

# Filter

PURE ENTERTAINMENT!

## Man and beast

You can see yourself in Rona Pondick's sculpture. He's interested in images that allow for broad interpretation.

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Rona Pondick's pieces are shiny, wild, bright, groovy kinds of objects. See them at Cranbro Art Museum in Bloomfield Hills.  
Cover design by Randall Masters

## Cover story



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CRANBROOK ART MUSEUM

'Dog,' 1998-2001 is yellow stainless steel.

# What do you see?

## Rona Pondick exhibit taps the unconscious mind

BY NICOLE STAFFORD  
STAFF WRITER

You can see yourself in Rona Pondick's sculpture.

Your mirror image in the high-polished stainless steel that is characteristic of her work. Your primal self in them all.

Pondick's pieces, mostly amalgamations of animal forms with human body parts, are like a psychoanalyst's ink blots - open to interpretation but evocative.

*Rona Pondick: A Fifteen Year Survey*, which runs through Sunday, Nov. 30, at Cranbrook Art Museum in Bloomfield Hills, presents 15 of the artist's works, including one outdoor and two room-sized installations.

"You can't control the viewer," Pondick said. "I'm interested in images that have



Rona Pondick's 'Pine Marten,' 2000-01 has a hand and a head in human form.

PLEASE SEE **EXHIBIT, E15**

# EXHIBIT

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strong metaphor value and characteristics that allow for broad interpretation.”

One example is *Dirt Head*, 1997, which contains 10 tons of dirt and 400 elements, all of which look like human remains. Interpretations of the piece differ widely depending on exhibition context, said Pondick, a graduate of Yale University School of Art.

In Africa, viewers connected *Dirt Head* with voodoo. In Amsterdam, the piece reminded residents of the city's great floods. In Austria, *Dirt Head* became a reference to the Holocaust.

What do these interpretations have in common? They all are associated with death.

*Monkeys*, 1998-2001, a tangle of metal monkeys with human hands look urgent and desperate to be on the move. Are they staking out their territory or trying to differentiate themselves from the group?

Pondick, whose work is exhibited in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, also uses new technology in making sculpture.

*Dog*, 1998-2001 is made from yellow stainless steel that Pondick worked with a metallurgist to create. She uses digital scanning technology to incorporate her body parts into her work.

“It's a marriage of tradition with the innovative,” said Joe Houston, curator of exhibitions at Cranbrook Art Museum and organizer of the Pondick show.

“She has an amazingly high level of craft but is so forward-looking.”

Yet Pondick's work engages all viewers, the young and the old, those with and without formal art training, he said.

“We want to present different, challenging art, but we also want to engage the visual,” said Houston. “Ultimately, these pieces are shiny, wild, bright, groovy kinds of objects.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF CRANBROOK ART MUSEUM

In 'Monkeys,' 1998-2001 each animal has human hands.

## FORMS AND FIGURES

**What:** 'Rona Pondick: Sculpture, 1990-2003.'

**When:** Through Sunday, Nov. 30; museum hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday-Sunday and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., fourth Friday of each month (Fabulous Fourth Friday Nights program).

**Where:** Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills.

**Tickets:** Members, free, general admission, \$6, seniors, teens, and full-time students, \$4, children 12 and under, free with adult admission, call (877) GO-CRANBROOK or (877) 462-7262 or visit [www.cranbrookart.edu](http://www.cranbrookart.edu).