

# Life

## Running from 9/11 led sculptor to life's work

Abstract artist's experiences changed her art.

By Terry Morris  
Staff Writer

DAYTON — New York sculptor Linda Stein was tired of running, so she recruited some back-up.

She called on Wonder Woman, Princess Mononoke and Lisbeth Salander.

They are all incorporated into her work, which is on view through March 7 in her exhibition "The Fluidity of Gender" at Sinclair Community College.

Besides expressing the need for female superheroes and warriors, her latest creations are fueled by a re-defining of traditional masculinity and femininity, said Stein, whose art was purely abstract until Sept. 11, 2001, when she was working as usual in her studio in the vicinity of what soon became known as Ground Zero.

"The police came to our door to tell us to leave right away. They told us to run. I ran the whole day, from one end of Manhattan to the other. Someone would tell us to go to a certain subway station, but it was closed down when we got there, so we ran somewhere else," she said.

She stopped making art for an entire year after that. When she resumed, her work had changed. It "had



"MascuFem 681," a sculpture of leather, metal and mixed media, is part of her exhibition.

become vertical," and then details began to emerge.

"It took on a figurative form. I was making warriors with armor. I thought, 'What am I doing? I am a pacifist. I jog around ant hills,'" said Stein, who had recurring dreams about running as a child.

"Those dreams were about the desire for safety, and so is my work," said the Bronx-born artist, who believes she has found her purpose.

"Fluidity of Gender" includes sculptures of female torsos made from materials including leather, metal or paper. "They are figures of protection, but not aggression," the artist

emphasized.

Feminine shapes are embedded with masculine elements, a force she also sees as working the other way in contemporary life.

Salander, the female protagonist in "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo" demonstrates "how a woman can assert strength and not be constrained," she said.

"Mikael Blomkvist," the leading male character, "wears baby blue throughout that film, which is a study in gender role reversals. I think that's one reason it has hit such a nerve with young people."

Stein will speak on her inspirations, observations and passions as part of the exhibit, which is part of REACH Across Dayton 2012 at Sinclair.

REACH, or Realizing Ethnic Awareness and Cultural Heritage, is a collaboration between Sinclair, the EbonNia Gallery and the Dayton Visual Arts Center.

There will be a reception with the artist from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday in the Burnell R. Roberts Triangle Gallery, located in Building 13 at Sinclair. Students will give interpretive performances at 7:15 and 7:45 p.m.

Stein will give a REACH 2012 keynote address, "The Chance to Be Brave, the Courage to Dare," at 10:20 a.m. Friday in Building 12. A question and answer session will follow.

She will also lead an informal interactive talk from 1 to 2 p.m. Friday in



Armored with her own art, Stein explores gender roles and identity in her work. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

### How to go

**What:** "The Fluidity of Gender: Sculpture by Linda Stein"

**Where:** Burnell R. Roberts Triangle Gallery, fourth floor of Sinclair Community College's Building 13, South Perry and West Fifth streets

**When:** Through March 7. Gallery hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays

**Cost:** Free

the Triangle Gallery.

Stein will give a different but related lecture in Yellow Springs, followed by a question-and-answer session. "Salander/Blomkvist: Challenging Stereotypes in 'The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo' and Beyond" will

be at 8 p.m. Wednesday in Room 113 of McGregor Hall at Antioch College, 1 Morgan Place.

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