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**Thinking big**

**When Kate Pond plans a public sculpture, it's no small thing. Her career requires not merely creativity but collaboration with a client.**

Kate Pond has designed 24 public sculptures since 1981. Her works can be
seen locally in Vermont as well as in Canada, Norway, Japan and New Zealand.

Pond is passionate about creating pieces that people can have a relationship with.
Whether you can sit, climb or walk through the steel sculpture, her three-dimensional
works invite participation from their viewers.

Pond worked on Wellspring, a 12-foot steel sculpture in 2007. The sculpture is located
at Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass.

“The Brandeis sculpture is one of my favorites,” she said. “It was such a wonderful process creating that piece.”

And the process of building a sculpture can be a lengthy one. The first step is for Pond
and the client to talk about what the idea behind the sculpture would be.

“It’s a very intimate thing, commissioning a sculpture,” she said. “It’s a collaboration
between the client and myself.”

Then, Pond creates three different maquettes, or small models, for the client
to chose from. Once a design is chosen, she configures the price and presents it to the
client.

But waiting for the client to accept the price is one of the most difficult parts of the process for Pond.

“The larger pieces, the more expensive,” she said. “When you buy sculpture, it’s a
three-dimensional decision. To take that jump and to decide to have the sculpture, it’s
a hard thing to do for clients.”

For some of Pond’s larger works she began to enlist the help of design
engineer and fabricator Frank Phillips. He works with metals in Colorado and the two
have had a working relationship for the past 10 years.

“The sculptures were getting more complicated,” Pond said. “I couldn’t do the
curved ones in my welding workshop because they require really large machines to shape the metal.”

Her largest work to date is 14 feet tall.

However, there is more to a public sculpture than what is seen above ground.
The pieces Pond did for Brandeis required two engineers to make sure the sculpture

was safe for people to interact with. A heavy foundation was used to make sure
that the sculpture would have the appropriate balance when high winds occurred.

“The foundation is a heavy counter weight below the sculpture to make it
safe for the public,” she said.

Pond does more than private and public steel sculptures. She has also completed donor recognition sculptures for non-profit organizations.

Recently, Pond started to work on a line of silver and copper jewelry. She began
making rings this past winter. “I’m really enjoying making a collection of
jewelry,” Pond said.

Her most recent work, Waterway, has an “on the lake” theme. The triptych piece is
made from antique steel and can be viewed at the Lake Champlain Maritime
Museum in Vergennes through July. The exhibition moves to the Flynndog Gallery in Burlington in September.

