

# Sculptor David Boyajian Carves A Niche Through Private Commissions

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David Boyajian is recognized as a master metal sculptor for his abstract pedestal-to-monolithic sized sculptures that are derivative of nature. With equal zeal he teaches sculpture and drawing at four schools including his own studio in rural Connecticut, inspiring a generation of artists. Recently he spoke to me about pursuing privately commissioned custom sculpture and ornamental iron.

—Louis J. Slovinsky.

*Q: “Red Tail,” a realistic bronze-and-stainless steel hawk, was commissioned for a specific residential site. Is this a new direction for you?*

Boyajian: Natural imagery infuses most of my sculpture and drawings. I am known more for my abstract interpretations of nature but that is only one aspect of what I do. I happen to enjoy the commission process. It’s a matter of using my ability and knowledge to accomplish the task at hand. Seeing “Red Tail” sited specifically on a boulder in my clients’ garden was rewarding for all the parties involved.

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*Q: You’ve created unique furniture and a grand steel balcony for the Sculpture Barn. Do you offer clients similar custom metalwork?*

Boyajian: Over the years I have created quite a bit of custom furniture and ornamental iron for my collectors. I’ll continue to work directly with the buyer on all their “metal needs.” Often times my ability to create just about anything out of metal sends me in a new direction. It can all be beautiful.

*Q: By opting for more client-directed or commercial commissions, do you risk eroding your identity as a serious contemporary sculptor?*

Boyajian: Not any more than Picasso or Giacometti. It’s a way to cultivate a clientele, acquainting potential buyers with many fine art pieces. Not everyone out there has knowledge about sculpture. This can be an introduction. The commissioned work is aesthetically consistent with my sculpture for exhibition.

*Q: Do you make a qualitative distinction between your sculpture and the work that a client, architect or designer orders?*

Boyajian: The difference is the process. I wouldn’t normally wake up and say, I think I’ll make an Ikebana table today. But that is what I did today. As long as the creative energy is flowing the work continues to renew itself. I’m always creating work for both exhibition and commission. For example; a collector saw a small stainless and bronze piece at a show and asked me to scale it up four-times the size and make it a working fountain.

Currently I’m hammering male and female heads out of bronze for a client based on earlier pieces they saw in my portfolio.

*Q: I understand your sculpture students include interior designers, landscapers and architects who then use the skills in their professions.*

Boyajian: Some of them. I’ll teach anyone with a desire to design, fabricate, forge and carve. In my studio at the Sculpture Barn, the learning environment is based on sharing information. It’s an “atelier” which is a French term for workshop, where a number of artists work together under one master. I teach my students a contemporary approach to working with traditional materials such as steel, bronze, stone, etc. Our mission is to make art not chrome-plated choppers. Many of my students have been with me for years.

*Q: How did your recent move to your new space called the Boyajian Sculpture Barn change your life and art?*

Boyajian: Being the owner of a large commercial space has many benefits. I can create, exhibit and teach, all under one roof. I invite the public into the process. And the possibilities are limitless.

*Editor’s note:* The David Boyajian Sculpture Barn and Gallery, 3 Milltown Road in New Fairfield, Conn., is open Wednesday through Sunday, 10 am to 6 pm. On view through October 30 is a member artist exhibition called “Atelier II,” exhibiting the work of Boyajian’s students. Visit [www.sculpturebarn.com](http://www.sculpturebarn.com) or call 203-746-6101 for information about metal and stone classes and events in the gallery. David Boyajian welcomes appointments with anyone interested in contemporary sculpture.