

**Reporter-Herald:** 'Works by renowned sculptor De Wain Valentine on display at University Art Museum', by James Garcia, May 10th, 2012

# Works by renowned sculptor De Wain Valentine on display at University Art Museum



De Wain Valentine is shown in his Venice, Calif., studio in 1970. Special to Go ( De Wain Valentine )

Colorado State University hosts an art exhibition featuring work by minimalist sculptor De Wain Valentine through Dec. 14 in the University Art Museum.

The work of the renowned artist can be seen free of charge in the Colorado State University Art Museum.

Valentine, who calls himself «The Old Cowboy,» broke into the art scene in the 1960s and 1970s with grandiose plastic sculptures, which can be experienced in the exhibit.

The exhibition is part of the Art Museum's Critic and Artist Residency Series, which began in 1997 to bring influential artists to the campus for lectures and exhibitions. With Valentine's massive sculptures (sometimes weighing up to 3,500 pounds and 12 feet tall) he sought to capture the essence of the ocean and skies and the way the reflective surfaces and luminescence are altered by light.

«I would like to have some way, a magic saw, to cut out large chunks of ocean or sky and say 'Here it is,» read a quote by Valentine that was inscribed on the wall of one of his many exhibits.

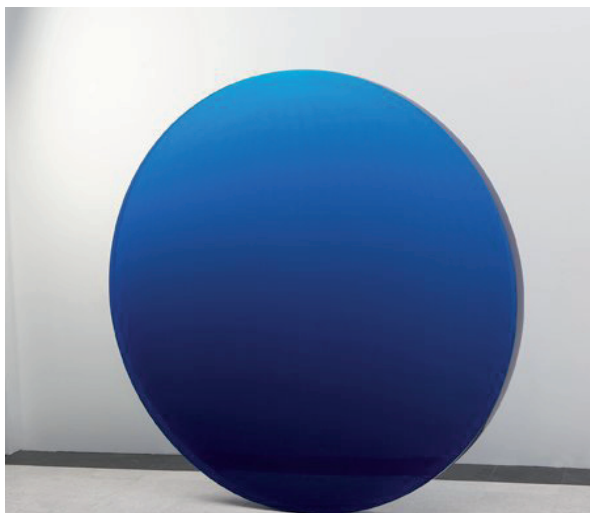
Before Valentine, artists were unable to cast anything larger than about 50 pounds in plastic without it cracking -- but he was determined to make plastic big in the art world. The unique light-responsive properties of the plastic resin he helped create, called Valentine MasKast Resin, and the size of his pieces have illuminated Valentine's work for the last half-century.

Along with his classic sculptures, Valentine's recent polycarbonate and acrylic paintings and large-scale art commissions will be presented in the exhibit.

Born in Fort Collins in 1936, Valentine was inspired by contemporary artists of the minimalist and 'Light and Space' movement of the 1960s and moved to Los Angeles to become an integral part of the movement.



«Portal Blue» by De Wain Valentine, cast polyester resin. Special to Go/Kiana Valentine ( De Wain Valentine )



«Circle Blue» by De Wain Valentine measures 70 inches in diameter and is made of cast polyester resin. Special to Go/ Lancaster Photographics ( De Wain Valentine )

New York art critic, Peter Plagens, has described Valentine's work as embodying «perceptual and ontological» mystery. Plagens' essay will be presented in the exhibit alongside an article by university art museum director, Linda Frickman, describing Colorado's influence on young Valentine.

It was in Colorado that Valentine discovered his enthusiasm for reflective surfaces. And the essence of his young «cowboy» lifestyle has always been with him.

«He went to school in the building where the museum is and yet very few people in Colorado are aware of his importance,» said Frickman. «It seems really a critical thing to remedy, so the Northern Colorado community can recognize there's a major American figure from the art world that's come from here.»



An early photo shows De Wain Valentine, who calls himself «The Old Cowboy.» The well-known sculptor was born in Fort Collins in 1936. Special to Go ( Picasa )