

Don Porcaro

Kouros

With their snaking snouts and abundance of legs, Don Porcaro's new sculptures conjured delight rather than fear.



Don Porcaro, *Avatar #23*, 2006, concrete, metal, and paint, 10" x 7" x 6". Kouros.

No threatening invaders, his alien beasts looked as if they might have scampered over from Sesame Street. For more than a decade this artist's stone-and-metal assemblages have been assuming increasingly organic forms. In these new sculptures, he has brightened the colors and lightened up the ornamentation surrounding the core of his sculptures, creating lively cartoonish figures.

The 21 "Avatars," as Porcaro calls these sculptures (all 2006), were assembled from pipe fittings, rake tines, and bits of ironwork attached to carved stone and cast-concrete torsos. The sculptures' heavy bodies had graceful, pleasing forms, and the stained finishes rendered their sur-

faces surprisingly sensual. If stripped bare of its appendages, the body of each sculpture might have conveyed the soothing effect of a rock rubbed smooth by water.

Accessorized as they are, the sculptures serve the cause of whimsy. Evoking limbs and antennae, the painted metal appendages were well arranged without seeming fussy or overworked. In fact, the sculptures seemed to exude a certain pride in their cobbled-together condition.

These were most successful when contemplated as part of a larger, imaginary world. Two tabletop groupings allowed for interplay among the pieces and accentuated the sheer variety of shapes and colors. By contrast, one work, about the size of a person, was installed alone in the formal lobby and seemed out of place. Four works on paper completed the show. Called "Blueprints" (all 2006), they were painted in the same bright hues as the metalwork and could be seen as fanciful portraits of the engaging avatars.

—Eric Bryant