

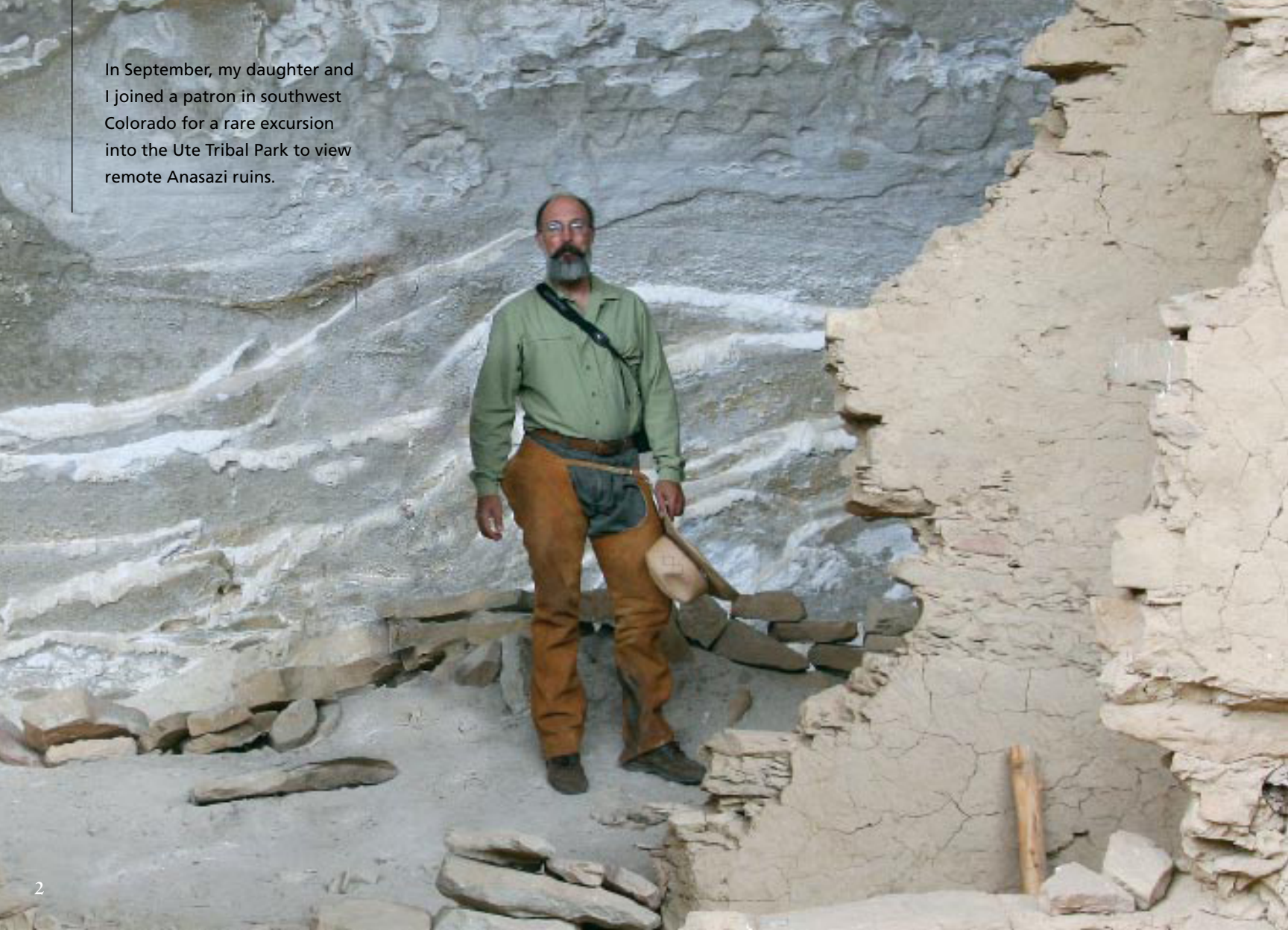
BARTWALTERSTUDIONEWS



“Bart Walter’s sculpture, a
stand-out in a crowded field.”

