



"Dark Stallion," acrylic on canvas, 54" × 64"

TRANSFORMATIVE ART

The edgy new myths of H. Margret's art.

BY SARA FORD

When describing her career, artist H. Margret uses words such as a fortunate odyssey. Indeed her original art, energized by multiple themes, has been a transformational voyage that has left both the artist and her collectors empowered. Strong work, aesthetically presenting a state of being, is the goal in her painting and sculpture process.

The artist attributes the transformational quality in her art to an accident in 1979, which, according to Jungian theory, initiated a process of psychological transformation. This mysterious alchemy led to edgy new developments in a painting style depicting

faces, heads, and figures. One major development was the different-sized eyes in the heads, which became a key imagery in her work. Many casein studies were created at this time, as well as oil and acrylic paintings.

"Then, in 1989, I encountered the books of Marion Woodman, internationally acclaimed Jungian analyst and author," H. Margret explains. "I found the titles of my paintings as phrases in her books long before I read her works." Some of these titles were "Precarious Balance," "Lost Child," and "The Black Madonna."

She eventually contacted Woodman, sending the analyst photos and slides of her

art. Woodman's handwritten reply stated: "Indeed they are the images of an archetypal journey. I am so happy that my work has helped you to connect these images to your own inner process with an understanding of the transformative power of what you are doing. It is an astonishing journey in paint. I do admire your courage and integrity."

Courage is a trait H. Margret has demonstrated in more concrete ways throughout her long career. Born in Pennsylvania, she remembers drawing as a child. "But I wasn't attracted to realism," H. Margret recalls. Early inspirations were frequent museum



"Mute Queen," acrylic on canvas, 40" x 50"

trips organized by her parents while her family still lived on the east coast. Seeing Vincent Van Gogh, Matisse and other modern exhibitions in her teens was formative.

Eventually, the family moved to Salt Lake City. At college in Washington state, H. Margret majored in journalism and took many art classes. "I began studio investigations in 1978 which germinated the series work I continue to evolve today." She spent a number of years working and exhibiting in the Pacific northwest, including many shows in Portland and Seattle. While in Seattle, she worked at Dale Chihuly's Boathouse, which she found to be a wonderful opportunity. While exhibiting her painting in downtown Seattle, Margaret Henkels became H. Margret, another alchemy in a complex career.

In 1994, H. Margret traveled to Santa Fe with a friend. The trip proved to be far more than a vacation. Astounded by the diverse

art community, she decided to relocate, assuming, even though her art was different, that she would fit right in. "I found a live-in studio on Canyon Road," she recalls, "and I started selling my art myself."

The feedback from her growing number of collectors turned out to be critical to her success. Noted one collector, "It's amazing to me how much of what inspires your work and is captured there is what I think about and value. I've come to know in the last seven or eight years that there really are no coincidences."

Another collector notes, "Free from the constraints of photo-realism, Margret's work sees through the facade of personality to the emotional reality of the subject, giving us an insight into depths we seldom otherwise see."

The originality of her work is not lost on the public, H. Margret comments. "That's when I started to realize that my work was

very communicative, very accessible." And, it was unique. "People really liked it. They'd say: 'Oh, this is different. Good.'"

On Canyon Road, H. Margret operated her own gallery, which soon represented the works of others as well as her own art, for ten years. And then the process changed. H. Margret closed her own gallery last year to be represented by another Santa Fe venue. She also shows in the Chicago area and is having a large retrospective show in Salt Lake City this coming October at The Forum Gallery.

A number of factors set H. Margret's work apart from that of other artists. Her imagery reveals highly developed content without realism. As one collector put it: "a painting that truly satisfies the senses." Each work shows surprising and sophisticated color combinations, richly textured surfaces and line ranging from bold to delicate. Emotional resonance is balanced with an



"Gentle Brute," acrylic on canvas, 60" x 54"



"Timid Girl," acrylic on canvas, 54" x 56"

edge dispelling any sentimentality. In fact, the strong gestural quality recalls Paul Klee or Franz Kline. Heads become abstract patterns in silver and black, with traces of green or red. Faces and figures float in clouded spaces contained by jagged lines. Lyrical yet with an underlying tautness, each image portrays an essential reality, like a poem.

In addition to her paintings—while she favors acrylics, she also uses ink and casein for studies on paper—H. Margret has been involved in a number of special projects over the years, including the production of an independent short film. “Captive Head Breaks Out” was written and directed by H.

