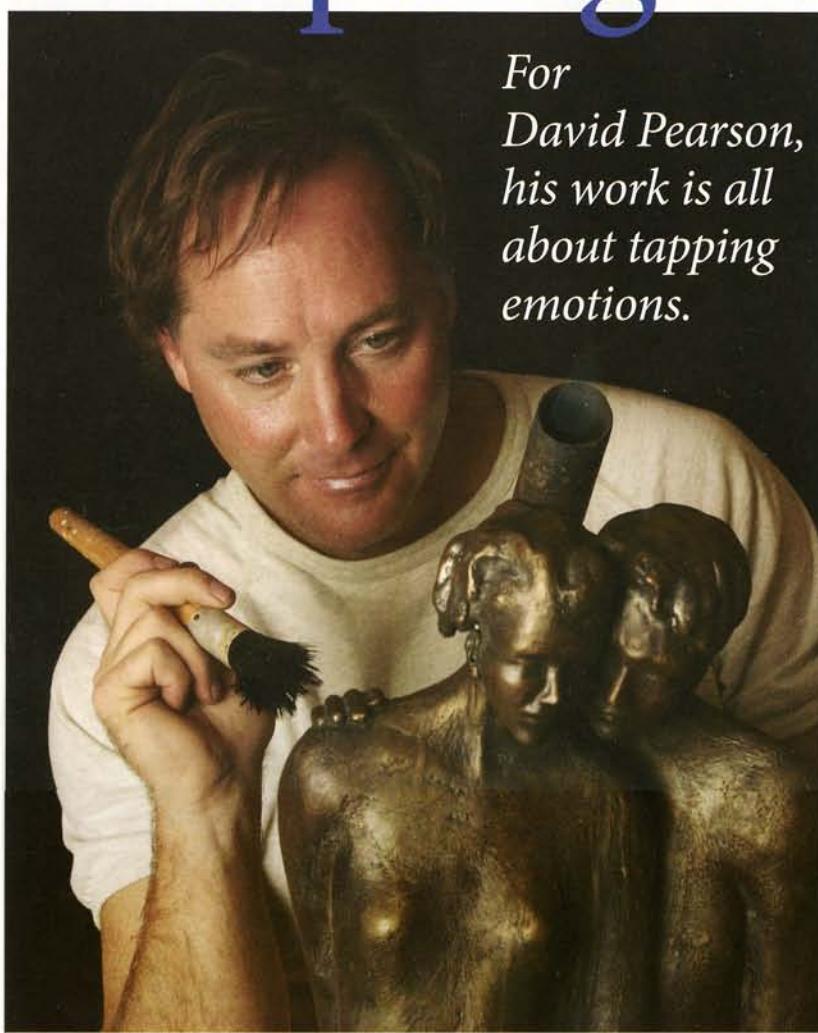


artist profile

David Pearson

Sculpting Feelings

*For
David Pearson,
his work is all
about tapping
emotions.*



Continued from cover

"He finds energy in each literal transformation of material—from hand to clay and the creation of the mold, the wash; to the casting and the burnout, the pour; and to the chasing of the metal and the final completion of the patina."

Pearson came into the world during the autumnal equinox on Sept. 20, 1958. Born on the cusp of perfectionist-oriented Virgo and beauty-absorbed Libra, he has always felt a destiny with a greater life force. "A lot of times, pieces just come through me and when they're finished, I can't believe I made them," says Pearson.

His bronzes are most often shaped into elongated female forms, mummies and one-winged angels, and are sometimes accompanied by doves and finches.

Spending his first eight years in the ranching town of Tucumcari, NM, Pearson thrived. "I re-

member being about six years old and going out with my uncle and the rest of my family, hunting for arrowheads. We would do that twice a month. I loved it. And I loved visiting the old Indian ruins. I was always into the mystery, wondering what it was like for them."

Unfortunately, the town of Tucumcari died after the railroad moved out, taking 20,000 people with it. The hub had been in Tucumcari, and then it moved to Amarillo, TX. Pearson's parents moved the family to Santa Fe, where Pearson found himself in the midst of a bohemian environment, known for its large concentration of artist studios.

Pearson's own artistic aptitude soon emerged, drawing illustrations for the newspaper at Santa Fe High School. He went by the name of "Rainbow" at that time and flourished in experimental classes such as horticulture and electronics. It was

this open-minded atmosphere that cultivated free expression that Pearson calls "totally free and caring. I really fared well. I don't know if I would have said I had talent," he explains, "but I was always looking at books and art, and seeing art in other people's houses."

