

Shelly Durica-Laiche Slide Notes

Shelly was born in Charleston, Oregon August 1972. She is a working artist, who lives in Portland. Her family worked in Indio, California as migrant farm workers when she was young and her mother named her Indio, among other names - her birth certificate had only a last name. She chose to be called Shelly at 5 years of age, when starting school.

Shelly says, "I'm a welder that designs and builds both decorative and functional steel objects. I use as much salvaged material as possible in my work. I collect it from steel yards around the state, from the side of the road, through my travels or by donation. Scrap metal has an embedded history and character that folds into each design.

Portland State University

Shelly graduated from Portland State University with a double major in Sculpture and Graphic Design. She took her first welding class in 2003 and started her own business in 2012. This is a piece she created using bailing wire and rice paper. Notice how large it is at the top of the stairs.

Oregon Zoo

Ask students if they have been to the Oregon Zoo. Ask if they have ever noticed that some of the rocks and trees are not real? Shelly was part of a special team that helped to create some of the animal habitats from steel rods, wire, concrete, paint, and rubber.

LAIKA - ParaNorman

LAIKA is a movie production company in Oregon. Shelly helped to build some of the movie sets for the movie *ParaNorman*. She used cardboard, toothpicks, paper, and paint, to create trees, rocks, and leaves.

Shelly's Sketch Book pages

Here are some images from Shelly's sketchbook. She thinks about things she has seen in nature; she also gets inspiration from the odd pieces of metal that she finds. Then, she sketches a design. Shelly has said "I'm inspired by the unique shapes of all my found treasures. Sometimes I know right away what I want to build with them but sometimes it takes years. I'm driven by the design challenge of transforming known objects into ones with a new voice... for the viewer to be surprised by how a material is used in an unconventional way, far removed from its past life. It's magic to me."

Indio Metal Arts

Shelly named her art business Indio Metal Arts. Here you can see some of the different metal pieces she uses in her artwork. She is committed to using as much recycled/salvaged material as possible.

Scrappy Moongate – 2023 6'H x 7'W, steel, brass, aluminum.

Shelly makes Moongates by special order; a moongate is a circular opening in a garden wall that traditionally acted as a passageway for people to walk through.

To create a piece of this size, she first places the metal on the ground, so all the elements are ready. When she is happy with the design, she welds the metal pieces together.

Making Art

Protective gear is required to weld metal. Shelly wears a leather apron to protect her skin and clothing from the sparks that come from welding. She also wears a protective helmet, and a respirator mask to keep from

breathing in toxic fumes. Because she uses recycled material, there is sometimes paint, plastic, rubber, oils, or other materials on it that could be harmful to the lungs and body. Here you can see a moongate being welded.

Wetland Gate – 2020

Made of aluminum, brass, copper, steel, rocks, and a marble for the bird's eye. This gate is over six feet tall, the leaf on the right side, is the door latch.

Gothic Polka Dot Flowers - 2022 and Coppertail – 2022

The flowers are 4-6 feet tall made of reclaimed steel and ball bearings.

Coppertail is about 5 feet tall, made of steel and copper.

Surfer - 2022

This sculpture is about 3.5 feet tall.

Shelly said, "I really enjoyed watching this character evolve into the Surfer! It started when I acquired the orange bottle jack, I knew it would become a leg and searched for another piece I had set aside 9 years ago that became the other leg."

Buoyancy – 2023

This sculpture is over 5 feet tall and over 2 feet wide. Made of steel and brass.

This piece is kinetic, that means there are parts that move.