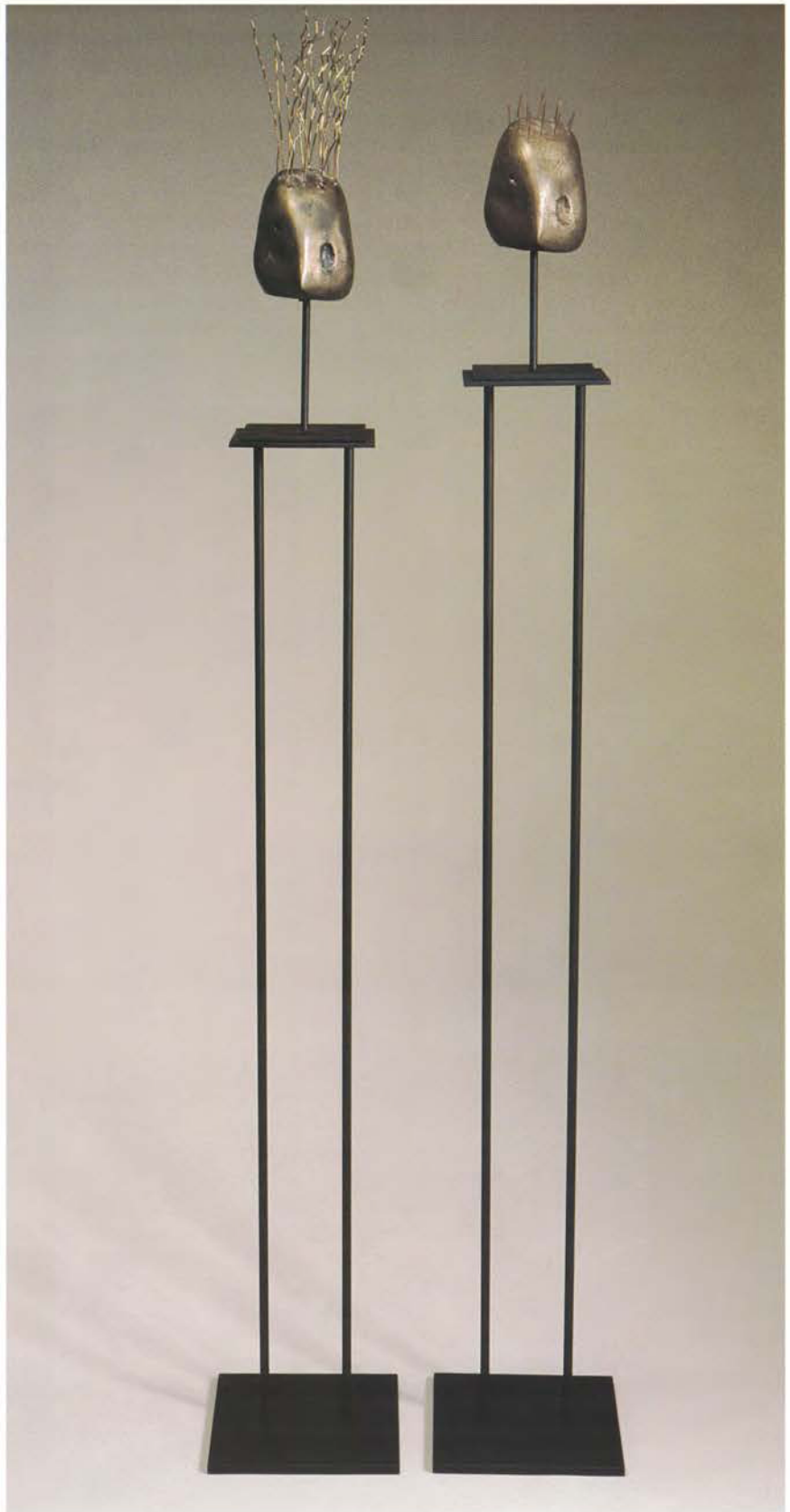


*“Self-Portrait Blues,” acrylic on canvas,
36" × 24"*

Margret. The film premiered in 1999. This project connected images into a story with a creatively revitalizing production process.

Her future plans include working larger in both painting and sculpture. Heads, such as “Gentle Brute,” and abstractions will be evident. Sculptures, such as the bronze pair of heads, “The Couple,” are planned in larger scale suited to outdoor or large public and personal entry spaces. In all her work, H. Margret’s art continues to be a bridge to those energies represented by the hidden archetypes buried within us. Once we connect, we will be empowered.

H. Margret
www.hmargret.com



“The Couple,” bronze, edition of eight pairs, 74" tall

H. MARGRET



Hobby Horse

50 x 40

acrylic