FRAGMENTA

JAY HOLLAND / SERGIO DE GIUSTI
My purpose in creating this exhibition is to honor two distinguished artists with deep Detroit connections. For over five decades, Jay Holland and Sergio De Giusti have relentlessly devoted themselves to the cultural arts — as artists, instructors, mentors, and community builders. They both display their mastery of the fundamental classic figure, and each has evolved and created their own individual, expressive, and interpretive style. The fragmented, fractured, textured, archaeological, and mythological references of their works are mysterious and memorable. Please enjoy the virtuosity and versatility of these two extraordinary talents.

Skip Davis

Both artists share a great interest in music. Jay loved Russian opera and introduced Sergio to Modest Mussorgsky’s masterpiece Borís Godunóv and Enrico Caruso’s Italian opera singing. Sergio recalls Jay playing Caruso’s music for his students in all of his classes.

The friendship that began in 1960 at the DIA and continued through all of these years seems to be based on a love of art and classical music, and a mutual respect for each other. As Jay says, “we are friends forever after.”

While Jay and Sergio have been in several group shows together, FRAGMENTA is only their second two-person exhibition. It is a pleasure to bring together a body of work by two renowned sculptors in a Museum where the works of a great American master, Marshall Fredericks, reside.

Curatorial Statement

A grant from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), along with operational support from Saginaw Valley State University made the FRAGMENTA: Holland/De Giusti exhibition possible.

I wish to thank these agencies for recognizing the value and importance of the arts in our lives and for supporting museums that exhibit the work of our gifted artists.

I want to acknowledge our elected officials in Lansing and Washington who support the MCACA and the NEA with an annual budget allocation, the result of which is a healthy cultural environment for Michigan residents and visitors to our state.

The work in this exhibition was loaned by the artists and private collectors. We are grateful to all of them.

Special thanks goes to Skip Davis for his commitment to bringing FRAGMENTA to the Museum, Pat Ferrill for designing the catalog, and the entire museum staff for assisting with the installation of the exhibition.

Marilyn L. Wheaton
Museum Director

When Skip (William) Davis, a Detroit area art collector, asked me some time ago if I might consider an exhibition based on the theme of “master and student” that would show the work of two well-known and respected Michigan artists, I asked him to tell me more. Subsequently, he sent me an exhibition concept proposal, which I responded to enthusiastically.

Skip’s proposal read: “Detroit sculptors Jay Holland and Sergio De Giusti are monuments themselves in the art world. Not only have they both been recognized internationally for their mastery in the classical genre, but they have distinguished themselves as artists, instructors and mentors, and as contributors to the Detroit art scene for over six decades.”

Sergio De Giusti and Jay Holland met in 1960 when Sergio was a high school student and Jay was teaching sculpture classes at the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA). Jay was initially attracted to Sergio’s Italian accent (Sergio came to Detroit from Italy in 1954), and later the older artist could see a special talent in his nineteen-year-old student. That sculpture class with Jay helped prepare Sergio for his admission to Wayne State University in 1961 to study sculpture.

Jay and Sergio saw each other regularly for many years. Sergio often visited Jay and his wife at their home in Birmingham, where there was always music and serious discourse about art and sculpture. When Jay took a year-long sabbatical from the College for Creative Studies, Sergio took over teaching his classes.

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Seldom does either Jay Holland or Sergio De Giusti represent an anatomically seamless figure — as in the Graeco-Roman ideal — proffering instead a fractured, embattled vision of humankind. Attuned to the cathartic turmoil of the post-WW II era in which they matured, each forged a distinctive sensibility that allowed them to express their responses to the antihumanistic ethos they witnessed around them. Nor did they toil alone in their efforts to confront a world they saw as out of joint. Their sculptural compatriots, who likewise shared their dark, worrying view as they probed the human condition, are legion: Kenneth Armitage, Reg Butler, Cosmo Campoli, Lynn Chadwick, Herbert Ferber, Elizabeth Frink, Alberto Giacometti, Jacques Lipchitz, Seymour Lipton, Giacomo Manzu, Marino Marini, Eduardo Paolozzi, John Nick Pappas, Germaine Richier, and Theodore Roszak, among others.

