

CONFLUENCE of OPPOSITES



JOHN VAN ALSTINE  
CAROLINE RAMERSDORFER



LAKE PLACID CENTER for the ARTS  
LAKE PLACID • NEW YORK

July 12 to August 12 • 2007

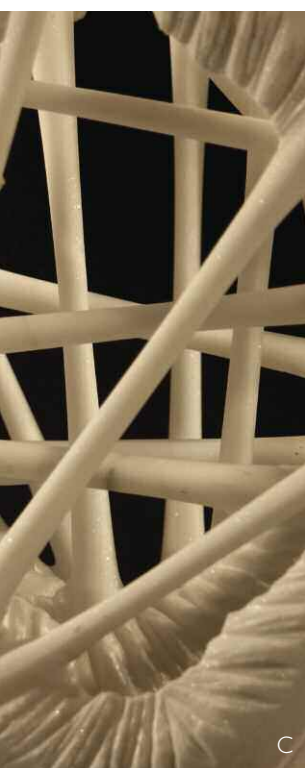
## CONFLUENCE of OPPOSITES: A PERSPECTIVE

**My idea is to create *soularchitectures* that reflect and provoke an approach into an inner world. Transparency and openings allow light to be a significant part of their presence, making visible intermediate spaces.**

—Caroline Ramersdorfer, 2007

**Albert Camus, the French existentialist, in his essay *The Myth of Sisyphus* used this myth to illustrate his notion that reaching one's final destination is not always of utmost importance. In fact if one "reconsiders Sisyphus" as Camus suggests, the struggle or journey reveals itself as ultimately the most meaningful—an idea that I and many others believe is central to the creative process.**

—John Van Alstine, 2007



Making art is a journey for both Caroline Ramersdorfer and John Van Alstine. Both work in stone: Ramersdorfer in marble and Van Alstine in slate and granite. Both come from mountainous places: Ramersdorfer from the high Alps at the intersection of Austria, Germany, and Switzerland and Van Alstine from the Adirondacks of New York. Each artist is profoundly influenced by nature and environment and is driven to find meaning in the intersections of art, life, and nature.

The mountains of Van Alstine's native Adirondacks and the American West are an abiding source of inspiration for him. His artistic sensibilities are informed by nature and the man-made dynamism reflected by industrial remnants. Carefully selected found pieces of slate or granite are combined by the artist with found pieces of processed iron and steel tools or industrial chards to form works of exquisite craftsmanship, technical perfection, and elegant design. The formal beauty of the works challenges the viewer to look beyond to the inherent tensions suggested between nature and industrialization. In the tradition of the late sculptor David Smith who also worked in the Adirondacks, Van Alstine artfully assembles objects from nature and man's work, releasing an expressive language to reinforce his theses of work and process and balance in life and nature.

Trained in Italy in an environment of generations of marble workers, sculptors, and masterpieces, Caroline Ramersdorfer's highly original works are a fascinating complement to the sculpture of John Van Alstine. Rather than assembling elements with minimal manipulation, Ms. Ramersdorfer's works are major manipulations of blocks of marble. She reduces marble to slices that she carves into solids and voids; ridged and columnar, fluid and sensual surfaces interact, revealing an almost microcosmic world within the stone. The slices of stone, mounted in polished steel frames, interact with light to become ethereal systems of light and translucent stone. Like veils, the pieces of stone reveal inner spaces that serve as metaphors for the meanings found in cerebral journeys of reflection.

The work of these two gifted sculptors affirms the tradition of sculpture as a medium based on formal principles and deeply held abstract ideas about life and nature.

