

Rita Blitt sculptures dominate gardens at Aspen Institute

The Aspen Times
June 13, 1992

Mary Eshbaugh Hayes

The sculptures of Rita Blitt are made of heavy steel, yet they seem to dance. They seem to bend and move in the breeze.

Blitt's work is reflective of nature, music and dance.

Circles and lines from nature predominate in her works.

Five of Blitt's sculptures will be on exhibit throughout this summer on the lawn at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies.

"I started from realism, but my work has become more and more abstract," says the artist. "I started as a painter, then I began drawing abstract renderings of what I saw. The drawings soon led me to sculpture.

Many of the sculptures began as drawings. In conjunction with the sculpture show, Blitt will hold an exhibit of her drawings on July 27 in the lobby of Paepcke Auditorium.

Blitt talks about her lifetime immersion in art.

"I started as a child taking classes at the Art Institute in Kansas City. I got scholarships when I was eight years old. My teachers encouraged me.

"My grandfather always designed little flowers on the letters he wrote to me. I returned my letters with drawings of flowers but mine just got more abstract."

Blitt studied fine arts at the University of Illinois and the University of Missouri at Kansas City.

She says her work has constantly changed.

"In the 1960s, I'd talk about my work. I'd say it was spontaneous combustion, a mystery to me," she relates.

"Then in the 1970s, I know I was drawing from my subconscious.

"Just recently I gave a sermon on spirituality and art. People have always said my work is spiritual. Now, instead of talking about mystery and the subconscious...I am owning up to spirituality."

Blitt was born and raised in Kansas City. She still lives there with her husband, Irwin Blitt, who is a developer of shopping centers. They have been coming to Aspen since 1960 and have owned a home here since 1978.

They are supporters of Dance-Aspen, the Music Associates of Aspen, the Anderson Ranch Arts Center and the Aspen Art Museum.

During the 1970s Rita Blitt exhibited with the Gargoyle Gallery in Aspen, then with the Putney Gallery and Joanne Lyons. She is represented in galleries in Chicago, Santa Fe and Palm Springs.

Blitt's next step in art?

"With my indoor sculptures, I am incorporating music. When you approach the piece, music plays."



Five sculptures by Rita Blitt were installed this week on the lawn at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies. The sculptures will remain on display throughout the summer. *Frank Martin photo*