

# Sculpture



by Gilbert Bouchard

U of A professor and sculptor Peter Hide credits the oil industry and Edmonton's unpretentious populations for our city's reputation as an international steel sculpture capital.

"Steel work is being done in other places, but the main thrust of the steel sculpture movement is here," said Hide. "Edmonton steel sculpture is being bought in Boston and New York and has been for the last two or three years. We're being recognized as a phenomena and not simply as one artist."

Hide explained that steel sculpture originated in France in 1915, spread to New York in the mid 30s, then to London in the early 60s, and finally to Edmonton in the late 70s. "Steel sculpture has moved around and it hasn't died off in those other places but the energy levels have evened out."

One of the reasons Hide gives for the development of such a powerful school of steel sculpture is "Edmonton's keen interest in art, but not a pretentious or faddish interest." This unpretentious interest and support made possible the development of a school of art that is considered "old hat" in other centers. "In New York the students would be more obsessed with fashion. New York has become overheated."



The photographs from left to right illustrate the following:

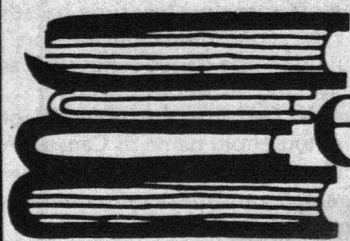
Sculpture student Ken George removes steel with a grinder.

Mild steel scraps are stored on pallets and moved with a forklift.

Student Ben Darrah wears a mask and gas filter for protection from welding smoke.

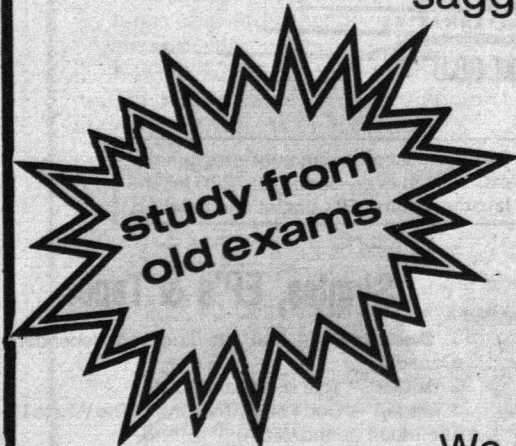
Ken is confronted with the weight of the medium.

This is a finished piece by local sculptor Clay Ellis, and part of the Sculpture City Show, which is at the Edmonton Art Gallery until October 25th.



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