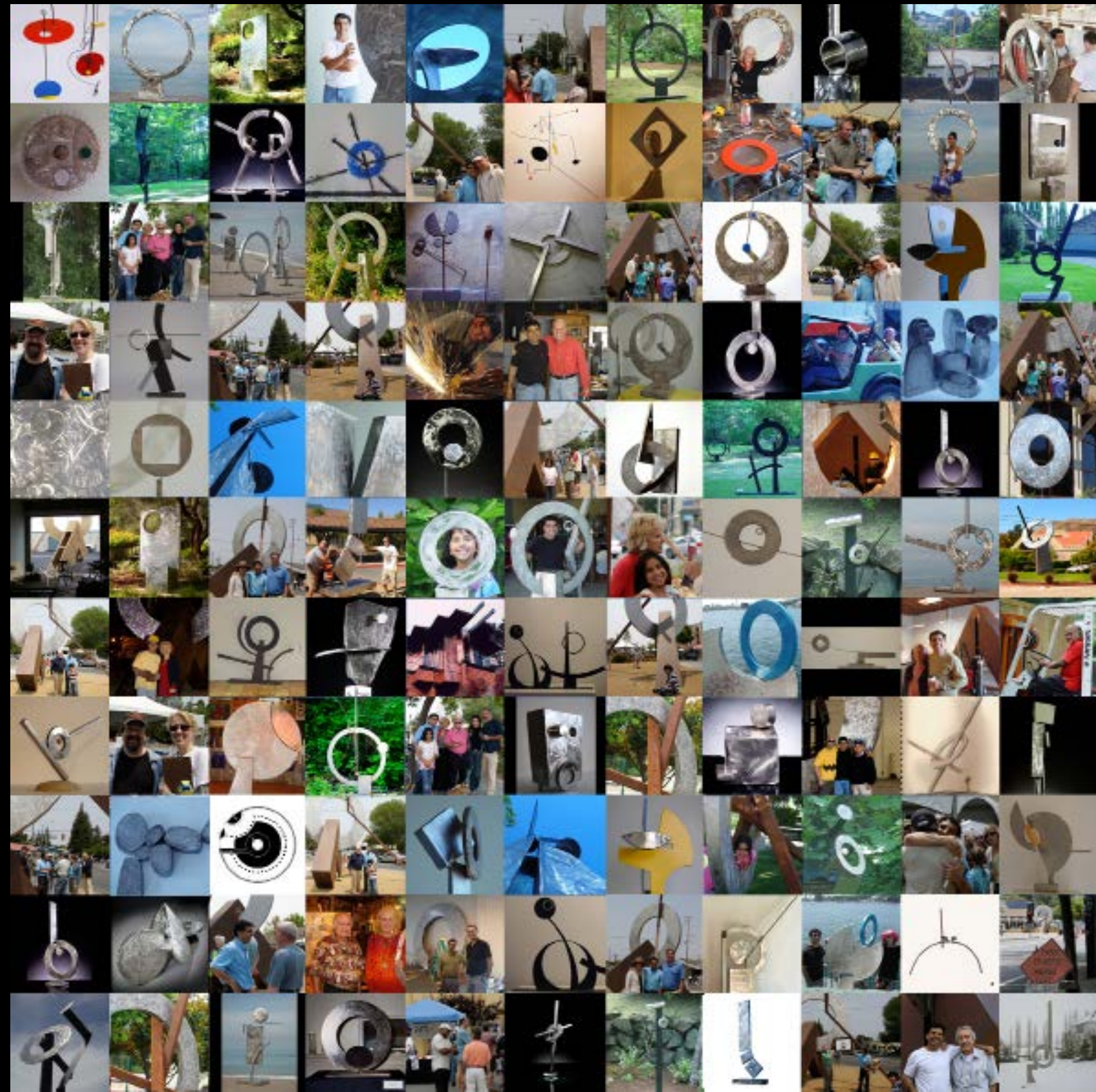


THE INTERSECTION
OF SPEED AND TIME

Strong enough to captivate the drive-by viewer, WholeSome also invites pedestrians and other passersby to experience its visual and tactile delights up-close.



В О В А С К



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