

THE UPDATE

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS AND SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

November 2011

BAHAMIAN ARTIST'S RESIDENCY AT UNI

*Courtesy of Cammie Scully, Director
Waterloo Center for the Arts*

Bahamian artist, Antonius Roberts, embarked on a residency at the University of Northern Iowa in collaboration with the Department of Art. The residency was inspired in part by the experience of the Waterloo Museum's curator, Kent Shankle, at Antonius Roberts' installations, *Sacred Space* and *Welcome*. Waterloo community stakeholders and their Public Art Committee asked Roberts to consider creating a piece that memorializes the devastating flood that occurred in Waterloo in 2008.

The flooding wiped out a couple of historic neighborhoods including a very special island community known as Sans Souci, which was home to 20 families and which had, in earlier times, been a thriving resort area. The Waterloo Museum provided Roberts with wood from downed trees and remnants of a gate and fence from the island — all that remains of what was once the first golf course in Waterloo — now just a wooded area.

Since the floods, the island has been purchased by the city, the homes are being torn down and it is anticipated that the entire island will become a park and nature preserve, where the works created by Roberts during his residency could be on permanent display. Kent Shankle took Roberts to visit Sans Souci.

Shankle shared stories of his childhood days living in such a small, loving and caring community where everyone joined together at the lake for picnics or walks through the wooded area enjoying the wonders of nature. What Roberts took from this experienced was the awareness of a beautiful place filled with positive energy and the spirit of love, evident by the fact

that lawn areas are still nicely manicured on a regular basis by a good gentleman who once called the place his home.

In a *Nassau Guardian* article, Roberts is quoted: "A lot of us, we tell our stories locally and we tell our stories through our work, but this gives us an opportunity to take our stories to the world. To me, making art outside of the Bahamas is really what I would love to do," he continues. "It provides me an opportunity to take my story with me."

During a press conference prior to his time at UNI, Roberts expressed excitement for the week-long residency at UNI, which coincides with the "Master Artists of the Bahamas" exhibition opening at the Waterloo Center for the Arts as well as a two-day symposium. The exhibit will run from October 14,

2011, through January 2012, and will feature over 40 pieces of artwork by a diverse group of Bahamian artists, including the late Amos Ferguson, Brent Malone and Jackson Burnside as well as contemporary artists, Antonius Roberts (featured exhibit artist), Dave Smith, Eddie Minnis, John Beadle, John Cox, Kendal Hanna, Max Taylor and Stan Burnside.



