

Dean Richard Leary

Biography

Dean Leary was born in the small town of Swananoa, North Carolina located in the Blue Ridge Mountains, but his family moved to Roanoke Island on the Outer Banks when he was 10.

After graduating from Manteo High School in 1963, he attended East Carolina University where he earned a bachelor's degree in art in 1970. In 1971 he studied bronze casting in Corona and Rome, Italy with the University of Georgia, and in 1973 he received a MFA in sculpture from East Carolina University.

Following his graduation from CU, Dean worked for a year in his studio and then accepted a position as an instructor at Mitchell Community College in Statesville, NC where he taught sculpture and three-dimensional design from 1974 to 1979. In September of 1979, he took a one year interim position as a sculpture instructor at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. Since 1980, Dean has worked in his private studio in Statesville, NC and has been exhibiting in galleries throughout the Southeastern United States.

Artist Statement

My sculptures reflect my keen interest in our environment. I grew up on the Outer Banks and my work reflects both the majestic beauty and the destructive forces of nature. Weather continually "sculpts" our environment.

Powerful storms cut inlets through our barrier islands, rivers are reshaped by floods, winds move sandhills, and islands and reefs appear and disappear. Trees are shaped by coastal winds; waves carve the beaches. Shells, driftwood, bones... all are inspirational, and I feel my work reflects nature's influence.

Materials/Techniques

The majority of my sculpture is created by carving directly into stone (alabaster, soapstone, granite, marble). This direct carving technique allows me to explore a wide range of expressive possibilities using a material that is not only rich in texture and color but also has the quality of permanence.