

LOCAL ART

Sculptor builds art as tall as herself

Lynn Duryea's large clay and metal works are inspired by photos and ordinary objects; LCCC hosts her exhibit 'Material Matters'

By Karen Cotton
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Those who are in the Laramie County Community College ceramics and art classes will discover the inspiration behind Lynn Duryea's large metal and clay sculptures.

Duryea's ceramics are 5-6 feet tall and will be on display at the LCCC Esther and John Clay Fine Arts Gallery Monday through Feb. 25 in "Material Matters."

"The way I approached this show was because it's in a school setting; I included a series of photographs," Duryea said. "I took images and objects that are inspirational to me. These are things that I've been thinking about for a number of years. The imagery surfaced in my recent work."

Duryea is a teacher at Appalachian State near Boone, N.C. She included drawings on tar paper that she uses as models for her sculptural art.

"So students have a sense of the process on a practical level," Duryea said. "So they have some sort of understanding on how my work evolved over a long period of time."

The drawings and 18 photos will be on display with her clay and metal art.

A camera is one of the main tools Duryea uses.

Her work comes from the inspiration of photos that she takes of old buildings, surfaces, gas stations and stock pilings.

"A phrase that I often use is, 'The ordinary is quite extra ordinary,'" Duryea said. "Everyday stuff is what I find to be inspirational and beautiful - things that I find on the side of the road that you pass and go back and look at again."

Duryea had planned to conduct a workshop for LCCC students but she won't be able to attend the opening reception or do a workshop because of a time conflict with a new teaching job at Appalachian State University where she is the assistant professor of art and the area coordinator of ceramics.

Duryea started taking ceramics in 1969 when she was living in New York City.

She grew up in Montauk, N.Y., a little town at the end of Long Island.

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Lynn Duryea
Sculptor and artist

What?

Clay sculptor Lynn Duryea will have an exhibit at the Esther and John Clay Fine Arts Gallery. Admission is free.

When?

Monday through Feb. 25:
The opening reception is at 7 p.m. Monday.

Where?

Esther and John Clay Fine Arts Building, LCCC, 1400 College Drive.

More information?
Call 778-5222.

art history and had a brief career as an art historian where I worked at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City," she said.

Duryea moved to Maine in 1974 when she decided to do clay full time.

"I saw an ad for a pottery class and thought it was something that I'd like to do," she said. "There had never been an opportunity for me to try clay."

Ceramics wasn't taught during her elementary or high school years. It also wasn't offered at the college that she attended.

"The ad is what got me going," Duryea said. "I began by taking a series of classes and workshops. I moved to Deer Isle in Maine. They have a craft school there, the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts."

She attended the school and but it was 2002 when she received

a master's degree.

"I was out of college for 30 years before I went to graduate school in ceramics," she said. "I got my master's of fine arts from the University of Florida. In 2002 I was a studio artist where I worked in my studio and taught full time."

Duryea started by making functional pottery.

"I did some sculptural work and in graduate school. I started doing large scale work and working with other materials," she said.

Duryea said creating the large scale ceramic pieces can be tricky.

She works with clay and metal and incorporates thin steel sheets that bend the same way that she bends the slabs of clay.

Slabs are big sheets of clay that are rolled out and formed to make big objects.

She stacks the pieces by alternating clay and metal.

"In some cases for the exhibit I'll hold them together with bits of museum wax," she said. "The steel columns are hollow and are weighted to the floor and the other pieces are stacked on top."

Before building any of clay pieces they are planned with dimensional sketches on tar paper that help her decide the shape the piece will take.

"You don't want to handle the clay a lot until you make the shapes," she said.

Duryea draws inspiration from architectural and industrial objects.

"I work with 22-gauge steel and I like to use salvage steel because of the patina of age on it," Duryea said. "I work with the surfaces as they exist. Sometimes I sand blast them. So in terms of both clay and metal, I'm building surfaces up and sometimes wearing them away."

