

VENICE

M A G A Z I N E

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by Susan Rose

Ed Massey

Photography by Tom Bonner



"Visual impact. That's what makes sculpture so uniquely effective as social commentary. When properly utilized, it can arouse passions and evoke responses from viewers who may by chance come upon a sculpture, or who would flip the channel or turn the page when presented with similar commentary from a different forum."

So says Ed Massey. The LA/NYC based sculptor created quite a furor in 1990 with his 18 1/2-foot sculpture entitled *Corporate Ladder*. The work, a satirical depiction of corporate life, immediately became embroiled in controversy and has been featured prominently by the national news, art and business media.

Massey opines that sculpture intended as social commentary must provoke thought and promote discourse about the formal and topical issues present in the piece. Viewers of his sculptures often become instant art critics.

Curiously, Massey's works do not reveal a rigid political ideology: "If I feel strongly about an issue, I incorporate it as sculpture." Non-partisan, yet thoughtful and opinionated, he sometimes finds supposed foes in his support, while other times may alienate those with whom his viewpoints typically converge. He stresses, "I cannot permit myself to be limited as to subject matter or viewpoint. Offending those who prefer not to be confronted with my issue of choice, or who disagree with my commentary, goes with the territory."

Massey's most recently completed sculpture, entitled *Case Study*, is a commentary on America's dangerous, poverty-ridden, drug infested inner cities. The work forces the viewer to ponder the abject poverty of ghetto conditions.

Case Study is provocative and will undoubtedly be the subject of much debate. As such, it complements Ed Massey's body of sculpture which serves as a barometer of our times.