

UPCOMING SHOW

Up to 25 works
Oct. 18–Nov. 16, 2013
Somerville Manning Gallery
Breck's Mill, 2nd Floor
101 Stone Block Row
Greenville, DE 19807
(302) 652-0271

• SHOW LOCATION GREENVILLE, DE



RIKKI SAUNDERS

Essence of the animal

Pennsylvania sculptor Rikki Saunders works only from life, spending countless hours observing animals in their habitats, learning their language and studying their form. These firsthand observations give Saunders unique insight that enables her to capture the spirit and grace of each model while remaining anatomically correct.

Saunders' obvious love and respect for nature, and her desire to protect it from harm, is evident in all of her bronze sculptures. She and her husband, Jesse, have created a haven for critters on their farm in Pennsylvania. Among its residents are dogs, horses, peacocks, white-tailed deer and a herd of fallow deer.

Perhaps the couple's most extraordinary resident is Gift, a 17-year-old white-tailed deer that Saunders raised on a bottle after it became orphaned by a tornado. Her newest piece of a doe (yet to be titled) was modeled after Gift. "Even though Gift is a male, I refer to him for muscles and tendons," she clarifies. The sculpture is dear to Saunders' heart because it was the last work she discussed with her father—an exceptional woodcarver—before he passed away last January. The buck also was used for the life-size piece *Gift in Velvet*.

"Doing this piece was such a joy; it allowed me the luxury of spending time with Gift, though only the time he permitted. Some days we had 45 minutes to an hour, some days he had other things on his mind," she reflects.

Additional bronze works available during Saunders' solo show at Somerville Manning Gallery include *Alexander* and *Nureyev*, a pair of life-size peacocks. The latter peacock was named after acclaimed Russian dancer Rudolf Nureyev whose suspended leaps and fast turns were legendary. The peacock's story, however, isn't quite as glamorous. Saunders' husband had found the peacock on the ground one evening while grilling outdoors. Turns out the bird had broken its leg, so the couple put splints on him and he recuperated in a large dog cage in the artist's studio for three months.




Gift in Velvet, bronze, ed. of 7, 49 x 53 x 22"

"He's still with us today, but his leg didn't heal straight so we called him Nureyev," muses Saunders.

Heavily influenced by the art nouveau style and its elegant, flowing lines, Saunders strives to imbue each piece with similar energy and movement.

"I hope collectors get some joy from

my work and insight into these magnificent creatures," she remarks. "I hope they feel what I felt in the piece...that they feel that spirit and that essence of the animal." ●

For a direct link to the exhibiting gallery go to 

www.AmericanArtCollector.com



Nureyev, bronze, ed. of 12, 49 x 53 x 22"

PHOTO BY ALESSANDRA MANZOTTI PHOTOGRAPHY / WWW.AMANZOTTIFOTO.COM



Rikki Saunders sculpting her newest piece of a doe (yet to be titled), which was modeled after her white-tailed deer named Gift.



Julie, bronze, ed. of 24, 26½ x 22½ x 5"



Frisky, bronze, ed. of 10, 9½ x 10½ x 5"

ARTWORK PHOTOS: © JIM GRAHAM / WWW.JIMGRAHAMPHOTOGRAPHY.COM