The shattered psyches of the second half of the twentieth century were due in no small part to the serial destructiveness of WW II, the Holocaust, Hiroshima and the atomic bomb, the Korean War (in which Holland served), the Cold War, the Vietnam War, and the Gulf War. Artistic discourse buzzed with terms and phrases that encapsulated the fraught state of the period: “the age of anxiety,” “geometry of fear,” “damaged man,” “fragmented,” “shrouded,” “disfigured,” “the human condition,” “the loss of humanistic ideals,” “new images of man,” “existential man.”

Moreover, the heretofore conventional portrait head, bust, or half figure took on new, dark identities, via such descriptive terminology as “partial figures,” “disembodied forms,” “dismembered bodies,” that simultaneously evoked damaged antique statuary, which is minus the limbs, heads, noses, penises/genitals lost over time. Artistically, single severed limbs provoke interest and curiosity, as in downtown Detroit’s own “Fist,” the nickname for the suspended arm and fist of Robert Graham’s Memorial to Joe Louis. Would the Venus de Milo be as singular with arms attached?

Holland, a Detroit native born in 1928, studied at the College for Creative Studies (where he later taught for many years) and the Cranbrook Academy of Art. His life-size Manapart (1997) stands as a prime example of “damaged man” in distress. The lumpy, partially visible figure, poised in a classic contrapposto stance, is encased in shattered armor. He does indeed stand apart, but he is also coming apart at the seams. Vulnerable, “wounded and lacerated” (according to the sculptor), his steel carapace no longer protects him from the slings and arrows hurled his way. One horn has already been shorn from his helmet. The remains of a shield attached to his left “arm” (there is in fact no arm behind it) is paper thin — and useless. Circumnavigating Manapart reveals that his armor is jaggedly split, neck to waist, down the length of his back. Patinaed in a dusty brown, this “existential man” is indeed bereft, isolated on a base that, given its irregular shape, might be described as akin to an ice floe.

A related figure, Decision Pending (1983) is, as its title implies, beset with indecision, while other works, with more explicit titles — A Knight Assembled (1998), Ozymandias (“a remnant of past glory and power,” per the artist), and Bound Figure (both 1978) — summarize Holland’s leitmotif of the shattered ideals at the core of “the human condition” — as well as his practice.

De Giusti, born in 1941, immigrated to Detroit from Italy with his family in 1954. While in high school, he met and studied briefly with Holland and subsequently at Wayne State University, where afterward he taught for a number of years. Grappling with his own vision of human existence in a distressed, fractured society, De Giusti employs the wall-mounted bas-relief as his primary idiom. In contrast to Holland’s blunt, confrontational effigies, De Giusti’s multigical reliefs sweep in fluent arabesques across wide (up to sixteen ft.), multipanel compositions. Within the restless, flowing milieu of heads, body parts, partial figures, lengths of drapery, and miscellaneous detail, scenes drawn from history, opera, the bible, and various classical sources can be discerned. In Genesis (1992) randomly deployed bodies and body parts emerge from a ground littered with ragged, twisted lengths of fabric and strips of bandaging. In the struggle to free themselves from these restrictive coverings — shrouds? cocoons? — De Giusti’s figures animate the fraught eclosion from nonexistence to febrile life. Projecting lengths of undulating fabric link the separate panels into a whole, and the figures — prone, partly hidden, upside down or right side up — thrust forth from the elegantly modeled primal soup.

Similarly, in The Arts (2005), a quartet of relief panels provide fragmentary references to the literary arts (a book), performing arts (theatrical mask), visual arts (palette), musical arts (bearded divo, violin, hand, and baton), their forms emerging from restless eddies of wind, water, and drapery. Here too several rolling forms project beyond the edges of the cast hydrostone to engage viscerally with viewers.

Although all of De Giusti’s figurative reliefs involve mash-ups of classical art practice and his modernist themes of turmoil and turbulence, his Homage to Bernini (2007) is perhaps the most dramatically baroque of all. Within a long, narrow friezelike format, stretching almost ten feet in width, the form of the famous sculptor gradually emerges — his face and hand becoming visible — only to disappear from sight in the last panel, a sobering reminder of the demise of art, humanity, and its vaunted ideals.

