

Organic CONTRADICTION

“The essence of my work lies in balancing tension between surviving and vanishing.”

- Zigi Ben-Haim, Sculptor

Ben-Haim's work has been exhibited throughout United States, Europe and Israel.

BY MIKE SCHULL
LIFESTYLES EDITOR

As spring approaches summer and Ball State's quadrangle becomes greener, those passing through will also notice the metallic shimmer of the sculptures of renowned artist Zigi Ben-Haim adorning the area.

The traveling exhibition "Zigi Ben-Haim: Journey With Me" showcases eight of the artist's most recent works and will be on display until mid-September. The exhibit is hosted by the Ball State Museum of Art, currently partially closed due to renovations.

"This exhibit is something important to make a whole of the museum," said Museum Director Alain Joyaux. "The works on display allow people an opportunity to consider something else within their life."

Ben-Haim's sculpture combines contradictory elements, pairing eternal organic forms with contemporary concepts. Ben-Haim says his pieces explore life's interactive forces, the migration of people and anachronistic adaptation for survival.

"The essence of my work lies in balancing the tension between surviving and vanishing," Ben-Haim said. "To my work, this is the seed of inspiration—capable of bringing new life."

The individual pieces are made of such remote materials as steel mesh, concrete and aluminum. With these combined elements, the works feature contrasting tones, such as softness and toughness as well as natural and urban.

According to Joyaux, the larger contrast in Ben-Haim's work is that of the difference between the living and the man-made.

"The pieces are almost anthropomorphic," Joyaux said. "They play on nature and that place between something alive and dead, and then that gray space in between. Though many are animal and human forms, they still remind one of something non-biological."

The Ben-Haim sculptures currently on display date from 1989 to 1997. Works near the Administration and Burkhardt buildings include "OK Tail" as well as the futuristic "Air Pressure" and "Walking Tall."

"Around the Touch" and "The Fall" can be found located by North Quad. Nearby,

"Without Neighbors," "Spike Hole" and "Roaring Balls" can be found beside Ball Gymnasium and the Cooper Science buildings.

The combination of cold, minimalist forms with warm human elements sets each work apart from other sculptors' work. According to Joyaux, the experimental nature of Ben-Haim's work lends itself well to individual interpretation and allows for a unique experience.

"The added information and added input presented by the sculptures allow viewers one more part of wholeness as a person," Joyaux said.

A native of Iraq, Ben-Haim lives and works in New York City. His sculptures have made appearances in individual and group exhibitions throughout the United States, as well as Europe and Israel. Ben-Haim has also received grants from the Pollock Krasner Foundation and National Endowment for the Arts. He has a master of fine arts degree from San Francisco State University.

The Ball State Museum of Art is open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Admission is free. For further information, call 285-5242.

Art Locations

■ BURKHARDT

"OK Tail"
"Air Pressure"
"Walking Tall"

■ NORTH QUAD

"Around the Touch"
"The Fall"

■ BALL GYM

"Without Neighbors"
"Spike Hole"
"Roaring Balls"



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showcases eight of the artist's most recent works and will be on display until mid-September.



"OK Tail" (left) and "The Fall" (below) are composed of stainless steel mesh, oxidized copper and stainless steel. The sculptures were created in 1996 and 1989, respectively.