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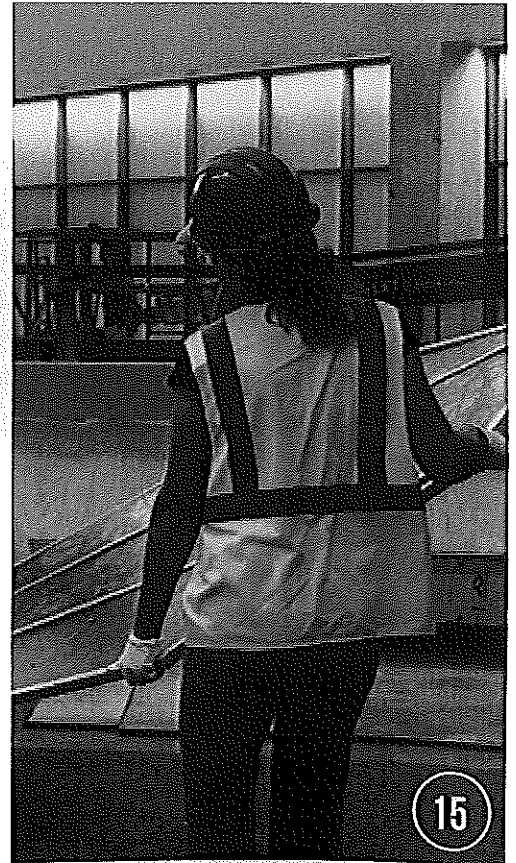
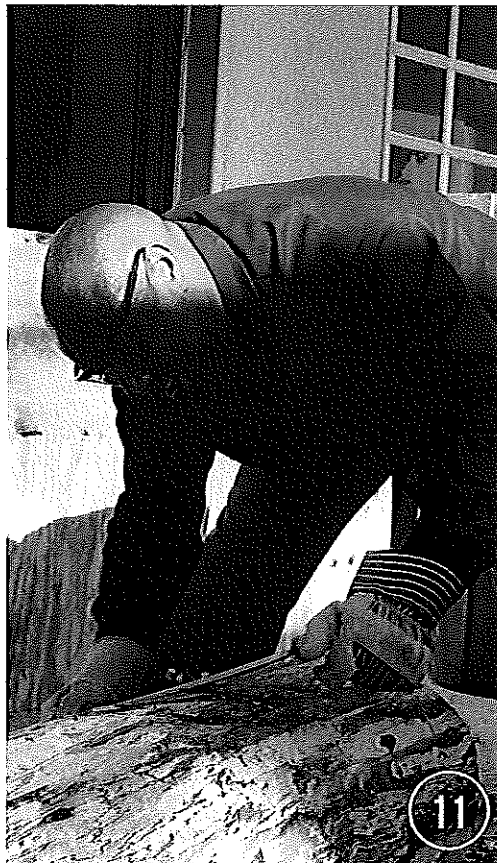
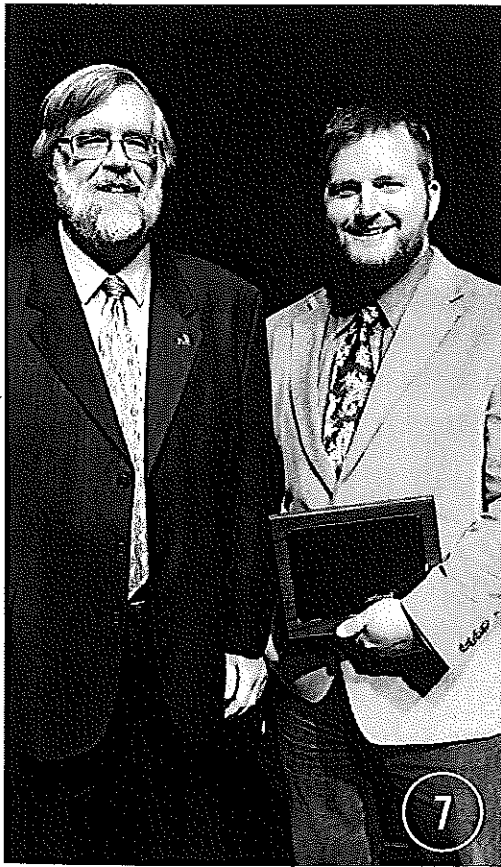
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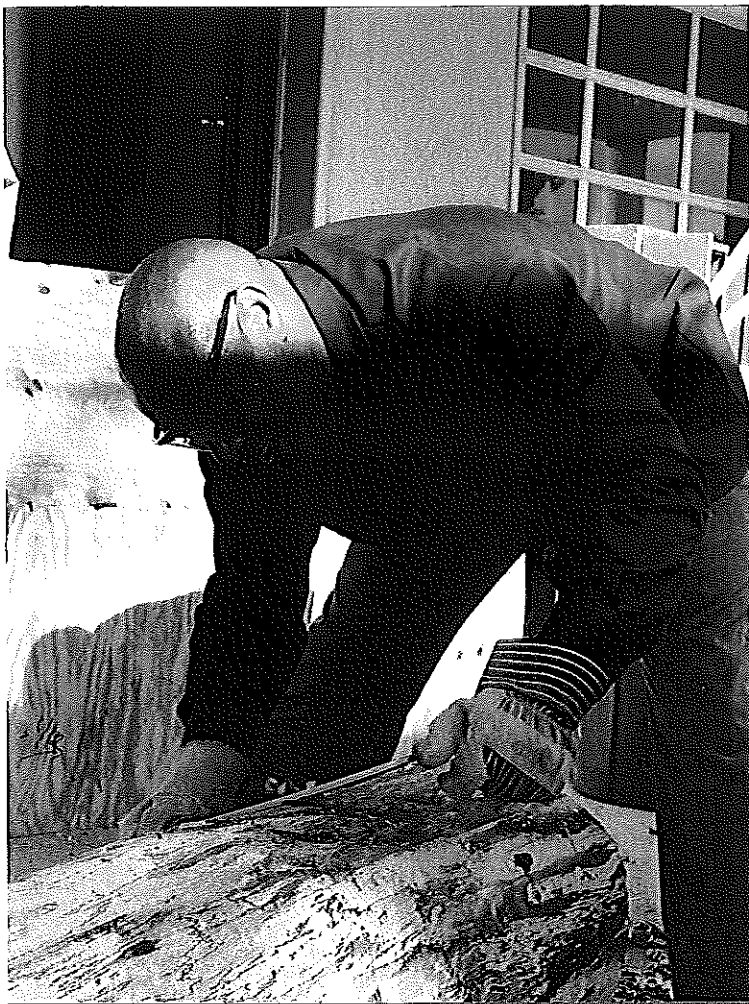
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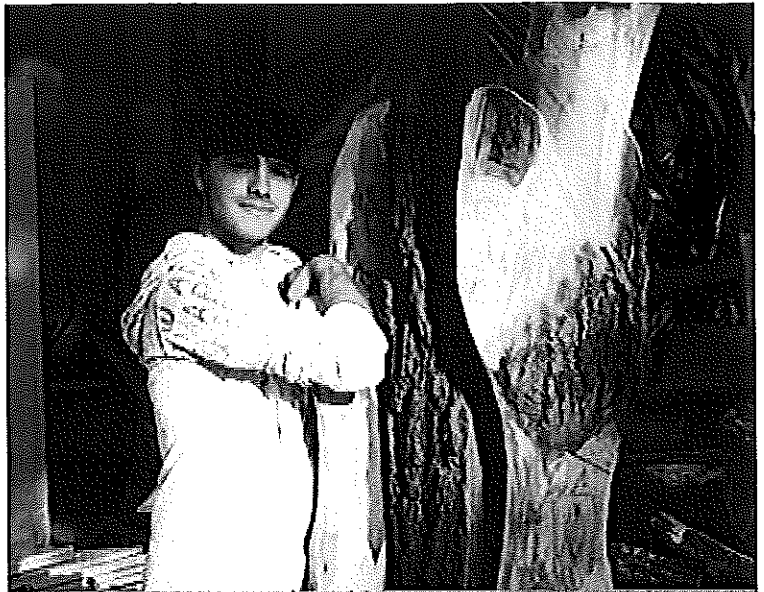
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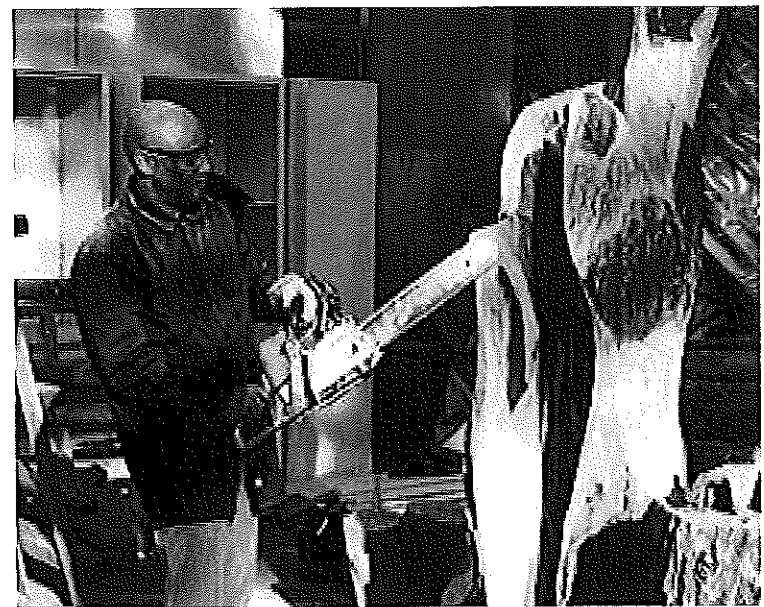
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Bahamian Artist's Residency at UNI

Roberts (pictured above) also worked with students from UNI on a public art piece crafted out of local material. Students were encouraged to select a piece of wood and create a free form structure while keeping in mind a true design concept. As a measure of his positive experience during his residency at UNI with the sculpture department, Roberts had this to say, "You are all very lucky to have this facility. It's one of the best equipped sculpture departments I've ever seen."



>> Zach Bowman, a senior sculpture major, stopped by to observe Roberts' work in progress.



CHECK OUT ROBERTS' WORK ON THE WEB!
WWW.ANTONIUSROBERTS.COM