

Artists Among Us: Artist Profile - Hans Van de Bovenkamp

by Eileen Casey



"Sagg Portal," 2008, Sagaponack Sculpture Field, Sagaponack. All art images courtesy of artist

Continuing with our artist profiles of artists both living and working in the Hamptons, our next artist is Hans Van de Bovenkamp, who lives in Sagaponack

Sagaponack - Hans Van de Bovenkamp was born in Holland in 1938, and in 1958 attended the School of Architecture, Amsterdam, Holland, and from 1958 to 1961 attended the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI (B.S. Science and Design).

Van de Bovenkamp has received the Best Sculpture Award, Guild Hall, East Hampton in 2003. In 1996 he won the Sanctuary Design Competition, Omega Holistic Health Institute, in Rhinebeck, New York, and in 1976 he was enrolled in the American Institute Arts & Letters, New York. In 1976 he was awarded the Nebraska Bicentennial Sculpture Competition in Sydney, Nebraska; and in 1964 he was awarded the Emily Lowe Sculpture Award in New York.



Artist Hans Van de Bovenkamp in his Sagaponack studio. Photo by Eileen Casey

Van de Bovenkamp is an Advisory Board member to the Institute for Symbolic Studies and the Omega Institute. He is also a member of the International Sculpture Center; New York Sculptors Guild; and the Royal Society of British Sculptors. Committed to his community, Van de Bovenkamp will be one of the 18 artists participating in the AdultCamp @ Ross "Collectors Eye" series where "visitors will tour both influential and emerging artists' studios on the East End, and gain a glimpse into the mystery and process that goes into the formation of ideas and the creation of work" [beginning June 30 through Aug. 18]. Van de Bovenkamp has also recently donated pieces for auction to the Springs Improvement Society, as well as the Hamptons Music Festival.



"Confluence," 1976, Sydney, NE, for the Bicentennial.

Commenting on his beliefs as an artist, Van de Bovenkamp states "I have become increasingly aware of art as a dialogue between matter and spirit. In recent works, I have emphasized myth, symbol, and dreams and the evolution of time (historically and with aging) to evoke an atmosphere in which the sculpture and its environment speak to the subconscious of the observer."

Further elaborating, "These miniature landscape 'shrines,' with symbolic trees, water, spirit houses, stairs to indicate scale, are all with the orientation to the celestial world. These landscapes are intimate and hopefully one day they can be realized full scale, as they have been built throughout history by various cultures and are today still experienced as tourist meccas."

When did you start making art and what medium(s) do you consider to be your roots in art?

HVdB: Since 1961, I have been exhibiting all over the world. I have had more than 50 one-man shows in addition to taking part in numerous group exhibits.

What is it about the Hamptons that brought you here and enticed you to stay, work, and pursue your art here as opposed to some place else?

HVdB: I came out here to visit friends - de Kooning, Lassaw, Ray Parker, Syd Solomon and Tony Rosenthal - I knew them all in my 20s, and had a studio next to de Kooning. For many years I had been isolated in evolving my body of work, and had no one to talk to about it, however, I am now with a gallery (Louis K. Meisel Gallery) and I can talk to him about my work just as I made that connection so many years ago to artists living out here. My wife, Siv Cedering, and I bought this farm in Sagaponack and I spent years transforming it to a place for our art and to be creative. It is always evolving as I am. We went through a great deal to build what we wanted - dealing with the ZBA, cleaning up - I even learned to use a backhoe! [The property includes a pond, horses (rescue horses from Amaryllis Horse Farm) and a number of buildings in addition to the house and studios - Van de Bovenkamp uses a golf cart nowadays to get around the property - perhaps due to over exertion with that backhoe!].

How do you support yourself as an artist?

HVdB: I have completed more than 50 commissions, including monumental sculptures that have become landmarks in parks and plazas.

Why live and work in the Hamptons as opposed to elsewhere?

HVdB: I find the Hamptons to have a great art community. Also, of course, the light, and the flat horizon. I always use a low horizon line in my work for sculpture and the flat, low horizon line here reminds me of the Netherlands, which is actually below sea level. I am also able to make a link here between the art and the architecture. As for that light - it makes for wonderful reflective light in my work, particularly the morning light which is magical. The links between architecture and preservation found here is also very important to me.



"Fiddlehead Fountain," 2007, Wainscott.

What local environmental or historical aspects of the Hamptons do you relate to that may be reflected in your medium?

HVdB: The spectacular light here.

What artists do you feel have influenced you and your work?

HVdB: Picasso, David Smith and Frank Gehry.

What advice would you give an emerging artist?

HVdB: Work, work work and show everywhere.



"Gateway," 1986, Manhattan House, NYC.

What gives you an edge (if any)?

HVdB: My experience and the large scale of my work

What are you working on now, and are you involved in any upcoming shows or exhibitions?

HVdB: ArtHamptons (Van de Bovenkamp will be unveiling five sculptures), and an installation at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza (New York City). But I must mention the "Sagg Portal" series here. This is a series I have been working on for the past six years. It is about "menhir," which is a word for standing stone [such as Stonehenge]. These portals are to leave a mark by balancing shapes and stacks of metal relative to the landscape and environment. Similar to Abstract Expressionism, this has been a very

important series for me. [Van de Bovenkamp unveiled a new sculpture last month at Manhattan House in New York City as well].

• To view more of Van de Bovenkamp's work visit the following website at www.vandebovenkamp.com, or Louis K. Meisel Gallery, www.meisलगallery.com or Sculpturesite Galley, SF www.sculpturesitegallery.com



"Champagne," 1983, Lansing, MI.