

MOVE OVER, TRADITIONAL SCULPTURE. Whether it's twisting, turning and tilting or swaying, swinging and spinning, kinetic sculpture speaks a language all its own. It's a language of motion, prompted by a touch from a hand, the wind or even light to get the action started. Made from steel, aluminum, wood, fabric or glass, kinetic works are all about change.

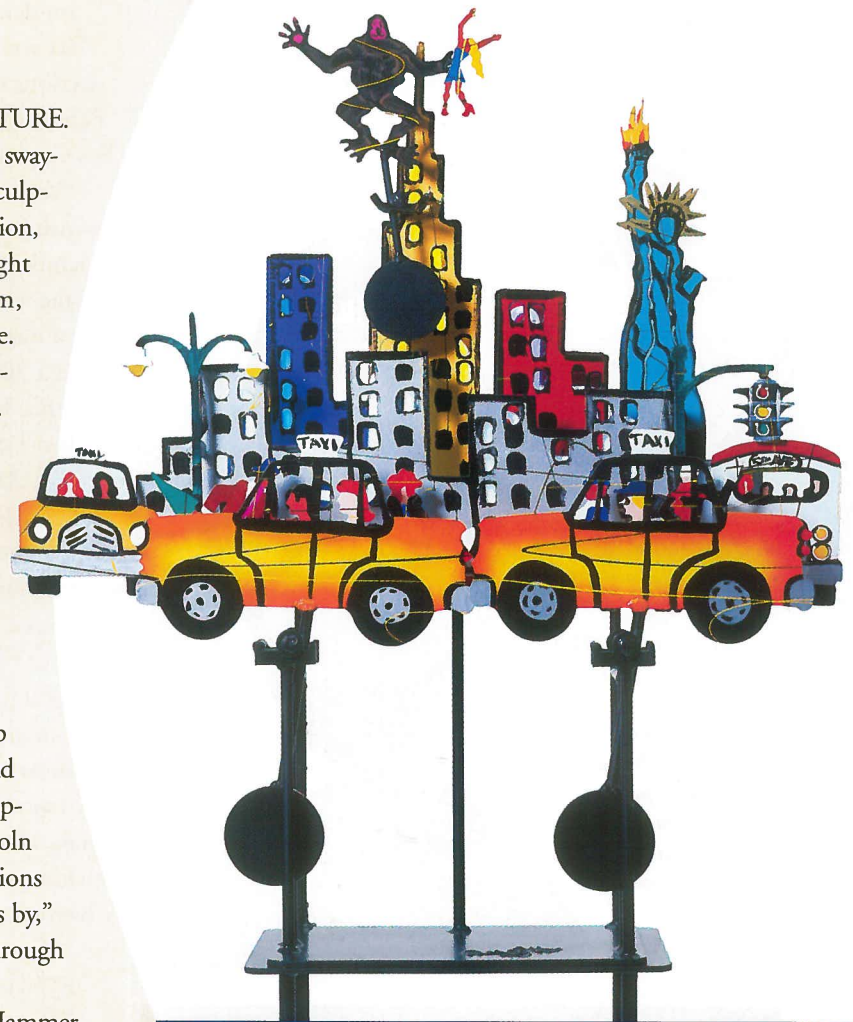
New Orleans artist Bryan Mavor builds highly polished kinetic aluminum sculptures based on natural shapes. "Actually," he says, "I doodle abstract ideas and that's how the sculptures flesh out. The shape just catches my eye while I'm drawing." A metalworker, Mavor has a passion for sailing that spurred his interest in sculpture moved by air currents. His indoor and outdoor sculptures, ranging from tabletop models to 7 feet, rotate completely. "There are 360 degrees of motion in each element," he explains, each piece clearing the other as it makes its circle.

"The shapes are delightful. They move, so you keep seeing the sculpture from different perspectives as the wind moves," says Lee Freed of the works in the wind sculpture garden she created at the Freed Gallery in Lincoln City, Ore., to showcase the moving metal constructions of artists such as Lyman Whitaker. "Everyone stops by," she says. "Even after we're closed, people stroll through the garden."