Caroline M. Welsh  
Director, Adirondack Museum

## CAROLINE RAMERSDORFER

*Cover, upper right and bottom*

- A FRAGMENTAL I Indicator**  
2006 marble/steel,  
22"h x 22"w x 6"d
- B INNER VIEW Deeper**  
2006 marble/stainless steel,  
76"h x 32"w x 47"d

*Essay panel*

- C Detail, INNER VIEW  
Cellstructures II**  
2006 marble/steel,  
14"h x 12"w x 8"d

*Panel below*

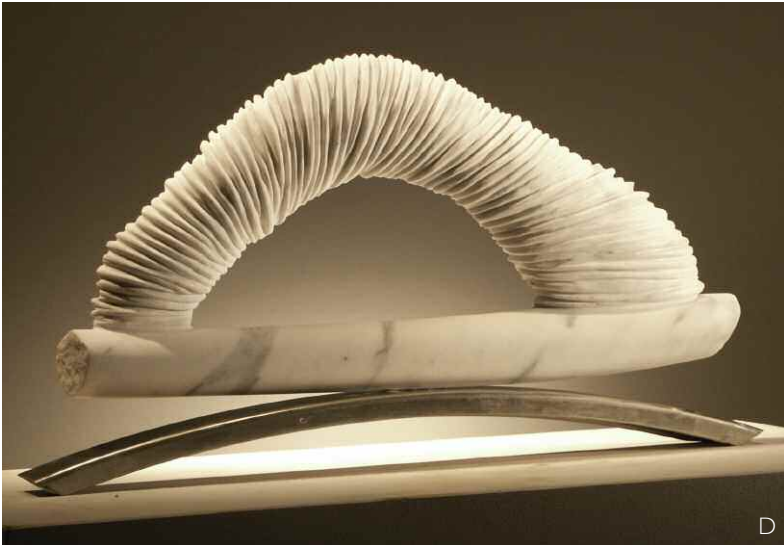
- D FRAGMENTAL III Aura**  
2006 marble/steel  
15"h x 27.5"w x 3"d
- E INNER VIEW Cellstructures II**  
2006 marble/steel, 14"h x 12"w x 8"d
- F FRAGMENTAL II Sounds 2006**  
marble/steel, 22"h x 18"w x 4"d

*Back panel*

- G FRAGMENTAL V Winged**  
2006 marble/steel,  
44"h x 9"w x 9"d
- H FRAGMENTAL IV  
Mindgate 2006**  
marble/steel, 12"h x 25"w x 3"d
- I Detail, FRAGMENTAL IV  
Mindgate 2006**  
marble/steel, 12"h x 25"w x 3"d
- J INNER VIEW Cellstructures III**  
2006 garnet granite/marble,  
8.5"h x 10"w x 11"d

*Biographical panel*

- K INNER VIEW IV**  
2006 marble, 9'h x 9'w x 7'd  
*permanently installed at I-Shou  
University campus, Kaoshung, Taiwan*
- Y INNER VIEW Deeper**  
2006 marble/stainless steel,  
76"h x 32"w x 47"d



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## JOHN VAN ALSTINE

*Cover, upper left and center*

- L SISYPHEAN CIRCLE VIII**  
2006, slate/steel, 14"h x 14"w x 5"d
- M FLECHE III**  
2005, slate/steel,  
44"h x 90"w x 18"d

*Essay panel*

- N HULA VI (heavy hips)**  
2007, slate/pigmented steel,  
47" h x 21"w x 13"d

*Panel above*

- O SISYPHEAN CIRCLE XVIII**  
2006, NYS bluestone/pigmented  
steel, 37"h x 43"w x 12"d
- P Detail, SISYPHEAN CIRCLE VIII**  
2006, slate/steel, 14"h x 14"w x 5"d
- Q LUNGE IV (red tail)**  
2006, slate/pigmented steel,  
29.5"h x 31"w x 8"d
- R KICKBACK II**  
2007, slate/steel,  
24.5"h x 37"w x 7"d

*Back panel*

- S Detail, HULA VI (heavy hips)**  
2007, slate/pigmented steel,  
47"h x 21"w x 13"d
- T Detail, HULA VI (heavy hips)**  
2007, slate/pigmented steel,  
47"h x 21"w x 13"d
- U FLECHE III**  
2005, slate/steel, 44"h x 90"w x 18"d
- V BROADREACH III (red billow)**  
2007, slate/pigmented steel,  
11.5"h x 14"w x 4.5"d

