

William Brayton: Bio

William Brayton graduated from the University of New Hampshire, cum laude in studio art, and received an MFA from Claremont Graduate University in Los Angeles. Brayton has exhibited his work in a broad range of venues including: The Barrows Rotunda, Dartmouth College; The Mount, Lenox, MA; The Art Lot, Brooklyn, NY; The Chesterwood Museum, Stockbridge, MA; Soil Gallery, Seattle WA; and the Boston Sculptors Gallery, Boston MA. His work has appeared in numerous publications including Sculpture Magazine, Art New England, The Seattle Times, and The Boston Globe. Brayton is an emeritus Professor of Art at Hampshire College in Amherst Massachusetts where he established the Sculpture Program in 1988. He is the recipient of a Pollock Krasner Grant, a Mellon Foundation grant, a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Grant, and other grants in support of his work in the studio and within academia. Brayton has been a visiting artist at many institutions including Dartmouth College, Smith College, Penn State University, Claremont Graduate University, Amherst College, Skidmore College, and The Brattleboro Museum. He lives and works with Erica Wurtz and their son Gavin in Conway Massachusetts.

Artist Statement 2023

Chance, gravity, and implied motion are key elements in my work. Starting with some self-imposed limits, parts made from wood, aluminum, bronze, concrete, and plastic are added, cut out, repositioned, or abandoned. As a sculpture comes together, chance opportunities collide with the memory of previous decisions. Gravity affects perceived mass and balance. Disrupted patterns can imply motion. Where parts cross; screws, rivets, bolts, and welds create connections in distinct ways. An accumulation-based approach in drawing has parallels to my work in sculpture. Decisions are made across multiple images at once. Tools are fabricated to create specific lines. Pencil, charcoal, gouache, and ink are combined with spray paint and stencils, blending a record of the hand with more mechanical methods. Across both sculpture and drawing, plant architecture, wind patterns and water systems influence my exploration of branching, bending and intertwining forms and images. Despite the use of neutral geometric forms, an emotional reading often surfaces at the end of the process. This found meaning becomes the subject of the work.