

Leslie Bruning

Leslie Bruning has been an active creative artist for over forty years. He received a BA Degree in Art from Nebraska Wesleyan University in 1970, studied at Graz Center, Austria and earned an MFA Degree in Sculpture from Syracuse University in 1972. He served as Professor of Art in Bellevue University from 1973 to 2011. He is a founding member and a partner in the Hot Shops Art Center, Omaha, NE. He is also the owner of Bruning Sculpture, Inc., a mold making, casting and fabrication studio that has artist clients across the country. He is a founding member of Omaha Creative Institute.

Bruning is an active participant, advocate, and organizer of Public Art Projects. He was a member of the J. Doe Project in Omaha and created the J. Doe form. He was a participant in Chicago's Navy Pier exhibitions in 1998 and 1999, Omaha's O! Art Project, and several other projects.

Bruning has had over 40 solo shows, over 120 group or juried exhibitions, and completed more than forty sculpture commissions. He is represented in numerous collections across the country.



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Leslie Bruning, Sculptor



VESSEL - a sculpture by Leslie Bruning, 2011

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska • 1919 Aksarben Drive • Omaha, NE (Aksarben Village)

The concepts embedded in this sculpture include health, medicine, ecology, life forms and beauty. The large scale perforated vessel stands as a metaphor for man and man's ability to affect his own environment, either positively or negatively.

Inside the translucent vessel is an abstraction of the Rod of Asclepius, which is a universally accepted symbol of physicians and the whole of the medical field. The rod provides the basic structure for the sculpture. Spiraling around this central shaft are three forms that could mimic the snakes from the Rod of Asclepius. The large open circle on each side directly reveals the crescendo of the internal spiraling forms.

These forms are enclosed by the translucent vessel, which has four identical sides. On each surface there are patterns of perforated images. Near the bottom of each side are Pallid Sturgeons, which are an endangered species in the Missouri River. This species existence is threatened due to acts of man and can be corrected by a change in man's behavior. Swimming with the sturgeons are humans that must co-exist with the fish, the birds, the plants, for all to survive long term. Man is portrayed as a swimmer because in the water, man must work in the moment with other natural forces to survive. In the upper section of the vessel hawks and eagles are gliding through the air further demonstrating how different creatures function in different ways but all are part of the large picture of living. At first appearance and from a distance, these images will probably not be detected by the viewer. As the observer nears the sculpture the images are revealed. The message is that all of nature's inhabitants have to co-exist in a shared environment.

The sculpture has internal lights, projecting upward to light the interior of the sculpture.

Structurally, the sculpture is mostly symmetrical with all four sides of the vessel being identical in configuration and size. The central shaft supports both the snake like spiral forms and the vessel walls. The perforated skin creates a feeling of lightness and transparency, which makes the form appear almost weightless as it floats over a bed of low growing vegetation. The sculpture is predominately constructed with galvanized steel and in stainless steel, which provides a permanent shimmering silver surface during the day as well as providing very low maintenance surfaces.