A clut of shrouded, partial figures from 1999 — Effigy, Wrapped Figure, and Ethnographic Head — further reflect the artist’s emphasis on “anxiety and turmoil.”

Notably, Holland and De Giusti have occasionally essayed related subjects, significantly “helmets.” This protective headgear is replete with references, destructive and constructive, to armed conflict, ferocity, gladiators, medieval jousts, alpha land, militarism, knights, round tables, and romance, all bundled in a single artifact. Holland’s Helmet (c. 1975) is sleek, shiny, snouted, and marginally functional; De Giusti’s Benin Helmet (1999) is bandaged, shrouded, and useless, its life force seemingly snuffed out. These sculptures, representative of the artists’ caustic oeuvres, disruptive voices, and dissatisfaction with the world, offer, nonetheless, a bracing dose of what Marlene Dumas has described as “art without a face lift.”

Dennis Alan Nawrocki
Jay Holland

Manapart, 1997
Forged and welded steel and Lumnite cement
6’6” x 39” x 32”
Jay Holland  
*Mask of Agamemnon*, 1997  
Forged and welded steel  
24-½” x 17” x 15”

Jay Holland  
*A Way Out*, 1974  
Bonded bronze  
28-½” x 18” x 10’

Jay Holland  
*A Leg to Stand On*, 1984  
Cast Lumnite cement  
35-½” x 16” x 9”

Jay Holland  
*Balance*, 1986  
Cast bronze  
20” x 10” x 7”

Jay Holland  
*Twisting Man*, 1985  
Cast bronze  
22” x 8-¾” x 6”
Jay Holland
*Far Summit*, 1980
Forged and welded bronze
6'10-½" x 15" x 15"

Jay Holland
*Ancient Symbol*, 1961
Forged and welded steel
41" x 19" x 31"

Jay Holland
*Decision Pending*, 1983
Cast Lumnite cement
69" x 38" x 30"

Jay Holland
*Disjecta Membra*, 1985
Forged and welded steel
18" x 22" x 35"
Jay Holland

*Invasers' Helm*, 1975
Forged and welded bronze
37" x 12" x 14"

*Jacketed by Doubt*, 1978
Cast bronze
24" x 25" x 11.5"

*Arboreal Form*, 1960
Forged and welded steel
24" x 25" x 11.5"

*Montebank*, 1981
Cast bronze
21" x 9" x 7"
Jay Holland
*Separated Man* (detail), 1982
Cast Hydrostone
23" x 9" x 6"

Sergio De Giusti
*Images from Ur* (detail), 1992
Cast Hydrostone, bas-relief triptych
23" x 67"
Sergio De Giusti
*Images from Ur*, 1992
Cast Hydrostone, bas-relief triptych
25” x 67”

Sergio De Giusti
*Genesis*, 1992
Cast Hydrostone, bas-relief
30” x 17” (six panels)
Sergio De Giusti
*Effigy*, 1999
Cast Hydrocal
24" x 12" x 9"

Sergio De Giusti
*Ethnographic Head*, 1999
Cast bronze
10" x 5" x 7"

Sergio De Giusti
*Benin Helmet*, 1999
Cast bronze
14" x 7" x 6"

Sergio De Giusti
*Canopic Jar*, 2011
Cast bronze
14" x 9" x 6"

Sergio De Giusti
*Effigy II*, 2007
Cast bronze
15" x 12" x 8"
Sergio De Giusti
Wagner’s Opera – The Flying Dutchman, 1993
Cast Hydrocal
22” x 27” x 10”

Sergio De Giusti
Wagner’s Opera – Ring of the Nibelungen
(Das Rheingold — Götterdämmerung, and Siegfried), 1988
Cast Hydrostone, bas-relief triptych
31” x 7”

Sergio De Giusti
A Faust Symphony (detail), 2010–15
Charcoal and pastel
60” x 40”
Sculptors David Barr and Sergio De Giusti were selected from a national search to create a “Labor Legacy Landmark.” David created the design and the arc; and Sergio created the 17 bronze reliefs that comprise Transcending, now installed at Hart Plaza in Detroit.

