Spring 2013

Klipsun Magazine, 2013, Volume 43 Issue 06 - Spring

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I was always taught speed could be thought of as the rate at which an object covers distance. But my concept of speed has changed throughout the years. For me, it is about the progression of something or someone, the moments between the seconds.

However, I didn’t always see speed the way I do now. Growing up with an uncle named “Fast Mike”, who races cars professionally, speed was always about being the fastest. He would maneuver around the cones on the track in the blink of my eye, finishing first in a matter of seconds.

As I became older he asked if I wanted to ride with him in one of his races. My hands gripped the side of the seat as he started the engine. I was preparing for the ultimate fast-paced thrill. But something funny happened. The memories of him whizzing around the track faster than my eye could follow didn’t match up to what I felt and saw while being in the car. Time seemed to slow; every move he made was done with such purpose and precision. We were no longer racing at 90 mph but gliding slowly along the track, feeling those moments between the seconds.

In compiling this issue I learned even more about the importance and unique quality of speed. One man experiences what it feels like to set the land-speed record on a motorcycle, while a basketball coach with a heart condition has to slow down and show his passion for the game on the sidelines.

How one treats and experiences speed is the key, not how fast or slow something happens.

Lani Farley
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F
ly fisherman Brandon Sly tempts trout and salmon from the
cold waters of the Skagit and Nooksack rivers with homemade
flies, keeping a close eye on the shifting waters to land that
evasive silver lightning.

For the fisherman, time seems to slow down. Ripples and cuts
in the river become clearer. Sly must remain attentive to detect
movement below the surface of the water, where fish can appear and
vanish in mere seconds. At the same time, the fisherman’s muscles
are primed for a split-second window to set the hook when a fish hits
the fly. His goal is to catch a trophy trout. The fisherman must be
able to read the river and its surroundings to select the perfect fly.

“Observe, observe and observe,” says Errol McWhirk, a Pacific
Northwest fly fisherman. “That is really the only rule. You have to
be aware of what is going on around you.”

Fly fishers have an increased sense of awareness, especially
on their favorite local waterways, and gain a certain sense of sat-
isfaction from mastering their “home river,” or the stream they
fish at most often.

Sly especially enjoys fishing the Skagit and the Nooksack rivers.
“There are certainly better rivers out there,” he says. “But to
me there is a sense of pride in knowing your local river.”

Fly fishers may go home without a single fish to their name
after spending an entire day on the river. While such inconsistency
may bother other sportspeople, for fly fishers it is not necessarily
landing the fish that is important, but instead the overall experience
of being on the water.

“When you catch a fish it’s like putting frosting on a cake,”
McWhirk says. “Cake is good with or without frosting. Just like
fishing is good without catching.”

Fly fishers have a deep respect for the fish they endlessly work
to hook because of their connection with nature. Fishers use
barbless hooks in order to reduce trauma to the fish’s mouths and

Above: A fly fisherman
practices two-handed spey
casting on the Nooksack River
near Nugent’s Corner, Wash.

A fisherman’s experience in the river

Story by Eric Guenther
Photos by Evan Abell

LIFE ON THE FLY
generally use catch-and-release techniques in order to minimize their impact on the stream or river.

"Even though I like fish I don’t keep very many," McWhirk says. "Why waste them when you can go catch them again?"

Whether the goal is to land a trophy trout or to simply enjoy time out on the water, fly fishing is a way of life for many fishers who hope to pass down the tradition to future generations.

"I got into fly fishing from my grandpa," Sly says. "I have two brothers, and we were all home-schooled. It was great growing up. While all our friends were off at school, we would spend two to three weeks in Montana fishing. It was something we always looked forward to and just continued on, and all three of us are still into fishing."

For many, simply being in the river is not enough. Fly fishers will research about local insect populations and learn how to tie certain fly patterns to round out their skill set.

"Fly fishermen are do-it-yourselfers," Sly says. "We want to know not just how to catch a fish, but why we are catching the fish we do. For us, tying flies is a way to be connected to fishing when we actually can’t go fishing."

"From tiny surface flies made to resemble small insects such as the Blond Wulff, Cinnamon Sedge and the Rat-Faced McDougal, to larger underwater flies such as the Woolly Bugger, fishers come armed and ready for any kind of rise they may encounter. These fly variations are made to dance either on or under the water, and mimic natural insect movements. The tiny Blondie Wulff is a slender fly with a large tuft of feather near the eye of the hook made to imitate a caddis fly, while the larger Woolly Bugger made of dense feathers imitates a fly larva."