When Pearson was 16, he was hired at the Shidoni Foundry, the oldest in the Southwest. It wasn't a glamorous job, but Pearson marveled at the lustrous bronze shapes as he chipped away. Moving along rapidly in his art, he mastered the techniques and moved into the job of "finisher" within a year,

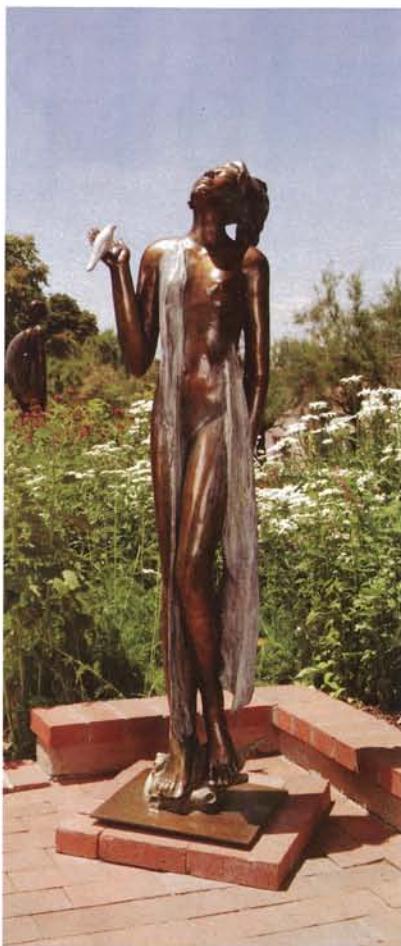
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► "One Song," bronze, 30 inches, edition of 14.



ARTIST PROFILE **D**avid Pearson

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▲ "Ascension of Eve," bronze, 57 inches, edition of 15.

and was a natural at patina quirks. He mastered such processes as rubber wax molds, wax grating and dressing wax. He loved working with bronze, and later described it as "old, magical energy with melting metal."

For Pearson, the Shidoni experience served as art school. "He got to see what artists do, how they do it, how they sell it, and how to make a living with it," says sculptor Doug Coffin, a mentor of Pearson's.

"I was motivated and inspired by all of the artists I worked with," said Pearson. "They didn't really care if anyone liked it; they really didn't care if it sold. They found that space within themselves where nothing else mattered except their art," he says.

Employees at Shidoni were able to receive reduced rates for the bronze pouring process. Pearson pursued that privilege and began producing an elongated female form that bespoke Egyptian and African art influences. "I was 18, and I made my first piece, 'Tracy,' and put it in the gallery, and it sold within the first week," he remembers.

Though Pearson's sculptures were being sold in galleries all over the Southwest, it wasn't a secure living. So in 1982 he accepted a position at Dwight Hackett's Art foundry in Santa Fe, eventually becoming its director and master sculptor. After an

impressive 10-year run at Art Foundry, he left to head a 700-piece casting project for Notre Dame's College Football Hall of Fame. Then, in 1995, a year after the passing of Allen Houser, the Chiricahua Apache artist who inspired Pearson in his early years, Pearson was hired to design and build a bronze foundry at Allan House Inc. The Houser project took Pearson three years, and turned his thoughts to his own mortality as he approached 40.

After purchasing some land in the Galioteo Basin, south of Santa Fe, Pearson began building a studio in the mid '90s. A house would follow that



▲ "Kamsin," bronze, 70 inches, edition of 9.

he would share with his wife, Patricia Carlisle. The studio was his, and he could work from dawn to dusk on his own ethereal sculptures.

The lithe, ethereal, elegant pieces are the trademark of Pearson. Bronze figures inspired by tales of Greek Mythology flowed out of him. Narrow, elongated figures had, as arts writer Michael Koster wrote, "Stoic faces from another time evoke the stillness of the tomb, the dignity of an age long past."

Pearson's style is unmistakable. Linear, tapered figures are idealized rather than individualized. They are sometimes more abstracted, sometimes more representational, but they belong to every culture, every era. They are spiritual, significant,

You've got to touch people. That's why you create art.

—sculptor David Pearson

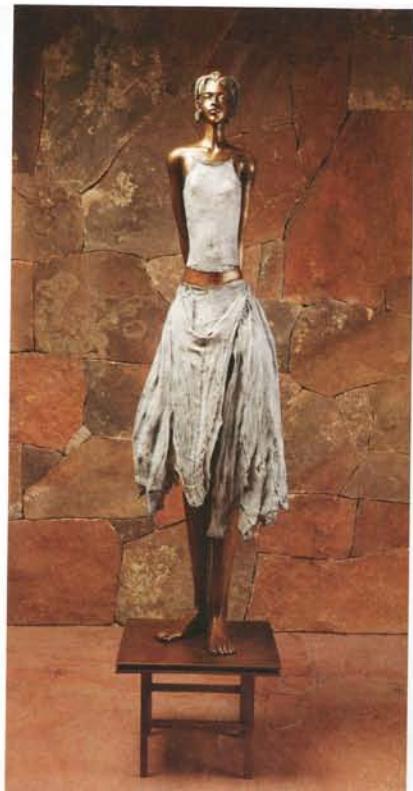
romantic and universal.

Asked about what advice he would give an emerging artist, he explained that young artists "live with so much angst in looking for themselves, and they don't really have skill in promoting themselves. One of my secrets is in making small editions, and artists who push large editions are missing the point...they shouldn't spread themselves too thin."

"It has been a steady progression from the 16-year-old sculptor to the artist that I am today at age 48," he continues. "I have found my space. Nothing can change me because this is my art, this is who I am and this is what I do." **ABN**

SOURCE

■ Patricia Carlisle Fine Art, 505-820-0595, www.carlislefa.com



▲ "Une danse de Reve," bronze, 52 inches, edition of 15.