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SCULPTURE TO HANG AT UBC

Ex-Luftwaffe Pilot Wins Canada Council Award

A former Luftwaffe fighter pilot who delights in abstract sculpting has won a \$2,000 Canada Council award.

An eight-foot by seven-foot abstract sculpture fashioned from sheet copper and called Concerto will be ready to hang on the wall over the west entrance of the University of B.C.'s Buchanan Building by March 20.

Gerhard H. Class, of 1619 Appin, North Vancouver, has the work half finished and the grant will enable him to complete it.

Class, 36, who switched from being a "very realistic" sculptor to abstract work, said of his latest creation, "I'm much more satisfied with this expression of my own feelings than with any beautiful, realistic piece I've ever done."

The sculpture, he explains, is abstract not because this is the current trend but simply because it has to be.

CAN 'FEEL' IT

It's the only form, he says, in which he can feel creative. Concerto is currently being

worked on day and night whenever Class isn't teaching sculpture at the Vancouver Art School where he has a class of 17 beginners and advanced pupils.

Class has also been a logger, janitor, ski instructor and tombstone maker in his 10 years in B.C. But it's no fluke that his career as a sculptor is now on the upswing.

His father, Johann Class, was a sculptor in Germany's Black Forest city of Lahr, like his father before him.

His older brother, Richard, runs the family stonecutting business in Germany but also is a sculptor.

DRAFTED AS FLYER

Gerhard also learned to fly gliders, a feat that got him drafted into the Luftwaffe out of art school in 1941. For 3½ years he flew in Russia, France, and finally everywhere in the final days of the Second World War.

After the war he spent two years as a sculptor with his father, then went back to school, graduating from the

State Academy of Fine Art in Karlsruhe. Six months later in 1951, he decided to come to Canada.

Canada didn't need an sculptors, the immigration people told him so Class signed on as a logger, with Port Alberni as his destination. After four months, he took janitor's job in a West Vancouver garage.

SKI INSTRUCTOR

He got a job as a ski instructor, met an English girl called Brenda, and married her.

He took a draftsman course via correspondence and for two years worked as draftsman with Plywood Manufacturers' Association.

For the past seven months he has been a commercial artist with them, and is also a director of the association's new magazine, Plywood World.

"It's the first job in Canada I'm getting paid for that I really want to do," Class said.

Sculpturing on the side, Class entered an exhibition