Adam Harris, Curator NMWA

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Life in the Whirlwind

by Bart Walter

WHAT A DELIGHTFUL and demanding whirlwind the year 2007 has been! Sculpting, lecturing, traveling, working in foundries and installing monumental sculpture have kept me busier than ever before. Thankfully, I have wonderful studio staff for support, led by Hilary Hatfield. Last spring we celebrated Hilary's tenth year as my representative, a milestone we are all proud of.

As three new life-size ostrich careened across the studio floor, I also began planning for my lecture at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, contrasting my life and methods with those of sculptor Antoine Louis Barye. With almost two hundred years separating Barye and myself, it seemed an impossible task at first. In the end, I found the more things change, the more they really do stay the same. As part of the Barye exhibition at the Museum, I also taught a sculpture workshop at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

By late spring, a pair of playful otters and a bugling elk took form in the studio. The otters are the culmination of a design I have worked on periodically for over twelve years. Then it was off to Kenya for a month of sketching, sculpting, camping and surviving flash floods. After returning from Africa, I left for Wyoming and Colorado to oversee site preparation for *Wapiti Trail* at the National Museum of Wildlife Art and the casting of *Wapiti Trail*, as well as a host of other sculptures. When all was completed at the foundry, I returned to Jackson for the actual installation and dedication of *Wapiti Trail*. Surrounded by vast open vistas, the elk look wonderful, making the combined efforts of so many people a joy to behold.

While taking a much needed break in Jackson, I found a herd of rutting bison. Surrounded, I could not resist capturing them

again and again on paper with charcoal, and then creating a field study in wax. I also fell in love with cow moose and made a wax field study (see *Encountering the American West* page 10). I used to think I had to go to Africa to experience a wildlife adrenaline rush, but found out this summer the American West still holds a great deal of excitement.

In September, my daughter and I joined a patron in southwest Colorado for a rare excursion into the Ute Tribal Park to view remote Anasazi ruins. Riding in on horseback, we camped among pottery shards and ancient stone implements and hiked high into the cliffs. On one shard of pottery, I spotted clear fingerprints made at least 800 years ago, sending a jolt of recognition and shared experience through me. Suddenly the maker was not simply an ancient Native American, he (or she) was an individual, a craftsman making a form out of clay. That seemed very familiar indeed, and instantly a gap of almost a thousand years was bridged.

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Relevance of Contemporary Wildlife Art

**By Dr. Adam Harris, Curator
National Museum of Wildlife Art**

OUR ERA IS A HEYDAY for wildlife subject matter in art, with incredible work being created across a range of media by a host of talented artists. Ignoring the art being created by living artists would be turning a blind eye to a vibrant, contemporary movement which has ties to a wide range of issues being debated on an international level. Art focused on wildlife or nature has always spoken to the deep, interconnected relationship humanity has with the other living things on the planet. Today, this art is all the more relevant as humanity grows increasingly concerned

with the environment, the loss of animal habitat, and the pending extinction of a variety of species, both large and small. With this contemporary relevance in mind, the National Museum of Wildlife Art has featured a combination of living and deceased artists since opening day in 1987. Since 1997, one of the living artists in our collection has been Bart Walter.

In 1994, the museum's focus changed from wildlife of the American West to incorporate wildlife from all over the world.

This allowed us to display a more complete history of wildlife art and reflect the ongoing importance of Asian and African wildlife in art being created today; it also allowed us to collect Bart Walter's sculpture, a stand-out in a crowded

field. Beginning with the life-sized chimpanzee *Contemplation*, the museum has added *Warthog*, *Vulturine Guinea Fowl*, *Resting Arrows*, *Agile and Swift*, and most recently the monumental *Wapiti Trail*. Walter's dedication to portraying African animals has resulted in a body of work chronicling many aspects of these creatures' lives. He has a fondness for family groups, animals in action, and studies of single creatures that convey individuality

Bart sculpting and observing mountain gorillas in the Virunga Mountains, Rwanda.

