

## CONFLUENCE OF BLUE

Confluence of Blue is a great example of the evolutionary process of a sculpture and the connection to my journey as an artist – from idea to fruition. The concept of multiple herons developed years ago.

Inspired by a conversation about our separate life journeys and the impact of coming together for a common goal and how that evolved into a sense of sharing, learning and growth. In that conversation, a simple comparison was made to the unique solitary life of the Great Blue Heron and their annual congenial gathering to start a new generation.

Through investigation, I developed a greater understanding of heron's biological traits and the cultural perspectives of the birds that have been woven into history. This built a fascinating foundation for a sculptural narrative. I struggled for years trying to define the concept in design, trying to visualize a concept that expressed the heron's traits, cultural ties and most important a connection – my story. It was simply that of a community coming together "for a greater good."

This sculpture expresses my reverence for nature and admiration of honorable societies. In creating Confluence of Blue, the heron rookery became the metaphor for what it takes in coming together "for the greater good" – to build a stronger community. Central to the theme stands the great White Oak with its deep roots suggesting the strength, history and enduring spirit of culture. Around the base of the tree, herons have gathered, joined to one another and all connected to the tree, the community.

The heron postures suggest: looking forward, respecting the past, making connections to one another, bringing goals to fruition and balancing a central vision – calm and focused – looking to the future.

The birds are orientated N-S-E-W to suggest the great influence and impact and its unlimited boundaries pursuing the common goal. The heron that flies above reflects the success by the efforts of the community below, as the mighty oak reaches to the sky in support.

As the bird's postures developed, I came to understand they reflected six important elements of life itself; focus – perseverance – celebration – relationships – success and gracious generosity.

In hindsight, this sculpture speaks to my need to remain connected to nature. Being a witness to the layers of nature that can provide insight to unraveling the layers of a life's journey, with art providing for that opportunity to share.

KEN NEWMAN SCULPTURES

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