



The National Association of Women Artists, Inc. is pleased to announce the winner of the \$10,000 Margo Harris Hammarschlag Direct Carving Award for 2011

**Stefanie Rocknak, who is a member of N.A.W.A., stated:**

"It's wonderful, I've never won a prize of this magnitude before, so the validation is really terrific."

Studying painting and art history as an undergrad at Colby College, Rocknak spent a semester abroad in Rome. She was so taken by the figurative sculpture she saw there that she returned home and immediately began teaching herself how to accomplish similarly captivating work in wood.

"To me, sculpture is about capturing body language that might otherwise go unnoticed," she explained. "Figurative sculpture is still quite relevant because it forces us to stop and look at certain expressions; we are given the opportunity to focus on one moment in time, one micro-expression. My sculpture is a manifestation of my philosophical belief that not all art should be conceptual; there is a perennial need for representative figurative art. I could write a bunch of philosophical papers that *say* this, but it's much better, I think, to attempt to *show* this."

Rocknak recently completed work on "The Queen," the second in what will become a triptych of large, laminated wood carvings. The piece took her two years and about 1,000 hours to complete.

"[The Queen] took a long time. I was really trying to push the envelope. I want to create figures that not only break geometrical planes, but have a compelling texture, both literally and figuratively. Hopefully the next piece, 'The Prince,' will take my work to a new level. I plan on including a falcon in this piece. Not only am I fascinated by the relationship between human animals and non-human animals, but I want to pay homage to some of my earlier teachers: the bird carvers."

There were many entries for the Hammerschlag Award, and the selection process was rigorous and competitive, explained Judith Cantor, Awards Chair for the National Association of Women Artists, Inc.. Renowned sculptors Eve Ingalls, Elaine Lorenz, and Mary Ellen Scherl juried the entries.

Four Sculptors were given Honorable Mentions: Sachiko Akiyama, Boston, MA, Rebecca Reineke, Providence, RI, Carol Schwartz, Englewood, NJ, and Jessica Straus, Newton, MA.

The National Association of Women Artists, Inc. was founded in 1889. It is the oldest professional women's fine art organization in the United States. It provides a forum for women artists to share ideas and to exhibit their work. Through its exhibitions, programs, events, educational programs, and archive N.A.W.A. fosters awareness of the monumental contribution of women to the history of American art. The organization is inclusive and serves professional women artists of all backgrounds and traditions.

To view more of Rocknak's sculpture, visit: [www.thenawa.org](http://www.thenawa.org) and <http://www.steffrocknak.net>

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