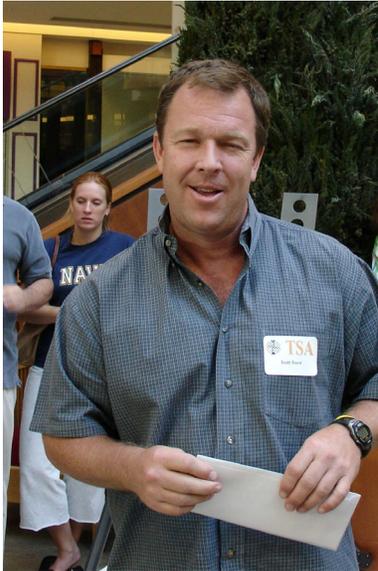


## *An Interview with Scott Trent*

*By Valery Guignon*

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VG - *How long have you been in TSA and how did you hear about it?*

ST - Since January of '06. Valery Guignon saw my work at *Debris* and contacted me. I greatly admire artists who reach out to other artists and I strive everyday to be half as gracious in my interaction with others.

VG - *What do you hope TSA can do for you?*

ST - TSA has already done more than I would have ever imagined. I've always understood the value of networking and being a part of a community; but, it's never been as apparent as with my short affiliation with TSA. From Brenda's informative emails, to the social gatherings, the availability and ease of talking with other like-minded people, and the opportunities to exhibit my work has been wonderful. More!

VG - *How long have you been working in metal?*

ST - **Four years.**

VG - *Where did you get started in your present direction?*

ST - Four years ago I found myself in a very dark place and I knew creativity was the light for me. It was a different creativity than I had practiced the previous 40 years and a perspective I still hope to come closer to achieving in the next 40.

VG - *Do you have your own studio or work elsewhere?*

ST - I had a silk-screening business for nine years, and the last couple years I operated that business out of my converted garage. When I sold my silk-screening business and decided to pursue art, the garage easily transitioned into a metal workshop.

VG - *How much time per week do you spend on your sculpting?*

ST - It fluctuates depending on life. I'm always thinking about forms and shapes and imaging the next piece. My work flow is more regulated by projects. I'll have weekends where I spend 20 hours in my shop or three days with every free minute finishing a piece or I might go three weeks without opening the studio door.

VG - *Do you also work in other mediums?*

ST - I enjoy clay sculpting, but have not spent much time in this area. I was drawn to metal for a number of reasons, primarily because I suck as a "real" artist. I often feel a pull to paint, but I'll have to master painting my metal before I move to the canvas.

VG - *Where are you going with your art from where you are today - any dreams?*

ST - My art will continue to be an expression for me. It will continue to expand my reach and touch for new relationships. (Relationships that would never have been apparent or available.) The art will continue to provide affirmations that I couldn't achieve in any other way, and most importantly, I hope my art will open me to new insights into myself.

My goal is to raise my art to a level to be considered. My dream is to create something that allows me to be understood.

VG - *Can you talk some about what you were saying with the piece that was in the show at Willow Bend?*

ST - I had two pieces in the Willow Bend show:

1. *Middle Passage* is a piece that I'm very proud of, but I know it will never be commercially successful. *Middle Passage* is the name given to the Africans' imprisoned journey to the New World. It also represents the journey or Diaspora of any people and the transition that occurs. I wanted to capture the idea of transforming from an individual to a slave. I used a very iconic slave figure, which has depth and history and goes back hundreds of years and then added commentary on people's current transitions. There are three pieces to *Middle Passage*, the first figure is the sole native figure, then the middle pieces which are the native figures, but marred and burned and haunting, followed by the final figure which is the disfigured native with a briefcase and tie. The other aspect of this



piece, that I was amazed to see, was how important the process was in telling the full story. I found a powerful metaphor as I cut, burned, scrapped, pounded, beat, and grinded, shaping these figures into slave images. I essentially reproduced the acts used to beat down and reshape people who were then formed into slaves.

2. *Conflict*. Uncharacteristically for me... I'd like to let this piece and the title speak for itself.

VG - *How does the dialogue between your vision and the material affect the end result?*

ST - I used found metal, so the dialogue between the metal and me is everything. It is truly about the metal and not me. Dialogue is the perfect term in this case, because if I tried to force the material into my vision, I'd fail. If I can understand what the metal is saying and then respond in a harmonious manner, I will create something that I'm very pleased with. The next step in this process for me is to never simply assemble pieces. My goal is to create a new form and to represent a sentience or soul in every piece I create.

VG - *What do your finished pieces teach you about yourself?*

ST - I love my art: The final piece and the process creating it. Each piece I create allows me to extend myself a bit further. To have someone stop and consider anything I've created is the greatest compliment I can imagine. My approach to art: Is attempting to get out of the way. If I create something "good", I'm pleased that I was aware enough to see it and lucky enough to stop before I lost it. I rarely feel like I can take credit for the original vision.

VG - *Do you want to comment on this statement?*

ST - Tension and risk makes an interesting work. Total control is often the death of it.

I love risk and accept the idea that I'm many years away from authentically taking risk with my work.

Tension; on the other hand, is easy for me. Whether it's challenging the space between the viewer and the work, causing spatial inequalities, or reflecting discourse, I see what's not and love bringing this to attention.

Control for me is exposing my lack of talent. I try to control everything in my life. Art is one space I truly attempt to release control and move unencumbered. **TSA**