Walter's lithe, sinuous sculptures are works of art that express much more than the simple subject.





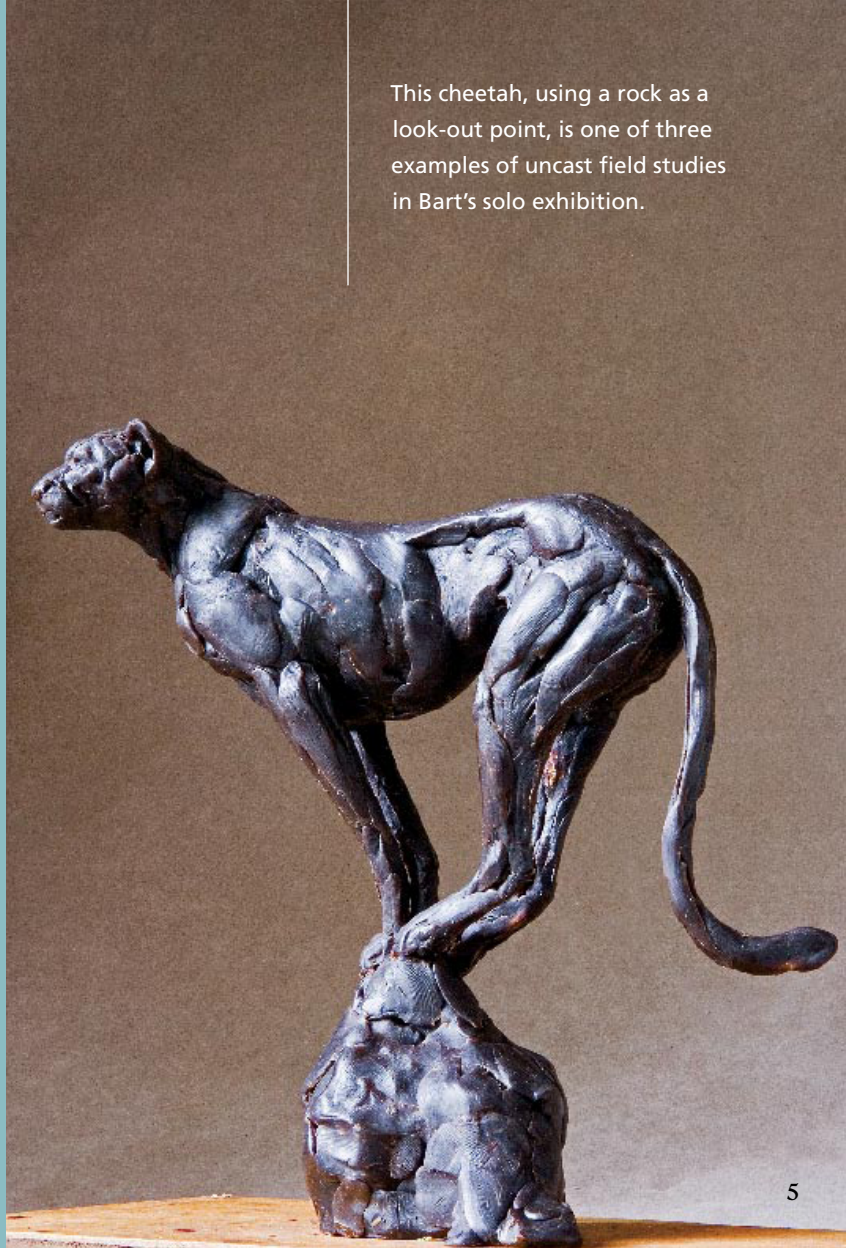
Giraffe Portrait | Charcoal Study |
Kenya 2005

and personality. Beyond the subject matter, Walter's lithe, sinuous sculptures are works of art that express much more than the simple subject of the piece. Because of the quality and scope of the work, because of

the enthusiasm for each animal that comes through in each piece, and because of the engagement museum visitors feel when they see a work by Walter, he was a natural choice for an exhibit of this magnitude. When the National Museum of Wildlife Art organizes an exhibit of a single artist, particularly a living one, it is always with the belief that the artist in question is creating work that will be appreciated for generations to come, work that is significant for a variety of reasons.

