

William Martin

North Providence, RI

"Turbineturret" 1999, welded steel, 9' H x 5' W

An old adage says that "necessity is the mother of invention". This idea is much too goal oriented and linear for a world governed by circumstance and chaos. The revised version should read "opportunity is the mother of invention", while necessity is the force that pares down the less useful examples. Change in technology has made opportunity for inventors to develop new devices. The history of invention is full of unsuccessful inventions, many ridiculous and even humorous. This is primarily due to two things, first, the odd forms the machines took as a result of trial and error experimentation, and second, the combination of new technology grafted onto previous forms. Some of these less than optimal inventions are catalysts for my imagination.

The physical qualities that result from hand craftsmanship and the combinations of materials are an important aspect of my work. I insist on construction methods that show evidence of being hand-made: Hammer marks from blacksmithing, and laminated wood are good mediums for achieving this quality. These handmade qualities are contradictory to the idea of mechanization just as mechanics best suited to particular tasks contradict one another within each sculpture.

The sculptures are an unusual blend of technology and machinery, but the scale and materials are controlled to give the viewer a sense of believability, inviting and defying them to imagine the machine in use. The metaphoric connections invite the viewer's projections and inspire them to invent an internal fantastic narrative they have not previously known.