

VICTOR GOLDSMITH: ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

I was born in NYC in 1945 and moved to Potsdam, New York shortly before my fifth birthday. When I was young, I used to go directly from my school to my father's studio/classroom at what was then Potsdam State Teachers College in upstate Potsdam, New York. There, I was set up with paper, paints, pencils and clay while my father, Ben Goldsmith, taught and critiqued his undergraduate students in the process and meaning of art. I of course, was oblivious, focused only on the images and shapes I was creating. Like most young children, my art was filled with content and meaning.

Our house was another classroom, though I didn't realize it. My father's paintings, sculpture and jewelry were a constant presence, as well as the tables, chairs, glassware and other household articles that reflected their modernist taste. Pieces by Charles Eames and Bertoia as well as cabinets and tables designed and made by my father were part of my world. The other, equally important object in the house was my father's baby grand piano which he played beautifully. Brahms, De Falla, Beethoven all shared our house with us.

And so, art and music went hand in hand through my youth, even while I was pursuing other activities. I became interested in architecture and eventually spent six years in the Architecture program at Cornell University, where I finally received my degree a year late in 1969. During that time, I made the acquaintance of three fine sculpture professors on the faculty of the College of Art and Architecture; Victor Colby, Jason Sealy and Jack Squire, and took a sculpture elective from Jack Squire during my senior year.

I briefly worked for William Downing, a local architect in Ithaca, before moving back to the Catskills where I had spent many of my summers working as a waiter. For the next few years, I worked as a waiter to support a simple life style and, using the laminating techniques I learned from Jack Squire, began making carved wood sculptures.

By 1977, I had already been working hard at my sculpture for eight years and was accepted as a graduate teaching assistant at The Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island. I spent the next two years learning my craft and trying other means of expression utilizing the wonderful facilities at RISD, receiving my Masters of Fine Art in 1979. Welding, construction, bronze casting were all part of my curriculum, but wood still occupied the space in the center of my creativity.

Economic necessity led me back to architecture, working with Michael Ertel Associates in Providence until I married my wife Ellen in January of 1981 and moved to Brooklyn, New York. Over the course of the next 20 years, I worked for two firms before taking over a construction consulting firm, moving to Hastings-on-Hudson and eventually retiring at the end of 2001.

Following my architectural career, I returned to art with a number of shows of photography and sculpture and in 2006, Ellen and I moved to Cushing, Maine, where I designed and built our house and a studio for myself and here I continue with my new old career.