*Biographical panel*

- W John Van Alstine with  
HULA VI (heavy hips)**  
2007, slate/pigmented steel,  
47" h x 21"w x 13"d
- X LUNGE IV (red tail, front view)**  
2006, slate/pigmented steel,

*Additional work, not illustrated*

- SISYPHEAN CIRCLE XXVIII**  
2007, slate/pigmented steel,  
19"h x 24"w x 14"d



W



K

[www.JohnVanAlstine.com](http://www.JohnVanAlstine.com)

[www.CarolineRamersdorfer.at](http://www.CarolineRamersdorfer.at)

**Education (selected)**

Cornell University, M.F.A. 1976  
 Kent State University, Kent, Ohio B.F.A. 1974  
 St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY 1970-72

**Awards, Grants, Fellowships (selected)**

2005 Gottlieb Foundation, Individual Artist Grant  
 2002 Pollock-Krasner Foundation, Individual Artist Grant

**Public Collections (selected)**

Baltimore Museum of Art  
 Blanton Museum of Art, *Austin, TX*  
 Carnegie Institute of Art, *Pittsburgh, PA*  
 Corcoran Gallery of Art, *Washington, DC*  
 Dayton Art Institute, *Dayton, OH*  
 Dallas Museum of Art  
 Delaware Museum of Art  
 Denver Art Museum  
 Gulbenkian Museum, *Lisbon, Portugal*  
 Hirshhorn Museum, *Smithsonian Institution*  
 The Museum of Fine Arts, *Houston, TX*  
 Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, *Cornell University*  
 National Museum of American Art, *Smithsonian Institution*  
 Federal Reserve Board, *Washington, DC*  
 Newark Museum of Art, *Newark, NJ*  
 Museum of Modern Art, *Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Portugal*  
 Phoenix Art Museum  
 The Adirondack Museum, *Blue Mtn. Lake, NY*  
 The Phillips Collection, *Washington, DC*  
 U.S. State Department, Art in Embassies/  
*Bolivian Embassy, Washington, DC; Jamaican Embassy, Kingston, Jamaica; Nepal Embassy, Katmandu*



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**Education (selected)**

Sorbonne, Culture and French Civilization, Paris, France 1979  
 International University of Art Florence, Italy 1981-83  
 Academy of Fine Arts–Sculpture MFA Summa Cum Laude, Carrara, Italy 1983-88

**Grants and Awards (selected)**

1991-93 Austrian Ministry of Art and Education  
 2005 Dubai, United Arab Emirates: Emaar Artsymposium–1st Prize  
 2006 Zhengzhou, China: International City of Sculpture & Cultural Year–Golden Award

**Public Collections (selected)**

Shimada Art Museum, *Kumamoto, Japan*  
 Vorarlberg County Museum, *Bregenz, Austria*  
 Eda Garden Museum, *Yokohama, Tokyo, Japan*  
 Federal Chancellery Artothek and Culture Department, *City of Vienna, Austria*  
 RAIBA Bank Art Collection, *Bregenz, Austria*  
 City of Zhengzhou, *China*

**International Sculpture Symposia (selected)**

Birth of Energy, *Hohenems, Austria*  
 Energy, *Reimei no-oka, Kickuchi Kougen, Kumamoto-Ken, Japan*  
 Labyrinth of centuries, *Sozo no-oka, Muraoka-cho, Hyogo-Ken, Japan*  
 Lightlines, *Kratal-Klagenfurt, Austria*  
 Lightspace, *Hualien, Taiwan*  
 Energy IV, *Telc, Czech Republic*  
 Inner View, *Kettering, Ohio, USA*  
 Inner View, *Dubai, United Arab Emirates*  
 Inner View, *Kaoshung, Taiwan*  
 Inner View, *Puerto del Rosario, Fuerteventura, Spain*

**Large-scale Urban Public Works (selected)**

Sourcepyramid, *Dornbirn, Austria*  
 Energy III, *Austria*  
 Beamspace, *Eda-Garden Museum, Yokohama, Tokyo-Japan*  
 5 Ringstone project, *Fukuoka, Japan*  
 Energy V, *Vernon, BC, Canada*



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