



UMLAUF sculpture
garden
& museum

605 Robert E. Lee Road, Austin, Texas 78704
Tues-Fri 10-4; Sat & Sun 12-4
umlaufsculpture.org

STUDIO IN THE MUSEUM

An Interactive Recreation of
Charles Umlauf's Studio

APRIL 22 – OCTOBER 16, 2016

Studio in the Museum

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Overview by
Katie Robinson Edwards, Curator



Charles Umlauf's 1956 studio, interior

When Charles and Angeline Umlauf donated their home, his studio, and 168 sculptures to the City of Austin in a living trust in 1985, they hoped the public could always touch his bronze sculptures. Since 1991, when the UMLAUF opened as a unique public-private partnership with the City of Austin, the bronzes have been protected through regular conservation so visitors can do exactly that.

Each sculpture in the Garden represents the finished product, the final stage of Umlauf's long generative process. What about the stages leading up to the finished bronze, cast stone, or carved stone sculpture? The Studio in the Museum exhibition is concerned with the process Umlauf undertook to develop his sculptures. The early stages of his process contain tremendous vitality, and the focus of that energy is the artist's studio. In his studio, Umlauf drew, sketched, modeled, carved, and painted. In his studio, one senses the energetic, unformed moments of developing art. One can see, hear, smell—and feel—the same materials the artist used.

Umlauf often explained his need to make sculpture by saying, "My memory is in my fingertips." That deceptively simple statement highlights how paramount the sense of touch was for Umlauf. Memory holds the past as well as the future, it holds ideas, images, feelings, smells, sounds. In a way, memory is everything. In Umlauf's case everything was tactile. In celebration of our 25th anniversary, we hope to re-introduce visitors to Charles Umlauf and his work in a way that is both memorable and tactile. The basis of the exhibition is Umlauf's studio, built in 1956 on a steep bluff overlooking



A glimpse of Charles' studio. A window sill covered in jars and cans.

Barton Springs Road. He was 45 years old when he moved in, an artist and Full Professor at mid-career who finally had the means to build a proper studio.

The heart of the exhibition is the vicarious experience of his studio, recreated through two illusionistic vignettes containing objects taken directly from the original studio. There one finds the artist's workbench, drafting table, sculpture stands, tools, drawing implements, the requisite studio clutter, and sculptures in a variety of media and degrees of completion. Details of the constructed studio scenes contribute to their authentic feel. The stained wall panels of the workbench vignette were chamfered to evoke the original 1950s shiplap. The plywood floor was coated with numerous layers (mixed with real cement) to recreate Umlauf's concrete studio floor. The studio door replicates the red original that still opens on a hill above Barton Springs Road; its circular Pietrasanta foundry label is a photographic reproduction. One of Umlauf's dusty fluorescent light fixtures is reinstalled here. The combination of the real and recreated encourages close looking and provides an immersive experience.

To bring the show into the present, the Experience Design Team who developed the show included additional interactive areas. Because every Umlauf sculpture begins as a two-dimensional drawing, Studio in the Museum features touchable facsimiles of some of his sketchbooks. The Design Team created three educational videos to demonstrate key steps in the lost-wax casting method that Umlauf used. Paired with each video is a sculpted, cast, and colored sculpture of a cat in Umlauf's style. Also included is a sculpted portrait of Charles Umlauf, with clay and the appropriate tools provided to encourage museumgoers to complete the portrait. These interactive areas are intended to bring visitors closer to Umlauf's process, expanding the usual museum visit into a tactile experience. And to help visualize the true scope of Umlauf's work, the Design Team has provided a 22-foot timeline that outlines major accomplishments in the course of Umlauf's 60+ year career, rich with photographs.

We encourage repeat visits, and hope these interactive spaces, timeline, and "period piece" vignettes offer an inspiring peek into the creative space of one of the twentieth century's most prolific sculptors. ■

Exhibition

April 22 – October 16, 2016

Opening reception

April 22, 6 to 8 pm

Insights: Q&A with the Exhibition Designers

July 27, 6 pm

Insights: Umlauf's Graphic Legacy

September 28, 6 pm

Thank you to everyone who helped to construct the exhibition: Nimer Aleck, Don Atkins, Stephanie Busing, Dan Doze, Trisha Fabian, Lee T. Edwards, Tina Heffernan, Everett Hyman, Maryhelen Murray, Bryson Owen, and Ivan Page. Thank you to Mo & Richard Anderson, the Cultural Arts Division of the City of Austin, and the Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation for their generous contributions.

Experience Design Team Lead: Stephanie Busing

Exhibition Curator: Katie Robinson Edwards

Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation

