

From: [Ruth Ridderman](#)
To:
Bcc: [Archive](#)
Subject: Ferris' Rankin Gallery February Artist
Date: 02/09/2007 04:01 PM

Included below is a press release regarding Ferris State University's Rankin Art Gallery's February artist. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

For Immediate Release
Feb. 9, 2007

Leah Nixon
Ferris State University
Assistant Director of News Services
leahnixon@ferris.edu, (231) 591-5604

Ferris' Rankin Gallery features Allen as February artist

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University's Rankin Art Gallery is featuring "Life Underground," a collection of sculptures and paintings by William Allen, through Feb. 23. Predominantly known for welding sculptures of animals out of steel, Allen's "Life Underground" features sculptures and paintings that were inspired by art of aboriginal cultures such as Africa, Oceania, the Inuit and Australia.

Allen creates his sculptures, many of which are life-size, by welding and shaping wrought iron. He sees his sculptures as an expression of the life and energy he finds in a deeper realm. His work explores the shadow side of life, where death always lies in wait. Through his metal sculptures and paintings, Allen taps into the raw, vibrant spirit that wants to pulsate through all of us.

With an education focused entirely on science and the intention of becoming a doctor, Allen signed up for a poetry class while a senior in college. The class made him realize that he didn't have a passion for medicine and he decided to forgo medical school.

After working a variety of jobs after college, such as a dry cleaner, house-painter and roofer, Allen decided to enroll in a welding class after a conversation he had with a fellow co-worker. The class made Allen realize he wanted to pursue the creative and practical craft of black-smithing wrought iron.

Having spent his childhood at the family cottage on Lake Michigan, Allen had a love for animals. For the next 15 years, Allen developed his skills as a sculptor of welded animals and sold them at art fairs throughout the country.

Not feeling satisfied with only sculpting animals, Allen and his wife moved to New York City in 1996. He began working with different types of materials, such as plaster, epoxy and earthen matter. He began to sculpt characters from his interior world, which made him see the importance of drama in his work. Allen returned to Michigan in the fall of 2000.



Ruth Ridderman

Administrative Secretary to the
Associate Vice President
Marketing & Communications
420 Oak Street, PRK 101
Big Rapids, MI 49307
(231) 591-2373
(231) 591-2985 Fax