Marc Moulton: Sculpting His Path to Success

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Sculpture Professor Marc Moulton had no idea he would become an artist when he first enrolled in college, but after acquiring numerous awards, an impressive submission record and public approbation of his quality productions, Moulton now admits he could not have imagined a better career.

The recipient of Georgia Southern University’s 2012 Award of Excellence in Research and/or Creative Scholarly Activity says while growing up in Utah, no one in his household ever discussed art or showed any interest in the subject. In fact, if not for a work-study position in Weber State University’s Art Department and a subsequent art class, he may never have found his true career path – creating large-scale sculptures and teaching at the university level.

“My choice of art happened along the way over a long period,” Moulton said. “I felt comfortable in the art classroom and my professors told me I was good at what I was doing. Of course, nobody knows what is going to happen to him or her but I certainly was propelled to follow some path; I just didn’t know which road I would take.”

Having discovered his path, the artist found he preferred the versatility of fabricating his outdoor art from metals like stainless steel, which he says require virtually no maintenance, can withstand nature’s elements of wind, ice, snow and rain, does not rust and cannot be easily vandalized, bent or scraped.

Moulton’s public art projects include works for corporations, schools and municipalities in several states. University patron Betty Foy Sanders chose his sculpture “Ascend” as the signature piece for the Center for Art and Theatre at Georgia Southern. His most recent work titled “Kernel” was installed at Georgia College and State University in Milledgeville, Ga. in 2011.

Currently the professor teaches a full load of classes at Georgia Southern, and is negotiating a contract with the city of Suwanee, Ga. to install a permanent display of the city’s 1,600 pound steel artifact from a World Trade Center Tower destroyed in the 9/11 attacks. His display would include a timeline of events as they unfolded on September 11, 2001, and at night, it would light up to project a dramatic image he described as the “ghost of lower Manhattan to show how the area used to look.” He added, “Once people know where that piece of scrap metal originated, it becomes a powerful thing.”

While Moulton’s work is influenced by the landscape of the mountains of Utah where he grew up, when he transforms a public space into something inspiring and uplifting, he says his body of work showcases other themes. “There is a personality to it. My character and my personality are rendered in each one because I am going to create what I know how to do and what I think I do well.” He explained, “I use lighting a lot in my work because it is dramatic and can establish a mood. It is the opportunity to see this sculpture as Mother Nature changes around it and the lighting will give you a different perspective or a different point of view.”

As Moulton sees it, public art is the opportunity to create or provide a more engaging, a more intelligent and enjoyable life and he asks, “Who doesn’t like that, who doesn’t like passion?”
Georgia Southern University students now have the opportunity to take their clothes off and get paid for it without getting stuck in the backseat of a patrol car.

The figure drawing class at GSU is currently looking for students to act as nude models to be drawn by fellow students taking the class. Figure drawing is an art class specifically focused on depicting the human body through drawing.

“The idea is that the nude form is a super complicated thing. We’re trying to get to a point where we can accurately render the true human form. The models aren’t nude for sex appeal, they’re nude because that is a human’s most natural state,” Jessica Burke, assistant professor and director of foundation studies at GSU, said.

The modeling consists of a few sessions during the semester, with each class being 2.5 hours; all models are paid hourly and based on the university pay system. There are no requirements or prior experience necessary to model for the class.

The class uses models from professional organizations in Savannah, members of the Statesboro community and GSU students.

“Our main objective is to really understand how the human form moves and breathes,” Amy Fix, assistant professor at the arts department and instructor of figure drawing, said.

“We focus on anatomy, specifically the skeletal and muscular structures to try to capture the figure’s movements and find why it moves the way it does,” Fix said.

The nude models provide the students with experience of recreating an image in front of them that isn’t a still shot.

“We were so focused on getting our work done there was no time to be embarrassed in front of a naked person,” Victoria Slagle, senior studio art major and former figure drawing student, said.

“Learning from the inside-out about the body and how to draw it is one of the coolest things I’ve ever done,” Slagle said.

“You can’t learn to draw a human with clothes on before learning how to draw a human without clothes,” Burke said.

The Art Department’s figure drawing professors are looking for models of any age, any shape, any color and any gender.

“We try to cover all body types, all shapes and sizes for our models. There’s no one type of model,” Fix said.

Fix said all of the modeling in the class is done for the benefit of the students’ education and further education of art and drawing.