"From an outsider’s perspective, it is very daunting," Sly says. "You see these little hooks and all this material and you have no idea how to make it all look like an insect. One of the things that attracts people to fly fishing is that there is that science-nerdy aspect to it."

Constructing a fly takes time, precision and a steady hand to deal with the tiny, razor-sharp hooks. The smallest details such as feather placement and choice of color can make the difference between hooking up or going home without a single hit on a fisher’s fly.

Traditional fly-tying material includes rabbit fur, pheasant feathers, a woven hairy thread and a voluminous soft feather called marabou to create a fly that closely mimics the insects found in the stream, Sly says.

Fly fishermen use rotating vises to hold a hook in place so that they can work at it from all angles and see how the fly will react either on or below the surface of the water. The fishers work up and down the hook to add hair and feathers to the fly. Once everything is in place, a complex knot at the eye of the hook and a dab of waterproof glue complete the fly.

As the sun sets, fly fishermen like Sly and McWhirk bid farewell to the stream and stow their flies, rod and reel for the next excursion into nature.

"Even though I like fish I don’t keep very many. Why waste them when you can go catch them again?"
Above: A female leatherback sea turtles have nested for hundreds of years. Washington, Oregon and California, back to the Indonesian beaches framing a vast and isolated beach where the ancient Pacific leatherback sea turtles have nested for hundreds of years. Untouched forests rose from gentle mountains, the greenery making one of the longest migrations in the animal kingdom — a 6,000-mile journey from their feeding grounds off the shores of Washington, Oregon and California, back to the Indonesian beaches where they were born.

Stepping onto the shore for the first time, Tapilatu noticed the beach was pristine, and hummed with the sounds of colorful insects and wildlife.

The only thing missing was the turtles. The Pacific leatherback has been listed as one of Washington’s 31 endangered species since 1981 by the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife. It is also considered critically endangered — the highest threat classification before the “Extinct in the Wild” category on the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s Red List.

If the rapid rate of population decline continues, in 20 years the Pacific leatherback numbers could fall so low they could be considered critically endangered.

In 2004, Tapilatu and several groups partnered to begin a research study measuring the nesting population levels. The estimated annual number of nests at Jamursba Medi has declined 78.3 percent over the past 27 years, with a 5.5 percent annual rate of decline. In 1984, there were 14,522 nests, and in 2011 researchers counted only 1,596 nests, according to the study published in 2011.

Throughout the research process, Tapilatu walked the 11-mile beach under scorching sun and during the darkest, moonless nights to count nests. He often found himself in the presence of nesting females, which can grow to be as large as a Volkswagen Beetle and weigh as much as 1,200 pounds. While nesting, it appears the leatherbacks’ future also depends on partnering with international neighbors who share a common goal of protecting them at every stage of their journey.

“The leatherbacks’ future also depends on partnering with international neighbors who share a common goal of protecting them at every stage of their journey.”

In 2012, the U.S. government designated critical habitat of 41,914 square miles off the west coast under the Endangered Species Act. Teri Shore, program director at Turtle Island Restoration Network, a San Francisco based nonprofit, believes this was a major victory, but more needs to be done.

“To me the leatherback symbolizes the ancient nature of our world,” Shore says. “They have been coming to our shores for millions of years before us, and if they don’t go extinct they will be coming to our shores for millions of years after. Allowing them to disappear would be a tragedy.”

With awareness growing, Tapilatu hopes to see the Pacific leatherback population grow over the next 20 to 30 years, mirroring the improvement of the Atlantic and Caribbean leatherback population that have increased since conservation efforts began in the 1980s.

“We cannot bring back the times when leatherbacks and other turtles had thousands of nests at Jamursba Medi, but we remain optimistic,” he says.

On the sun sets below the horizon and casts a glow across the sand, Tapilatu knows it will not be long before the hatching of a new nest begins. When the baby turtles scramble out of the nest and into the fading light, Tapilatu will be there to guide them safely into the ocean. He will follow their trails, hoping one day to see them again, until they reach the water’s edge and the gentle waves pull their tiny bodies into the sea.

“They are so vulnerable if we don’t do something,” Tapilatu says. “They are so vulnerable if we don’t do something.”

“Leatherbacks don’t belong to one specific people — they swim the entire Pacific Ocean,” Jenkins says. “It would be insufficient if we thought of it as just a Washington problem.”

When I look them face-to-face, I feel sympathy for them,” he says. “We cannot bring back the times when leatherbacks and other turtles had thousands of nests at Jamursba Medi, but we remain optimistic.”

