

# MICHAEL CICCONE

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## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Line, shape, form – their inspiration is infinite.

There's a difference between fabricating steel and what I do - there's a line you cross over into making art. Form itself drives me to make sculpture, whether it's the physical form of an object I find or the explosion of imagined forms in my head.

When I first started making art I was too young to realize it. I didn't find my true outlet until I was 20 years old - I met steel in 1987, and I've been consistently working with assorted pieces of steel, and incorporating stone and other found objects, ever since.

In September of 1992 I started to perceive drawing in space with a different perspective. I decided to return to found objects and discarded pieces of metal including large pieces of farm machinery, railroad spikes, I-beams, and scrap metals. Manipulating and arranging these objects, I have found an avenue to create sculpture. My work is mostly abstract, but also includes landscape, figurative, and utilitarian pieces.

I've always tried to preserve the integrity of the steel objects that I incorporate into my sculpture. I've been collecting raw materials for what seems to be a lifetime, but since 2003 the materials have primarily come from the construction sites I've worked on. Recently I was on a demolition job with archival significance – turning the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge into the Walkway Over the Hudson. I've managed to incorporate historical objects into my pieces, creating an entirely new series of work. Having respect for fallen pieces of history seems like a lost art. So let's explore it.

I incorporate steel and mixed media, such as stone or maybe even wood, in a unified shape. I enjoy the challenge of maintaining their original integrity, which sometimes seems impossible while composing a sophisticated and / or playful composition. I factor in different components such as size and weight, sometimes using asymmetry and abstract methods, to convey a shape that would otherwise be awkward to view or experience.

I basically do a rough sketch and then put it to steel. When I get on a serious roll making one piece of sculpture, I'll be inspired to think of another form while I'm creating that piece. I'll quickly divert my attention to the spontaneous idea I had. I'll do a quick thumbnail or I'll take scrap metal and arrange the form immediately into steel like a "rough sketch" in 3D. Using this procedure I don't lose my train of thought on the piece of sculpture I had started working on.

Where line transitions to form through suggested movements, many series are born - from the idea of a form and the materials I use. I try to use a lot of raw stock and odd pieces of steel, sometimes manipulating their shapes entirely or sometimes not manipulating them at all, holding their integrity as is while still maintaining my intended idea. I also still give the viewer the freedom to conjure up or develop his or her own interpretations as well. It's essential to stand back while viewing my pieces as a whole composition before focusing on the smaller details.

Essentially, I'm drawing in space with steel of different intended uses, unifying them to make up one form while still maintaining their own individual integrity.

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