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ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Above all, I am moved by the human condition and impelled to understand it. My work sometimes functions as a social conscience, touching upon issues such as social stigmatization, economic exclusion and environmental destruction. Other times, my art simply tells a story, another's or mine, or celebrates the beauty of nature. Whether I'm working on a large-scale public piece or a smaller, studio piece, quality concepts and craftsmanship are my goals. Everything from the context and history of a site to the surface finish of a sculpture is painstakingly considered.

My training as a maker and as an instructor has been conceptual and representational, academic and technical, and has emphasized the use of both innovative and traditional materials and techniques. My work is multidisciplinary, researched-based and concept-driven. The idea dictates its aesthetic, and craftsmanship is equally important. Style and content are one.

Because I integrate and move between mediums I often think of myself as a creative scientist who is conducting a series of personal and social experiments. While the majority of my works have been sculpture or environments that incorporate sculpture, several of my pieces have taken on more than one form. As a piece morphs and evolves, I re-present it. I am always anxious to see how the meaning of the work changes and how viewers respond to different versions of it. I relish in the reworking and evolution of ideas.

I recently have incorporated sound into my work, in particular, voice recordings. Personal interviews have been an element of, and a jumping off point for, two important projects of mine: *Home is the Most Important Place In the World*, first exhibited at the Henry Art Gallery in 2008, and my current focus, *Ascension*, an upcoming solo show at Gallery 4Culture in Seattle (opens August 2, 2012.)

Through my work, I have spent the past few years examining the effects of, and reasons for, stigma in American society, particularly with regard to how it affects those suffering from mental illness and homelessness. Inspiration for this work has come through my experiences with homeless outreach, advocacy and personal relationships. Now, I am digging deeper and am exploring ways that humans (all of us, but especially the disenfranchised) attempt to recover from and move beyond their life circumstances.

Ascension will be comprised of a body of work informed by this exploration. In October 2010, I received a "Grant for Artist's Projects" (GAP) from Artist Trust to help with the costs of building a central piece for this exhibit—an aluminum and stainless sculpture constructed from decommissioned helicopter rotor blades.

In addition to the sculpture, I intend to include audio-visual portraits of subjects whom I interview on their experiences of overcoming (or not), personal challenges. The resulting interviews will determine what form these stories will take. By using flight as a metaphor for transcending life's circumstances, I intend to highlight the contrast of the pain of individual tragedy with the beauty of escaping it.