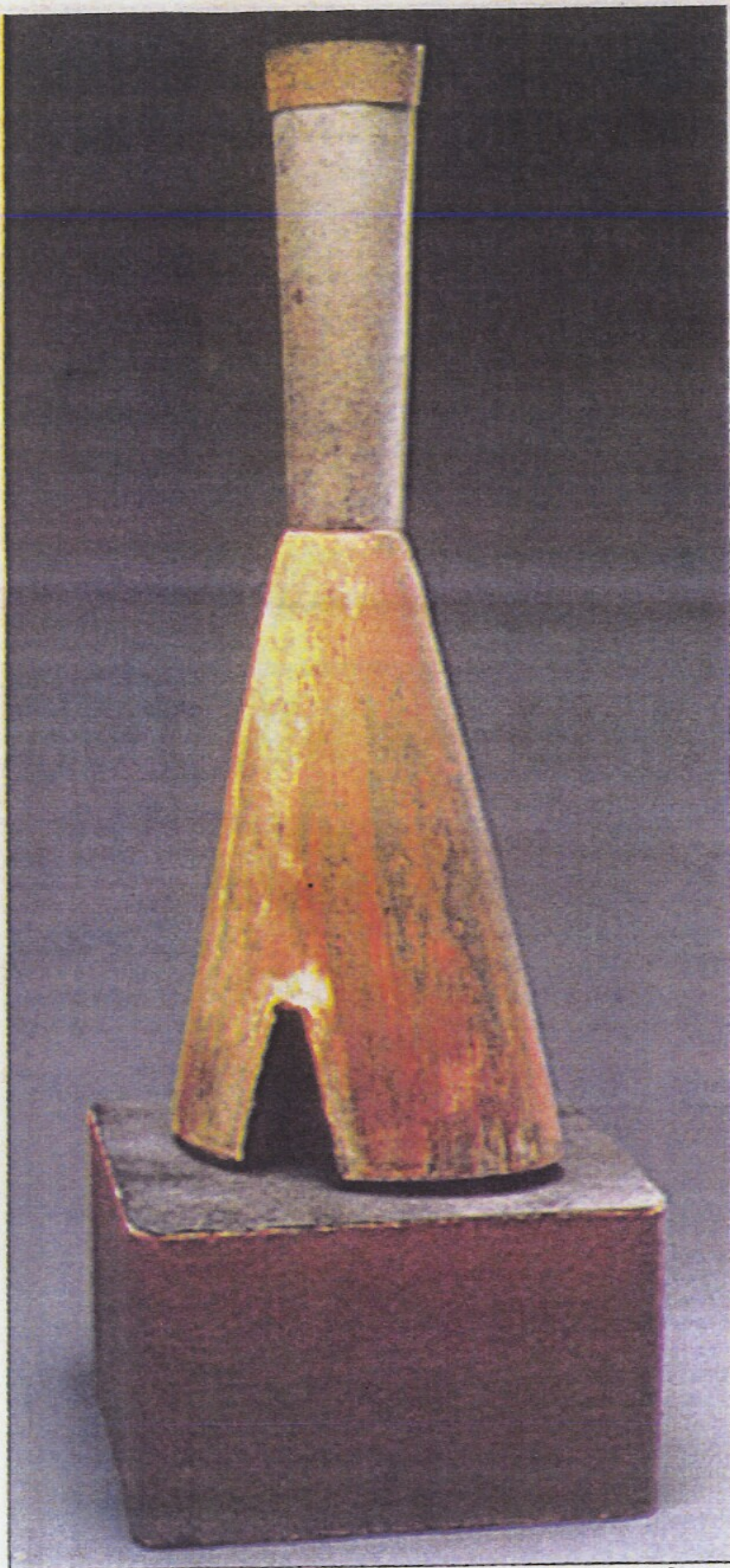
She said her work has the feeling of age and the passing of time. She began doing the large format ceramics in 2002.

Ceramics have always been a learning experience for Duryea.

"It's a constant challenge," she said.

She likes the fact that working in clay can be so diverse.

"You need skills to function well as an artist and find ways to be creative, whether it's being creative in the studio, or as a business person. Teaching full time is a demanding profession and involves a lot of kinds of skills," Duryea said.



Courtesy

Lynn Duryea, a clay sculptor who now lives and teaches art in North Carolina, will have work on display at the Laramie County Community College's Esther and John Clay Fine Arts Gallery Monday through Feb. 25. Her ceramics are 5-6 feet tall and are made from slab clay and 12-gauge steel.