



Sculpture

takes many
forms



'Tangle' by Bill Ooms.
Part of the variety
of works artists
bring to Loveland
this weekend.
— Special to Go

art Bill Ooms transforms wood into one-of-a-kind sculptures

Arizona artist set to display his work at Sculpture in the Park

By JOYCE DAVIS
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER-HERALD

In Bill Ooms hands, the impossible become truth; dreams become reality.

The Arizona artist's transformational work in wood often boggles the mind. How, one wonders, can a flat slice of wood become a three-dimensional ribbon, winding and curving with no end in sight? Or how does a block of wood yield an exquisite goblet rivaling that of the finest crystal?

Ooms will be one of 30 Loveland High Plains Arts Council artists showing in this weekend's 29th annual Sculpture in the Park.

In his shop north of Prescott, Ooms follows tech-

niques learned from his father and a destiny held in his heart to master and create new visions. His engineering background and lathe work transform wood into a variety of one-of-a-kind sculptures. From ornamentals, to hollow forms, ribbons and segmented pieces, each sculpture carries a beauty intended to last for ages.

For his segmented sculptures, Ooms turns pieces of various woods to create "rings" tapered to an angle. Each has a slight twist that will fit the adjacent rings, forming a spiraling effect within the piece. Ribbon sculptures are made from various woods assembled together in bowl form, then cut

"All things start with the shape. It has to be right from the very start. If you take away all of the ornamentation, you should still have a shape."

Bill Ooms
wood artist

apart and reassembled to form a smooth flow with twists and turns that close at the end. Some of the ribbons, called "mobius strips," have only one side.

Ooms says woodworking began as a hobby, allowing time to perfect his techniques over the years. In 2002, he took an early retirement, "pulling the plug on corporate America." From that moment, he used engineering and math to go beyond the simple forms, making even more intricate pieces. To accomplish his vision for more complicated sculptures, he wrote his own computer program, one that allowed him to incorporate angles and rings and other processes to twist and turn the wood.

"All things start with the shape," he says. "It has to be right from the very start. If you take away all of the ornamentation, you should still have a shape."

Such pieces as bowls, goblets and other hollow forms are inspired by the fine Native American pottery of the Southwest. "I used to go to see their work and they'd always encourage people to handle the piece, to get the feel of it," he says. "I've passed that on in my own work. I encourage people to touch and feel. I have a long-

GO & DO

Art weekend in Loveland

Loveland Sculpture Invitational: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday, 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday and 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Sunday, south side of Loveland High School, 920 W. 29th St. \$7 adults and children 14 and under free. Visit <http://lovelandsculpturegroup.org>.

Sculpture in the Park: 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday and 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Benson Park Sculpture Garden, Aspen Drive and Taft Avenue. \$7 adults and children 14 and under free. Visit www.sculptureinthepark.org for details.

Art in the Park Arts and Crafts Festival: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday at North Lake Park, 29th Street and Taft Avenue. Free to enter. For details, call the Thompson Valley Art League/Lincoln Gallery at 663-2407 or visit www.lincolngallery.com/text/art-in-park.html.

Artists' Charitable Fund Auction: 6 p.m. Saturday at the Norma and Lynn Hammond Amphitheater at North Lake Park, West 29th Street at Taft Avenue. Visit www.artistscharitablefund.org.

Parking: There are two \$5 lots located at Loveland High School. Parking is limited near the show.

Shuttles: To aid in parking, people are advised to take a shuttle, available at several locations around Loveland. Shuttle hours will be 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday.

- King of Glory Lutheran Church, Wilson Avenue and West 29th Street.
- Service Center, 200 N. Wilson Ave.
- Thompson Valley Towne Center, Colorado 402 and Taft Avenue.
- Orchards Shopping Center, U.S. 287 and West 29th Street.
- Centerra at Johnny Carino's Italian Kitchen, U.S. 34 and Rocky Mountain Avenue.

Videos: Visit www.reporterherald.com and search for "Art in the Park," "Sculpture in the Park" or "Charitable Fund" to see the online stories and videos of artists participating in those events.

time customer who only collects what fits in his hand. He will walk around holding pieces to make sure they have the right feel."

Lately, he's been doing small works that are highly decorated. These pieces, turned on an ornamental lathe, were once called "the hobby of nobility" because of the cost of the complex machinery required to make them, Ooms says.

They're signature pieces and easier to transport, but also part of his evolution as an artist.

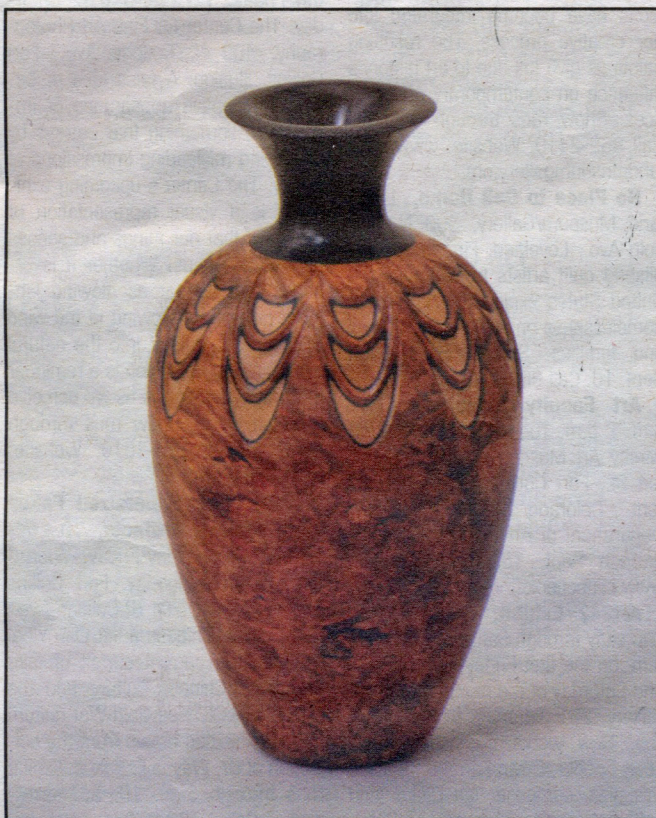
"There's always the question as to whether an artist should stay with his or her signature work or should you evolve," he says. "I'm excited to explore new territory and

so last year was a big transition time for me. Some might say it's pushing the new frontier and that's where I want to go."

Ooms recently began making "shawl" vases, draping burl wood over the bowl. The edges and natural voids in the burl allow him to almost "drip the burl wood over the vase."

Ooms says it's an exciting process and something he believes no one else is doing.

"It's part of the evolution process," he says. "It's one where you don't think first about the technology and tools you have and then make something. Instead, you envision what you want to make and then figure out how to make it happen. It's a new revelation."



"Pierced Vase" by Bill Ooms. — Special to Go