People are also drawn to the towering kinetic Hammering Men, created by Joseph Borofsky, that welcome visitors to the Seattle Art Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego. Both museums also have a variety of kinetic works in their permanent collections. And in Maryland, the 55-foot whirligig, "Life, Liberty & The Pursuit of Happiness," by mechanic, farmer and visionary artist Vollis Simpson at the American Visionary Art Museum is a Baltimore landmark.

"Too many people feel that art must be serious," says self-taught kinetic sculptor Fredrick Prescott, whose playground is Prescott Studio in Santa Fe, N.M. "I believe there is a child in every man and woman. People have a need to laugh and have fun." A life-size steel elk whose head bobs with the slightest breeze and a dog that sits on the ground and lifts its paw are the products of Prescott's playful nature. He also interprets the world around him in whimsical, colorful movable steel vignettes, from 18 inches and up, of Route 66, Saturday night at the movies and Wall Street, among others.

The former managing editor of AMERICANSTYLE magazine, Pat Worrell now freelances from her home in San Diego, Calif.



The arms at the top of David C. Roy's "Geppetto," left, are counter-weighted by long "legs" that frame the left side of this movable piece.



Right, Dennis Elliott combined bigleaf maple burl and stainless steel to create this work in his Gemini Orbital series. Below, a painted aluminum "Mermaid" weather vane by James Eaton.



Michael Jordan commissioned an eight-foot sculpture from Prescott, with himself on offense and Magic Johnson on defense. The artist's works, which can range up to 18 feet and 3,000 pounds, have also stamped into the collections of Oprah Winfrey, Sylvester Stallone, Roseanne Barr and Steven Spielberg. Two works are on view at Santa Fe's Coyote Cafe.

"You can rotate my pieces on their bases whenever you wish to give them a different look," says wood sculptor Dennis Elliott of his new Orbital Axis series. "This involves the viewer in the actual artistic process."

As a modern dancer and weaver, Gabe Stoner once designed a 30-foot kinetic canopy over the dancers in a performance he choreographed in the late 1970s. "Years later, when I decided to try making mobiles full time, I did a scaled-down version," says Stoner. Today Stoner and his partner Mike Hatton are the Mobile Guys in Osage City, Kan. They work with materials such as anodized aluminum tubing bound with dyed monofilament and fabric "to create," says Stoner, "peaceful, elegant mobiles."

David C. Roy, of Wood that Works, creates fascinating optical patterns of motion in spring-driven works he calls "wooden escapement mechanisms." Rooted in the traditions of Americana, James Eaton puts a contemporary twist on whirligigs and weathervanes. Woodworker Craig Nutt's vocabulary of vegetable motifs includes a twirling tuber or two, while artist Frank Chase uses exotic hardwoods to create floor clocks and kinetic sculptures.

To start collecting kinetic art, visit your local galleries and watch the pages of Datebook for special exhibitions at galleries such as the Wexler Gallery in Philadelphia, and in public installations such as Laumeier Sculpture Park in St. Louis, where wind and sunlight animate a construction by George Rickey.

In general, prices start under \$100 and range from \$1,200 to \$6,000 for most works, more for special commissions. "Buy something that appeals to you first," recommends gallery owner Freed. "Then you should get background information on the artist and make sure the work is from a gallery that stands behind it."

Kinetic-Art.org (301 Clematis St., #3000, West Palm Beach FL 33401; 561-655-2745) is a fledgling organization seeking to unite kinetic artists and collectors worldwide. "Our research has found only 250 artists dedicated to kinetic art, with the heaviest concentration in the U.S., Germany and Switzerland," says Ralf Gschwend, the group's president. "About 30 percent or so do other static sculpture or painting." View the results of the organization's first competition starting on July 1 at www.Kinetic-Art.org. "We're trying to bring kinetic art to the forefront," Gschwend says. "It's high time to expose this wonderful facet of sculptural art to more people in more places." ☒