AN EYE TOWARD AFRICA: The Art of Bart Walter will feature over thirty bronzes, plus sketches and field studies and will be on display at the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson, WY from January 12 to June 22, 2008. Visit www.wildlifeart.org

This cheetah, using a rock as a look-out point, is one of three examples of uncast field studies in Bart's solo exhibition.



Wild Imaginings shown in clay shortly after Bart completed the sculpture in 2006. In 2008, two public libraries in eastern and central United States will dedicate the first two bronze castings of this magnificent piece as part of their recent expansions.



Wild Imaginings

By **Bart Walter**

For centuries and across many cultures, sculpture places lions as the appointed guardians of public spaces. The lions which flank the entrance of The New York Public Library have become the iconic symbols of that institution. However, lions have historically been depicted as fierce gatekeepers. With *Wild Imaginings* I endeavored to engage the imagination and considered the lion as both a powerful protector and a comforting companion, more in keeping with popular children's literature.

My sculpture depicts a magnificent male lion emerged from the pure imagination of a child deeply engrossed in reading a grand adventure. The lion is seated comfortably with his mane tousled by the breeze; he looks attentively to one side where a child rests against him. The boy is young, perhaps seven to nine years of age. The lion's form and mane would reflect the expressive, deep, textures synonymous with my work. The child, in repose as if he is settled into his favorite overstuffed chair, but in fact he is leaning on the flank of the beast in his storybook.

There are contrasting forms of these two very different

figures, with the lion's tail gently draped over the child's

relaxed leg, emphasizing their connection and comfort

with one another. I hope to articulate in sculpture how the

human imagination, when sparked by literature, can create

images of vivid reality, transporting the reader to magical places where wild animals and humans can peacefully coexist. Observers will also note as they walk around the sculpture that each

side of the lion's face will reflect an aspect of his nature, one protective and powerful, the other more serene.

My interpretation of the lion figure is derived from many long trips to the Maasai Mara in Kenya. I have created numerous lion sketches on the Mara because I am so inspired by these amazing and beautiful creatures. The child is a reflection of my years as a parent, observing my own children at that wonderful age when their imagination is boundless as they devour books!

Bart Walter is featured in an article in the Winter 2008 Art & Antiques Collectors Sourcebook. This publication is available on news stands as a packaged set with Art & Antiques Magazine, January 2008 Issue

Art Collectors Sourcebook
ANTIQUE



"Wapiti Trail captures the viewer's attention with its majesty, execution and placement at our entrance. A friend who had been away from the valley for a while flew into Jackson. As dusk fell, he drove toward the museum. Suddenly he saw several elk descending toward the road! When he realized it was our new sculpture, he sheepishly let up on his brakes. He sent me rave reviews on this addition to the museum's collection."

*Lynn Friess, President, Board of Trustees,
National Museum of Wildlife Art*



"*Wapiti Trail* has already become a 'show-stopper' for people coming to the National Museum of Wildlife Art. The excitement it generates speaks to Bart's masterful artistry."

*James McNutt, Director,
National Museum of Wildlife Art*

"I recently saw *Wapiti Trail* when visiting Jackson, Wyoming. Bart's sculptures look incredible and are a perfect landmark for the museum."

