

Marian Ives



Coop founding member Marian Ives is having her first solo exhibit this month, called “Birds, Beasts and Bugs.” This is the most multi-media show she has produced and will have wall art encompassing oil painting, mosaics, welded iron sculpture, copper relief sculpture, and monoprints.

She’s been working with the monoprints for years but hasn’t shown them before. The imagery combines abstract shapes with “birds, beast and bugs.” She has cut her shapes with a jewelers saw from thin sheets of metal, in one case using one of her etched dragonfly ornaments, and laid these on the printing plate to create an embossed collage effect.

One of her wall sculptures is so big she hasn’t found the right blank wall to get a picture of it yet. It is “different from anything I have done. It is an ox-like figure with giant horns. A lot of my welded pieces



are mask-like heads that no one has seen yet.”

Marian remembers the moment when she decided to devote her time to learning the art of metalsmithing. Although her mother was an artist (albeit a frustrated artist, with seven children to raise) Marian had not thought of making things until she saw a silver bracelet made by the mother of a high school friend. Empowered by the idea of creating her own jewelry, she immediately signed up for classes at the DeCordova museum and started her life-long tool collection.

After working for a jeweler in high school, she took classes at the Rochester Institute of Technology School for American Craftsmen. She made her first weathervane as a christmas gift for her family, a

two foot long copper codfish. Although she had never made one before she was confident she could figure it out, hammering the form into shape and joining the edges with solder.



Among the hardest weather vanes she created were a knight in armor on a horse and a six foot long lobster. The gold-leafed lobster went on the Hook Lobster Co building in Boston. It was installed 28 years ago and can be seen on the corner of Atlantic and Northern avenues in Boston. For the upcoming show, she will have several copper pieces worked in the relief method of the weather vanes including new codfish, grasshopper and turtle vanes. She has made a giant halibut of copper that hangs on the wall. Marian divides her time between Hawley and southeastern Mass and remains a working member at the store two days a month. She lives near her sister when she is away, and has a cut flower



business there.

The idea for starting an arts coop in Shelburne actually originated with Marian and a friend of hers from New Hampshire. Marian had been involved in a Cambridge artisan cooperative for many years and felt that Shelburne would be a good spot for one. After her friend dropped out due to the distance involved, Marian teamed up with Christine Conniff to recruit the founding membership and secured the location. Enthusiasm, hard work, business savvy, a constantly evolving membership of fine artists and craftspeople has seen the coop through the years to its present 18th year!