



### Artist's Statement

I began making kinetic sculptures 12 years ago. My objective was to create a fluid moving three dimensional object in space. My earlier designs were very curvilinear and I wanted the motion to echo that. No jerking or sudden movements which would destroy the sense of floating in space. I didn't realize it at the time but the motion I was looking for related directly to my free flight model airplanes. I have never had an interest in making a model look like a real airplane, I only want to watch them fly, without my control. To me this is a beautiful thing to watch and it is the same motion and grace of movement found in free flight airplanes that I have always worked toward in my kinetic sculptures.

Since the movement and form were more important I used aluminum as a medium because it was white and reduced the amount of detail. There was also no attempt to represent anything in particular, just shapes moving in space. Comments about these things and my interest in making a living at this eventually moved my designs into the direction of representation so that now over two thirds of my designs are figurative and designed for the garden accessory industry. The fluid movement of the form, however, has always been the ultimate goal.

The engineering of motion was a necessary by-product of design. I have invented many different mechanisms and methods of work in order to achieve the movement I want. I have also used several different media new to me. Solving problems using mechanics and materials to achieve graceful motion under all kinds of wind conditions has proven to be an enormously rewarding adventure. I don't regret a minute of it and I have many more concepts and designs to explore.



*Oak Run Studios*

**Arthur Higgins  
2001**

Arthur Higgins has been a professional artist for 39 years. During this time he has had over 70 solo shows, been in over 80 group shows, completed 39 Public Art commissions, taught 10 years at the University of Alaska, and has his work in private, corporate, federal, state and municipal collections throughout the United States. He has an MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

He works in the media of oil, watercolor, etching, lithograph, woodcut, lost wax casting, mixed metals fabrication and wood. His time is divided between doing Fine Art, Public Art Commissions, and managing his contemporary craft business which is designing and manufacturing kinetic metal garden sculptures called Wind Petals™.

The Wind Petal™ concept was derived from a public art proposal and worked into a contemporary craft business after about 3 years of experimentation. The basic idea is to have a sculptural form moving as much as possible in all kinds of wind so that it would always be changing and the viewer would see it differently as its position changed. Problems such as a wear resistant bearing system, mounting system and high wind forces had to be solved which in turn affected the design. Another significant design driver was shipping. The designs had to be the right size for economical for shipping.

As these problems were solved the designs evolved into three basic concepts, those mounted on a pipe stand and are about waist high, those on a 30" rod, and those that are one shepherd's hooks and can be used indoors in flower vases.

All parts of a Wind Petal™ are hand made. A pattern is traced onto a blank piece of metal, the shape is cut out, edges rounded, and the cutting oil is washed off. The blank is shaped around forms Arthur designed which are made of wood, pipes and anything else that works for getting the right shape. After the pieces are shaped the parts are assembled and the whole unit is balanced. It is then disassembled, sand blasted with glass beads, rebalanced and packed for shipping.

Aluminum was the first metal of choice because its weight and because the alloy used is very weather resistant, originally designed for boat building in the Pacific Northwest. Brass with an applied patina has been added to the Wind Petal™ line recently, which is more costly and time consuming, but adds the dimension of age to the designs.

Arthur was born and raised near Seattle, Washington and attended undergraduate school at the University of Washington, graduating with a degree in zoology. He moved to Alaska in the early sixties and lived and worked there for 25 years before moving to his current studio/residence at Mosier, Oregon.



## Oak Run Studios

### 2001 RESUME

**ARTHUR HIGGINS**, p.o. box 499, Mosier, Oregon 97040 phone: (541) 478-3451 fax: (541) 478-2269. arthigg@gorge.net, www.oakrunstudios.com

**Education:** University of Wisconsin-Madison, M.F.A.; University of Washington, B.A.

#### Selected Public Art Commissions:

- 1999**  
acoustic board, acrylic, metal, 16' x 60', West Valley High School, Fairbanks, Alaska  
painted wood, metal, 12' x 82', Romig Middle School, Anchorage, Alaska
- 1997**  
painted, wood, aluminum, 4' x 18', Anne Wein Elementary School, Fairbanks, Alaska  
painted wood, steel shafts, and push rods, ball bearings, 4' x 24', Chugiak Elementary School, Anchorage, Alaska
- 1996**  
steel, brass, copper waterfall sculpture, 18' x 16' x 8', Gary Peterson residence, Portland, Oregon
- 1994**  
aluminum, cedar exterior wall sculpture, 24' x 17' x 15', Mt. Edgcombe High School, Sitka, Alaska  
mixed media interior floor sculpture for 3 year-olds, 6' x 9' x 20', Wonder Works Children's Museum, The Dalles, OR  
aluminum, red cedar exterior kinetic sculpture, 8' x 6' x 3', Juneau Parks Department, Juneau, Alaska
- 1993**  
copper, painted wood, 3' x 19' x 40' (hallway), King Career Center, Anchorage, Alaska
- 1991**  
mixed metals, wood, wall and 3-D floor sculpture, Rogers Park Elementary School, Anchorage, Alaska  
mixed metals, wood, relief sculpture, 3' x 184' (hallway), Tudor Elementary School, Anchorage, Alaska
- 1990**  
mixed metals, wood, 3' x 10', Columbia River Bank, The Dalles, Oregon  
woodcuts, State Lands Building, State of Oregon, Salem, Oregon  
mixed wood, metal interior wall sculpture, 5' x 12', Juneau School District Office, Juneau, Alaska  
mixed wood, metal exterior wall sculpture, 8' x 12', Juneau School District Office, Juneau, Alaska
- 1989**  
mixed wood, metal interior wall sculpture, 4' x 15', Galena School, Galena, Alaska  
mixed wood, metal interior wall sculpture, 4' x 10', Dept of Natural Resources Bldg., State of Alaska, Fairbanks
- 1988**  
painted wood *bas relief* interior wall sculpture, 4' x 40', Ravenwood Elementary School, Eagle River, Alaska
- 1987**  
metal and wood exterior wall sculpture, 4' x 40', Petersburg High School, Petersburg, Alaska
- 1986**  
painted wood *bas relief* 20' x 32', Nenana City School, Nenana, Alaska  
painted wood *bas relief* interior wall sculpture, 8' x 24', Bettles School, Bettles, Alaska  
painting, North Star Borough School District, Fairbanks, Alaska
- 1985**  
aluminum exterior wall sculpture, 6' x 12', Fairview Recreation Center, Anchorage, Alaska  
painted wood *bas relief* 6' x 14', Hughes School, Hughes, Alaska  
painted wood *bas relief* 6' x 12', Huslia school, Huslia, Alaska  
painted mural, 4' x 6', Nikolai School, Nikolai, Alaska
- 1982**  
painting, State of Alaska, Anchorage Pioneer's Home, Anchorage, Alaska
- 1981**  
aluminum 3-D exterior sculpture, 8' x 10' x 15', Eagle River Correction Center, Eagle River, Alaska  
painting, State of Alaska, Fairbanks Youth Center, Fairbanks, Alaska
- 1980**  
iron and brass exterior wall sculpture, 8' x 12', University of Alaska, Palmer, Alaska  
aluminum exterior wall sculpture, 6' x 12', Fairview Recreation Center, Anchorage, Alaska
- 1979**  
painted mural, 6' x 10', Kwethluk School, Kwethluk Alaska

**Summary:** Δ 39 years experience as a professional artist. Δ Awarded 38 public art commissions since 1977. Δ Over 70 solo shows since 1969. Δ Over 80 group exhibitions since 1976. Δ Art Instructor for the University of Alaska, States of Alaska and Oregon, various art organizations.