Sergio De Giusti

**Labor Legacy Landmark:**
*Transcending*, 2003
Cast bronze and marble
63” x 45”

(bottom, left to right):
*The Birth of Industrial Unionism*
*The Roots of Our Movement*
*The Future Belongs to the Young*
Jay Holland

**Born:**
Detroit, Michigan; November 16, 1928

**Education:**
- Cass Technical High School; Detroit, Michigan 1944–1947
- Society of Arts and Crafts; awarded Detroit Board of Education scholarship; Detroit, Michigan 1948–1953
- Cranbrook Academy of Art; Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 1954–1957

**Selected Exhibitions:**
- Birmingham/Bloomfield Art Center; Birmingham, Michigan 2006
- Kayrod Gallery; Detroit, Michigan 1998
- Detroit Artists Market (with Richard Jerzy); Detroit, Michigan 1998
- Michigan Gallery (with Sergio De Giusti); Detroit, Michigan 1989
- Delta College; Saginaw, Michigan 1985
- Michigan State University; Lansing, Michigan 1985
- Michigan Gallery (with Tony Williams); Detroit, Michigan 1982
- Hanemura Gallery; Detroit, Michigan 1961
- Flint Institute of Art; Flint, Michigan 1960

**Selected Commissions/Collections:**
- Manapart; Center for Creative Studies; Detroit, Michigan 1995
- In Praise of a Young Girl; Hoagland Family Memorial; Birmingham, Michigan 1989

**Decision Pending:** City of Brighton; Brighton, Michigan 1983
Decorative piece for Nedra Kapetonsky; Lathrup, Michigan 1980

**Calligraphic Spirit:** Dow Chemical Corporation; Midland, Michigan 1969

**Tobacco Relief:** DWG Cigar Company; Lima, Ohio 1966

**Tree of Life:** Ira Kaufman Chapel; Southfield, Michigan 1961

**Floral Concept:** Bell Florists; Birmingham, Michigan 1959

**Selected Awards:**
- State of Michigan Fine Arts Grant 1983
- Gold Medal Award for Sculpture; Scarab Club; Detroit, Michigan 1982
- Purchase Award — Small Sculpture and Drawing Exhibition; Ball State University; Muncie, Indiana 1981
- Purchase Award — Small Sculpture and Drawing Exhibition; Ball State University; Muncie, Indiana 1977

**Teaching History:**
- Society of Arts and Crafts / Center for Creative Studies / College for Creative Studies; Detroit, Michigan 1964–1998

Jay’s teaching responsibilities in the sculpture program at Society of Arts and Crafts were founded on a classical figurative tradition, enlivened by contemporary attitudes and a consuming interest in experimentation and inquiry. These adventures in sculpture were supported by a very active bronze foundry which sometimes doubled as an iron foundry. Considerable work in direct metal also prevailed at this time. Jay served approximately two years as Fine Arts Chairman and retired in 1998 after 34 years with the rank of Professor.

**Artist Statement**
The first sculpture from my studio in Birmingham included pieces based on herbal and arboreal forms. The spirit of these works owed much to the exquisite design and sensitivity expressed in classic Japanese gardens, wood block prints and Japanese calligraphy.

Working directly with metal, though time-consuming, reduces the process of making sculpture to literally a one-step operation eliminating the need for mold making and casting. Familiarity with direct metal techniques made the method a natural choice for developing sculptural ideas derived from medieval arms and weaponry.

My figurative works were dominated by the desire to demonstrate emotional distress by displacing normal anatomical associations, employing damaged anatomical parts, displayed in an imperfect alignment, shrouding portions of the figure and deleting certain anatomical parts. The result is forceful images attempting to interpret life’s passing experience, more effectively, perhaps for this sculptural discipline.