*Jeff Trandahl, Executive Director,
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation*

AVAILABLE ON DVD:

A new documentary on the landmark public art project by Bart Walter *Wapiti Trail* produced for the National Museum of Wildlife Art by SavaFilm ©2007.
ORDER BY PHONE 717.630.2437 or
EMAIL hatfieldbws@comcast.net
Cost incl. domestic shipping: \$10
Proceeds benefit the conservation of Wapiti Trail.





Cow Moose Study shown (at right) will be featured in the Defining the West exhibition at Gerald Peters Gallery in Santa Fe.

Encountering the American West

By Bart Walter

SITTING ON A STEEP WYOMING RIVERBANK observing and sculpting a cow moose, I thought to myself “What could be more tranquil?” The late summer sun beat down on me and it rained twice, but I was completely absorbed in my work and

hardly noticed. At the end of the day, I was almost finished and felt quite satisfied.

The next morning I drove along dirt roads searching long and hard for moose. I had decided to go home when I happened to glance

back over my shoulder and saw a cow moose three quarters of a mile away. I immediately parked the car, grabbed my field study and began walking upstream along a game trail through the

forest. I had learned a few days previously that cow moose can be aggressive and extremely dangerous, so I was careful. In dense cover, I found a shy yearling moose with a radio collar. The adult was completely hidden from view. Twenty minutes later, the yearling still seemed nervous despite a great deal of distance between us. So, I tried to imitate a contact call I had heard repeatedly the day before between a cow moose and her calf, in order to calm the yearling down.

No sooner had the call escaped my lips did I hear a tremendous crashing sound a hundred yards away, then the splashing of a large beast and the sound of swimming – all of it rapidly coming my way! I tried to see what was coming, but a willow thicket blocked my view. As the immense creature crashed through the nearby willows, I realized it must be a moose. I stepped out from behind a tree and raised my arms a bit, in order to look as big as

No sooner had the call escaped my lips did I hear a tremendous crashing sound a hundred yards away.



possible (despite how puny and helpless I felt). The cow emerged, eyes searching until she saw me. She stopped, did a double take, and then to my great relief trotted over to the yearling with a small calf in tow.

Now I had three moose to study, and feeling my troubles were over, I picked up my sculpture and set to work. Using binoculars, I was finishing the ears when all three moose suddenly bolted. The cow and calf moved rapidly along the bank to my left, the yearling ran to my right. I turned to watch the cow and calf

disappear, and then heard splashing behind me. Instinct told me what I would see as I turned back around; yet somehow I was unpre-

pared for the sight of the sow grizzly bear, galloping roughly in my direction with a cub forty feet behind her. Running away or climbing a tree was out of the question – as was standing my ground (as I had with the moose), so I did the only thing I could think of. I turned away, affecting a calm confidence completely at odds with the raw panic I felt. I threw back my shoulders and walked purposefully back the way I had come. I can tell you, it was a long walk back to my car!

Today, my new moose sculpture is being cast in bronze. I decided to leave the sculpture just as it was when I walked out of the forest. Extra wax strips remain strewn across the base just as trees were strewn across the forest floor. Never will I be able to look at this sculpture without remembering. Tranquility can and did give way to mayhem in an instant. The Wild West is still wild and very, very wonderful indeed.

I turned away, affecting a calm confidence completely at odds with the raw panic I felt.

Bronze is the New Green

By Hilary Hatfield

2007 WAS A YEAR OF STELLAR PARTNERSHIPS with significant conservation organizations doing work globally to turn the

tide of environmental degradation; both for ourselves and for the creatures of the earth.

The Studio of Bart Walter is privileged to be an ongoing partner with African Wildlife

Foundation, by exhibiting Bart's work at their DC headquarters. Bart's large scale works also returned to public exhibition at National Geographic Society last summer, on loan from both his collection and the collection of The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore. Also in 2007, Detroit Zoo hosted a traveling exhibition entitled *The Art of the Rainforest* and hundreds of zoo visitors were able to appreciate Bart's *Mountain Silverback* and *Contemplation*, on loan from a private collector. The Wildlife Experience in Denver also recently purchased Bart's chimpanzee group entitled *The Gathering* for its growing permanent collection of contemporary artists working in the wildlife genre.

