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Artist's message takes shape in iron

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Micky Jansen has been an artist all her life, but her foray into sculpture is a new-found passion that she's honing at Scottsdale Community College.

Jansen is currently taking a Sculpture class...her third... from Sculpture Instructor Ted Uran, who also is Fine and Performing Arts Division Chair. She participated in her first iron pour this year, learning and experiencing the painstaking process involved to prepare for the pour.

"Making the sculpture is the easy part," Jansen said. "Preparing the mold is the hard part, because it's very technical. It takes time and patience. At the pour, you have to be totally focused and aware of your surroundings, because you are playing with 'fire'...melted iron."

Using the lost wax process, students preparing for the iron pour spend about two thirds of the semester prepping the mold. But, Jansen doesn't mind, because she said when you're working on it you forget time and everything around you. It's like art is part of her DNA.

Growing up in Holland, Jansen remembers drawing as a child and spending her first earned money on a set of oil paints. She was very good. So good, in fact, she was accepted into the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague at age 16, based on her talent and potential rather than the required high school diploma.

The following year, however, at 17, she met a young man and dropped out of school to be with him and start a family.

"I never went back to school, but I didn't completely give up art," Jansen said. "I am mostly self-taught, but I have artist friends who I have worked with for years and we support each other."

Oil painting has been Jansen's art passion for most of her life, but she also has moved into acrylics, batik and, now, sculpting.

"I love to work with my hands and enjoy ceramics, but I don't use a pottery wheel, because I like to work the clay and mold it into shape," she said.

Jansen said there's always a message in her paintings and she is bringing that same spirit to her sculpture.

For the iron pour, Jansen drew inspiration from an oil painting she did 17 years ago that depicts a She-Wolf as Mother Earth and mankind suckling as a symbol of depleting mother nature of resources.

"I see the She Wolf as nurturing, embodying mother nature, who gives us what we need," said Jansen. "The She Wolf is giving, unboundlessly loyal, tender and unjudgmental...a giver, not a taker."

It's almost as if Jansen is describing herself. She gave up the opportunity of a formal education to start a family and raise four children. She gave unboundless love to her family, yet, it wasn't enough to save the marriage, which ended in divorce recently.

There's no bitterness in Jansen, even though she likely will lose her home and she is starting over when most individuals her age are settling into retirement.

"I'm growing," she said. "I really enjoy the classes and I'm learning so much from Ted. I ask a lot of



Micky Jansen is shown with her sculpture of a She Wolf, representing Mother Earth, and mankind suckling, which depicts the depletion of natural resources.

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