“During the 70’s, Holland did a compelling series of welded steel armor parts, underscoring the symbolic qualities of such beautiful forms. During the 80’s, he introduced classical figures with fragmented body parts, representing the deep psychological and spiritual damage suffered by modern man.”
Joy Hakanson Colby

“Jay Holland is considered by many to be the father of Detroit sculpture; he taught the craft at CCS from 1964 to 1998.”
Detroit Metro Times

“Studying with Jay, I quickly realized that I was in the presence of a master. Jay Holland is in a class by himself.”
James Bouchey

“Young artists shouldn’t miss the chance to study with Jay Holland. Every sculptor worth his salt has to master the human figure.”
Hugh Timlin

“I found a mentor and exceptionally skilled sculptor in Jay Holland at the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit.”
Suzanne Martin

“Jay is a maestro. To him, being an artist is about a lifestyle.”
Ray Katz
Sergio De Giusti

Selected Commissions/Collections:
- William Davidson Memorial; Guardian Industries Memorial Garden; Auburn Hills, Michigan 2012
- Pesce Memorial; San Donato Val Di Comino Cemetery; Lazio, Italy 2003
- Reaching Out; Michigan Legacy Art Park; Thompsonville, Michigan 2002
- Humanistic Stele; Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan; Detroit, Michigan 1998
- St. Vincent De Paul; Library, De Paul University; Chicago, Illinois 1997
- Bernini Triptych; General Lectures Building, Wayne State University; Detroit, Michigan 1996
- Civil Rights Memorial; M.L.K. Plaza, Eastern Michigan University; Ypsilanti, Michigan 1991
- Michigan Landscapes; Library of Michigan; Lansing, Michigan 1988
- Chiesa Parrocchiale; Church of San Vito Centennial; Maniago, Italy 1988
- Cross for Pope John Paul; Archdiocese of Detroit; Detroit, Michigan 1987
- Arturo Toscanini; Waupun Public Library; Waupun, Wisconsin 1969
- Gen. Anthony Wayne; Centennial Courtyard, Wayne State University; Detroit, Michigan 1968

Selected Awards:
- Michigan Council for the Arts Creative Artist Grant
- Wayne State University Arts Achievement Award
- Wayne County International Artist Award
- Cavaliere della Repubblica; Government of Italy

Artistic Statement
As artists we are products of our time and the people that appear at just the right time, who stimulate our senses and help guide us to make the right choices.

My vision as an artist has been very consistent throughout the years. Working in relief sculpture and focusing on the human figure; perhaps more so on the human condition. As an Italian born artist, I have been very strongly influenced by the tradition of modern Italian relief sculpture by artists Giacomo Manzù and Emilio Greco. I continue that tradition in my art work. My classically expressionist images are inspired by the passion and emotions of the Baroque and Hellenistic periods.

“By paying attention to the classical forms, De Giusti speaks of our future, the importance of culture and what we are in the process of losing through our actions.”

Nick Sousanis

Born:
Maniago (Friuli), Italy; September 25, 1941

Education:
Wayne State University; B.F.A. (1966) and M.F.A. (1968)

Selected Exhibitions:
- Tenebroso; Detroit Artists Market; Detroit, Michigan 2010
- Wrapped Fragments; Kayrod Gallery; Detroit, Michigan 2008
- Figurative Reliefs; Kral Art Center; St. Joseph, Michigan 2001
- Park Gallery; Kalamazoo, Michigan 2000
- Images of Ur: A Retrospective; The Studio Gallery; Alexandria, Virginia 1999
- Sergio De Giusti: A Retrospective; Madonna University; Livonia, Michigan 1998
- Sergio De Giusti 1967–1997: Thirty Year Retrospective; Berkowitz Gallery, University of Michigan; Dearborn, Michigan 1996
- Sergio De Giusti: Rilievi In Bronzo Mostra Personale; Galleria D’arte Grogoletti; Pordenone, Italy 1983
- Michigan Gallery; Detroit, Michigan 1981
- Sergio De Giusti Personale; Galleria D’Arte Rubens; Gradisca D’Isonzo (Friuli), Italy 1980
- Sheldon Ross Gallery; Birmingham, Michigan 1978
- Detroit Artists Market; Detroit, Michigan 1976

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“By paying attention to the classical forms, De Giusti speaks of our future, the importance of culture and what we are in the process of losing through our actions.”

