

# *Dakota Nature & Art* gallery and fine gifts

## **James Paulson**

As child I was surrounded by the arts. My father is a writer, and my mother a visual artist and illustrator. My earliest memories are of the smell of oil paint and the click of an old manual typewriter. But as I grew up, I recalled the early days of extreme poverty, and felt anxious about entering the field of the arts, in spite of their more recent success.

I graduated from high school in Bemidji , Minnesota and attended Bemidji State University , receiving a degree in Elementary Education. I taught for a time in New Mexico , on Holloman Air Force Base, before realizing that I missed the arts fiercely. I liked teaching, but I loved art. It seemed there was no escaping it.

I left my short career as a teacher behind and set out to find my niche in the art world. I had no clear idea what I wanted to do, how I wanted to express my creative spirit, so I began with what I was familiar with, writing and visual arts. But after writing for a time, and limited success as a freelance cartoonist, I was still left with a void, a certain lack of fulfillment.

Then, while on the phone during a winter's day in 1998, I idly thumbed some of my daughter's play dough. By the end of the conversation, I had completed a simple, crude bust of a man. I fell in love with the clay at that very moment and knew I had found what I was looking for.

Since that moment I have tried to evolve a style of work that focuses on form and expression, while still retaining images from the natural world around us. In my work I attempt to stay true to the subject in anatomy and motion, but at the same time allow the clay or wax to speak with the rich textures that translate so beautifully in bronze.

It is my hope that as I learn and grow artistically, I will create works that will evolve with me, and allow the viewer to experience even a small amount of the sheer joy that I feel when my hands hit the clay.

## **GALLERY AND JURIED SHOWS**

**James has dozens of Juried Shows - is published in several publications - if you wish a complete list contact us**