



Don MacLane
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Raised in New England, I completed high school at Barlow, a small progressive coeducational boarding school 90 miles north of New York. There I studied math and science but had exposure to performing and fine art. Senior year I was fortunate to have a class with a sculptor from New York named Roger Bolomey.

I went to Antioch College intending to continue study of science and math. Once there, however, I discovered that Art was treated as a legitimate academic pursuit. Learning to weld and pour molten bronze by moonlight seemed far more exciting than calculus. The sculpture professor, John Ritterskamp, had been an assistant to the well-known kinetic sculptor George Rickey. Antioch provided a great deal of freedom to try whatever seemed interesting. I taught myself to weld, built several bronze furnaces and basically acted more like a practicing sculptor than a student. Through the co-op program, I had a six-month apprenticeship to a cabinetmaker in Vermont named Simon Watts. My junior year, I was accepted into a residency at the ACT Workshop, a program of the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. ACT Workshop was studio space in an abandoned electrical station in the south end of Boston. There three other sculptors and I had the run of the cavernous unheated building. I produced a number of large Corten pieces and began working in stainless steel. After a year at

ACT, I returned to Antioch to complete my undergraduate degree. There I made a series of stainless steel pieces that had movable joints and forms suggesting a sequence of movement.

I was granted a graduate teaching fellowship to work with Paul Buckner at the University of Oregon in Eugene. There I continued my practice of building welded steel pieces that moved. One of these was a pendulum held up by a rocker that behaved oddly when set in motion. Either the pendulum or the rocker would slow, reducing its amplitude until it was at rest for an instant. Then, surprisingly, it would start to move again gradually increasing its amplitude until the cycle repeated. This unexpected dance captivated my imagination and exploring that type of movement has driven my work in sculpture since then.

After completing my MFA in sculpture, I moved back to New England and joined my friends from the ACT Workshop who had established a cooperative studio. There I worked on rocker supported pendulum pieces using stainless steel for the rockers and hinges, wood for the long interconnecting elements and basalt beach stones for the weights. After a year, I bought an old house in need of serious work and shortly thereafter my son was born. Work on sculpture was replaced by work on the house, childcare and what paying work I could find including carpentry, blacksmithing, welding and timber frame construction.

In hopes of getting back to art and away from the New England winters, we moved back to Portland Oregon and settled in a house in need of all the work I had just completed in New England. To make ends meet, I took a job as a Boilermaker. After about a year, it was clear that, if I was going to have to work a day job, engineering might be preferable to welding. I started back to school. For the next several years, I alternated between full time work as a welder and student. Finally, in 1984, I graduated with a BSME from Portland State University. I spent the next twenty years as a mechanical engineer designing color printers for Tektronix then Xerox. During that time, what creative energy was not consumed on printers went into designing and building experimental musical instruments.

In 2006, I retired from Xerox and immediately went back to work on kinetic sculpture. I basically picked up where I left off with some of the first pieces based on sketches in my old notebooks. The years spent as a steel fabricator and engineer developed skills that prove very helpful in making my current pieces. I am excited about being able to push

the kinetic work in new directions and the range of personalities that the pieces convey with their motion.