Jane Goodall and Bart Walter last autumn in Washington DC.

A year ago, Bart joined supporters of Jane Goodall Institute at the home of Starbucks' founder Howard Schultz to help raise funds for JGI's ongoing mission. Jane Goodall, Howard Schultz and actress Candice Bergen greeted guests and stood for photo ops next to Bart's *Mother and Child II* and *Striding Youth*. Last autumn, Bart and his work appeared again to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Jane Goodall Institute in Washington DC at a wonderful green event at Andrew Mellon Hall. Jane invited Bart to the stage where she told the story of how they first met and began their 20 year friendship.

Also in 2007, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation selected *Northern Lake* as their Chairman's Award. The National Fish and Wildlife foundation also asked Bart to speak about his experience as an artist interpreting the wild at their annual meeting held in Jackson, Wyoming.

All of these partnerships speak to the growing network of environmental non-profits seeking new ways to reach people with their time sensitive and essential message. The Studio of Bart Walter is privileged to be involved in creating new ways to carry this message through Bart's powerful and insightful work.

photograph: J. Prehn, Courtesy of JGI



Events & Exhibitions

January 12 – June 22, 2008

An Eye Toward Africa:

The Art of Bart Walter

National Museum of Wildlife Art,
Jackson Hole, WY

www.wildlifeart.org or 800.313.9553

January 12 – March 9, 2008

Pooches and Purebreds:

Canine Images in Sculpture And

Figurative Felines: The Sculptured Cat

Brookgreen Gardens, Murrells Inlet, SC

www.brookgreen.org or 800.849.1931

January 15, 2008

Meet the Artist — Bart Walter

Astoria Fine Art, Jackson Hole, WY

www.astoriafineart.com or 307.733.7973



Bart plans to develop
this Bison Study for
a new work in 2008.

January 15, 2008

Art Alive @12:05 Gallery Talk

National Museum of Wildlife Art,
Jackson Hole, WY

www.wildlifeart.org or 800.313.9553

April 3 – June 3, 2008

Revisiting the Arts

Carroll County Arts Council

Westminster, MD

www.carr.org/arts or 410.848.7272

May 2 – June 13, 2008

Defining the West

Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, NM

www.gpgallery.com or 505.954.5700

September 6 – November 2, 2008

Flights of Fantasy: The Artistic Bird

Brookgreen Gardens, Murrells Inlet, SC

www.brookgreen.org or 800.849.1931



BART WALTER TURNS 50

In January 2008 Bart turns fifty. Many who have followed his artistic career will remember the days when his beard was not so silvery. Yet as Bart has grown as an artist, the respectable grey has also increased and so has his wonderful body of work and circle of friends. To celebrate Bart's 50th birthday The Studio of Bart Walter is collecting stories from anyone willing to share. If you have a favorite Bart story or will offer a critique of your favorite Bart Walter piece, please send it in writing to hatfieldbws@comcast.net or mail to: Hilary Hatfield - Home Office, The Studio of Bart Walter 414 Mc Cosh Street, Hanover, PA, 17331. We welcome and are grateful for all submissions from the sublime to the ridiculous!

New Work: *Otter Knot*

16" x 14" x 20" high | Edition: 10

As you approach *Otter Knot*, a mysterious abstract piece appears, a single flowing form. As you move around it, the sculpture reveals itself as two intertwined intimate figures. It is playful and evokes passionate warmth. We fell in love with it at first sight.

Frank Baylor and Jenny Teeter, Art Collectors







**THE STUDIO OF
BART WALTER**

2008 NEWSLETTER

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Two Hunting Lioness

109" x 42" x 38"

Edition: 6

COVER:

Otter Knot, detail

See page 14 for

information.