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My commitment is to revitalize ecosystems while raising awareness that the vitality of any community and the continuity of its cultural heritage depends upon the health of the natural world that embraces and sustains it.

HUMBLE [< L. humilis low, small, slight, akin to humus, soil, earth (see HUMUS)]

HUMUS [< L. earth, ground, soil < IE. *ghom-: see HOMAGE]

HOMAGE [< L. homo, a man IE. *ghom-, < base *gtheim-, earth, ground, whence L. humus, Gr. chthon, earth, OE. guma man]

Hidden in the roots of our words, we find what we seem to want to forget—that we are literally the same stuff as earth. My work explores this identity while undermining the assumptions and values that keep us from acknowledging it. I work in various ways depending on the possibilities and needs of the context. My work has grown from individual sculptures that are personal and intimate, to site-specific installations that explore how landscapes and cultures mutually influence each other in particular historical contexts; to collaborative, often community-based, water remediation projects that occupy most of my focus today.

Working in consultation with ecologists, I have developed what I call biosculptures™—sculpted ecosystems that demonstrate natural systems solutions to urban and rural water quality and water quantity problems. Biosculptures™ are biogeochemical filters made of mosses and plants growing on rock or concrete substrates, that purify water and air while demonstrating how there is no waste in healthy natural systems. Rather, the waste of one organism becomes food for another. As water flows over the sculptures, the plants and associated bacteria transform waste and toxins into food, using pollutants as resources for their own metabolism. Biosculptures™ work at varying scales from small indoor systems that clean and recycle office greywater to large stormwater recovery projects in the landscape. My goal in this work is to bring ecological functionality together with sculpture's capacity for metaphor, imagery, form, and concept. Through the latter, I try to stimulate conscious and unconscious awareness that we humans are interdependent parts of the natural systems that support our existence.

I work to address the particular concerns of the community by collaborating with ecologists, landscape architects, bioengineers, and others to understand the particular ecological and structural needs of specific sites, and by working in close consultation/ collaboration with the range of stakeholders the project serves. The final work weds sculpture's conceptual, metaphoric, and aesthetic capacities with ecological functionality and, at its best, serves as a focal point for community building, as well as building community awareness. The physical sculpture becomes a nexus—a natural system's means of remedying polluted water that is a visible manifestation—and, a reminder of a renewed relationship between the human and other-than-human worlds—an energy collector of a social process.

Most of my recent work addresses urban stormwater issues—with current projects in Cincinnati, St. Louis, New York, and West Palm Beach. I also work in rural areas. This past year as artist in residence with the National Park Service Rivers and Trails Division, I worked in collaboration with Susan Steinman of Oakland, California in two small rural towns in the Pacific Northwest. The focus was primarily about building community support for projects that link revitalization of local water resources with economic revitalization. Our goals were to create an interpretive trail along a long underappreciated tidal slough that is crossed by route 101 (Tillamook, OR), and to daylight a stream in downtown, Caldwell, Idaho. Grossenhain a town of 17,000 in Germany, 30 km. west of Dresden, commissioned my biosculpture™ *The Gift of Water* as part of the constructed wetland that provides the sole filtration for their very large municipal swimming complex.

My desire to work with communities grew out of my project *Of Earth and Cotton*. From 1994-1998, I traveled throughout the rural South from the Carolinas to Texas, following the westward migration of the cotton belt, speaking with people who farmed and picked cotton by hand in the 1930s and '40s. For this project, I created a series of installations that included sculpture, documentary video, and historical photographs. But it was the less tangible part, my experiences with the cotton farmers, that

changed my life and my art practice. The power of these conversations and relationships made me want to work with people, and at the grassroots level. Up until this time, my practice had been quite solitary.

My work is based in the belief that to truly heal our environmental wounds it is essential to engage the attention, imagination, and heart of the public—to restore human values as we restore the natural environment. Partly this means making restoration processes visible, understandable, and compelling. It also means affecting people through their bodies as well as their minds, through their unconscious lives as well as through the conscious domains. I see the structure of this less as a triangle with a base than as roots of a tree pulling nutrients eclectically from many different directions. The major feeds into the roots for me—I'll call them root zones—are psychology, examination of values (ethics/philosophy?), kinesthetic intelligence, attempts to think non-dualistically, listening as best I can to what the other than human world is trying to tell me and my own personal transformative process. The latter, the ability to grow, which for me means consciously examining and experiencing my own fears, anger, vulnerability, feelings of insignificance, and negative projections—life teaching me about patience, compassion, humility, and love—proves to me that you can teach an old dog new tricks. I pull on all of this to shape how I look and listen, how I investigate the crown of the tree—the ecological needs of the situation, and the eco/social needs of the communities with which I am working. How I touch, aesthetic decisions are made in response to all of the above.

There is no simple list of methods and means, as I generally feel my way toward what will work in a particular situation and this very much evolves from the particular contexts. I can say that I look for the nodal points—places where multiple social and ecological factors intersect, and where solutions can be multifunctional.