Nick Sousanis

“The shrouds are bandages concealing loss of meaning, of faith, of memory, and maybe the loss of the ability to adequately represent the inner life.”

Glenn Mannisto

“These works, mysterious and compelling, demonstrate the artist’s fascination for an art form that has its roots in his country of origin. They also reaffirm the eclectic nature of Mr. De Giusti’s art whereby he is free to pick and choose from the ideas and visual images of a wide variety of cultures. This characteristic thus serves to anchor him firmly within the dominant perspective of much contemporary art.”

Irving Gumb

“Sergio is a major name in sculpture. He’s one of the few doing the bas relief that has recognizable theme to it, and very Italian.”

Jack Olds

“De Giusti is a master of relief, creating a pageant of figures in constant motion. The artist ranges from the opera’s of Richard Wagner to life in modern Michigan. He works with passionate energy that infuses his work with poetry. De Giusti builds sculpture environments to clothe modern allegories of love and death in forms rooted in the Renaissance. His theme: The alienation of modern man, viewed from an historical perspective.”

Joy Hakanson Colby

“One of the few traditional figurative sculptors who updates mythical and operatic themes with values from feminism, psychoanalysis and current events.”

Marsha Miro
Additional works by Sergio De Giusti in the exhibition not illustrated in this catalog:

**Urban Stele**, 1998
Wax model for bronze
7” x 56”

**Wrapped Figure**, 1999
Cast Hydrocal
22” x 17” x 8”

**Labor Legacy Landmark: The Roots of Our Movement**, 2003
Cast Hydrocan model
63” x 45”

**The Arts**, 2005
Cast Hydrostone, bas-relief
40” x 7” (four panels)

**Homage to Bernini**, 2007
Cast Hydrostone, bas-relief triptych
36” x 9’8”

**Pediment Fragment I**, 2007
Cast Hydrostone, bas-relief
16” x 20”

**Pediment Fragment II**, 2007
Cast Hydrostone, bas-relief
16” x 20”

**Martirio**, 2010
Charcoal
41” x 26”

**Canopic Jar**, 2011
Wax
17” x 10” x 7”

**Canopic Jar**, 2011
Plaster
16” x 7” x 7”

**War Monument**, 2012
Bronze and steel
15” x 23” x 7”

**Borealis**, 2013
Charcoal and pastel
41” x 29”

Additional works by Jay Holland in the exhibition not illustrated in this catalog:

**Guitar Player**, 1969
Cast bronze
13” x 11” x 8-½”

**Mandrill Helm**, 1973
Forged and welded steel
12” x 8” x 15”

**Medieval Helm**, 1974
Forged and welded steel
32½” x 9” x 14”

**Fats**, 1976
Terra cotta
24” x 7” x 6”

**Long Movement**, 1979
Forged and welded steel
62” x 25” x 16”

**Ukase**, 1981
Forged and welded bronze
20” x 27” x 9”

**Un Giorno di Regno**, 1986
Terra cotta
24” x 19” x 16”

**Continents**, 1988
Plaster
65” x 28” x 31”

**Mannequin**, 1997
Hydrostone, wood, and bronze wire
31” x 18” x 21½”

**A Knight Assembled**, 1998
Cast bronze
18” x 14” x 11”

**Menace**, 2001
Forged and welded steel
24” x 15” x 23”

**Un Giorno di Regno**, 1986
Terra cotta
24” x 19” x 16”

**Continents**, 1988
Plaster
65” x 28” x 31”

**Mannequin**, 1997
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Credits • Art direction and design: Skip Davis • Design and production: Pat Ferrill • Production: Kazuko Sacks • Photography: Brian Callahan, Jeff Cancelosi, Lori De Giusti, Roxanne Lambie, Glenn Schoenbach, Mark Yasenchak • Photo retouching: Tracey Bouchey • Editing: Cynthia Edwards • Proofreading: Andrea Ondish • Personal assistant to Jay Holland: James Bouchey
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