

ART

SPOTLIGHT

by Petra Wright



"Diptych #19" - Saggar Fired Diptych series 2014

TANYA RAGIR

This month GDCA is proud to debut "Warrior III", one of the centerpieces of renowned sculptor Tanya Ragir's recent 'Warrior Series'.

The artist's powerful and evocative nude torso sculptures literally stopped traffic when she first decided to exhibit her 'Seductive Armor Series' downtown in January of 2014. Inspired by lingerie ads littering the doorsteps of her neighborhood, Ragir realized that these intimate 'decorations' of our bodies were actually creating a protective barrier, akin to an armor... and in essence replacing the very thing they were claiming to promote - intimacy. Visually referring back to roman armament with its exaggerated & perfect anatomy, that, which is vital and alive and real is hidden... the 'Seductive Armor' series was born!

Next up at GDCA was her 2014 Saggar Fire 'Diptych' series. While these wall-mounted torsos might seem diminutive compared to her life size torsos - their presence is formidable and their effect not to be underestimated...they are breathtaking. Each individually crafted torso is achingly sensuous and perfect. Their curves elicit both desire and reverence, as well as a profound respect for the beauty and purity of the human form ... I like to think of them as Ragir's answer to Michelangelo's 'David'.

Once you have encountered, or should I say 'experienced' any one of Tanya Ragir's sculptures, you will undoubtedly recognize the artist's hand. Not so much because of similarity in style, but rather in feeling... Emotion is the primal driving force behind Ragir's work... and it encompasses all of it: passion, grace, devotion, longing, abandon, joy, ecstasy, vulnerability and devastation... Ragir's muses embody them all. Her transcen-

dent figures exude raw emotional power, unbridled sensuality, and are expressive to the point where they seem to cross over into our realm... they seem to live, to breathe.

"My life and my work are about overcoming limitations. Some are cultural, some political, some sexual - many are self-imposed", says the artist, "I embrace the gravitas, the depth and breadth of the beauty of women, which is limitless."

While Ragir's earlier bodies of work explored the interiors of form, her current collection, The Warrior Series, centers around states of being - "facing internal/external barriers, struggle and loss". Simultaneously with the original ceramic showing at GDCA Downtown, the cast bronze of "Warrior III" will be on view this month at The California Art Club at The Autry National Center.

All of Ragir's pieces are sculpted in clay, then fired or cast in bronze, aluminum, stainless steel and polyester resin. Sizes range from inches to monumental. The work is produced in either limited editions of nine, or as unique pieces. To see "Warrior III" in person and to learn more about the artist and her work, please visit us at GDCA on Spring Street at the corner of 6th Street!

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"Warrior III" - Warrior Series



"Black Lace II" - Seductive armor series