

*Letting someone else fabricate your work is like letting someone else make love to your wife.*

-Peter Reginato

## **Peter Reginato - American Sculptor**

There is strength to heavy metal sculpture, an unavoidable admiration of muscle. Steel is heavy, so that the fabrication of steel sculpture means hours of cutting and grinding, sparks and filings filling the air, goggles and face masks, work gloves and work boots. It is solid construction made from a naturally unyielding material. To conquer the medium, turn it into curves and curlicues so that it wriggles and bounces playfully, glows from the reflection of ambient light, spurts and exclaims, spirals and twists - is like making love. That there is an acknowledged legitimate connection to the piece, the integrity of commitment to the forms that have passed under his hands, shaped this way and that over a long and consistent career is very like a spousal relationship. It is only by having an intimate knowledge of the material that so much beauty can be brought forth. This is important to Peter Reginato, who has made a point of declaring not only his intentions, but also his commitment to that which he professes to love.

Historically, words have crossed over between objects and people; for instance 'beauty' is applied to both the realms of love and art. The word 'sexy' used to describe an object rather than a person is a recent addition to the American vernacular, an extrapolation of the English language. Peter Reginato's work is sexy. It has the serendipitous energy of a mating dance. The titles, both of the paintings and the sculpture, reinforce the association - *Pthalo Love, Midnight Yellow, Sweetheart, Double Dip, Cold Beauty, Tall Cool*. Reginato is not afraid to tell it as it is. He walks tall amongst the beauties, with a bold dash of humour thrown into the sophisticated mix. The work is made to inhabit a hip and glamorous world, to be the sleek embellishments of lifestyles that rise above the quotidian realm to a more refined round of existence.

The negative spaces gained when the shapes are cut from the steel, just as they are also punched from the plane of painted matter in *Joan of Arc*, create an interest in the process of the fabrication as it relates to the composition of the piece. Reginato makes practiced use of fluid transitions between elements, sensual curves or zigzags and corresponding positive to negative spaces. He inserts the linear into the manipulation of the third dimension. The static possibilities associated with steel vanish in movement. Opposites are lifted to superior status as heavy becomes light, stiff becomes soft and staid drops all reservations and boogies.

The addition of an acrylic dip of plastic painted exuberance - a brave move and adventurous as if willing to risk the already great attraction of the cold beauty for a more playful young thing - adds pop to the already charged experience. The psychedelic palate furthers the sense of magical interlocution. Like a light and ephemeral drug that sends shivers up an already awakened spine, the charge is bumped up, the moans of ecstasy repeated, the act becomes wilder and more abandoned.

Reginato's wife is a lot of fun.

Julie Oakes