“We cannot bring back the times when leatherbacks and other turtles had thousands of nests at Jamursba Medi, but we remain optimistic.”

The disappearance of one of Earth’s ancient creatures

Story by Elena Edington
Photos courtesy of Ricardo Tapilatu

From a distance, the beach was everything Ricardo Tapilatu had expected it to be.

Golden sands stretched for miles, blending into a cerulean sea. Untouched forests rose from gentle mountains, the greenery making one of the longest migrations in the animal kingdom — a 6,000-mile journey from their feeding grounds off the shores of Washington, Oregon and California, back to the Indonesian beaches where they were born.

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If the rapid rate of population decline continues, in 20 years the Pacific leatherback numbers could fall so low they could be difficult to recover, which could lead to extinction, Tapilatu says.

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Throughout the research process, Tapilatu walked the 11-mile beach under scorching sun and during the darkest, moonless nights to count nests. He often found himself in the presence of nesting females, which can grow to be as large as a Volkswagen Beetle and weigh as much as 1,200 pounds. While nesting, it appears the turtles are crying, as salty tears stream from their eyes. However, this is only a process to rid their bodies of salt buildup.

“When I look them face-to-face, I feel sympathy for them,” Tapilatu says. “They are so vulnerable if we don’t do something.”

Across the ocean, Lekelia Jenkins, an assistant professor at the University of Washington’s School of Marine and Environmental Affairs, works determinately on developing marine-conservation technologies.

Because of their journey through deep ocean waters, leatherbacks are prone to many dangers, such as long-line fishing, a common commercial fishing technique used by Washington fishermen and worldwide. Millions of hooks are placed on a line 30 to 50 miles long, often catching and drowning unintended prey.

The turtle excluder device is one invention that makes a difference, Jenkins says. Developed in the United States, the device is now used by fisheries to prevent unwanted creatures from becoming tangled in nets.

The leatherbacks’ future also depends on partnering with international neighbors who share a common goal of protecting them at every stage of their journey.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT
Changing the pace of breakfast, lunch and dinner

The sound of quickening footsteps on a narrow cobblestone road resonated in Jenna Kuczynski’s ears as she briskly made her way to a quaint restaurant hidden in the heart of Bra, Italy. The tantalizing scent of freshly prepared pastas, mouthwatering sauces and savory desserts drifted into her nose as she reached her destination: Boccondivino.

Once inside the restaurant, Kuczynski and the rest of her party were whisked away to a long table with 2-foot breadsticks waiting at all 12 placemats. The group spent four hours at the restaurant enjoying a five-course meal of bread, pasta, cheese and wine.

“The meal was to die for, by far the best of the trip,” Kuczynski says.

Kuczynski was with a group of Western students who spent more than a week in Italy in 2010 studying the Slow Food movement. The faculty-led study-abroad trip is now offered annually to 18 to 20 students who receive 10 credits for attending. The group stays in Florence, Italy and has the option of visiting Switzerland for a three-day tour and group cooking classes.

In Italy, the students study the Slow Food movement, which was founded in 1989 by Carlo Petrini in Bra as an alternative to the fast-paced lifestyle that fast food brings to families. Slow Food is an organization that helps reintroduce families to food that is good for the people who grow it and good for the planet, according to an email from Jenny Best of Slow Food America. The nonprofit organization has 1,500 local chapters that spread awareness about Slow Food through advocacy campaigns and projects.

Petrini founded the organization after he noticed the disappearance of local food and families’ decreased interest in where food comes from, Best says.

The movement now exists in 160 countries worldwide and has more than 100,000 official members.

Slow Food is about taking the time to enjoy the experience of procuring and eating food with others, says Gigi Berardi, the Western professor who guides the Italy trip. The organization promotes growing, buying, making and eating good, clean and fair food.

Good food is high in quality and produced with care, but must also taste good, Best says. Clean food is food that is produced in an environmentally friendly way, grown with care and has a

“"You can't feel proud of a tomato that is grown organically on the backs of underpaid immigrants."
It is important to enjoy meals together,” Berardi says. “It gives a sense of timelessness where you can enjoy the moment and learn more about who you are with.”

On the last day of the trip, students can visit a candle in the Italian countryside, where they spend the day eating a classic Tuscan meal including bruschetta, cheese and pasta. Here the students reflect on their time in Italy while enjoying their slowly cooked meal and each other’s company for what might be the last time.

The students then part ways. Some stay in Italy and explore Europe while others catch the next flight home. Kuczynski was able to stay in Italy where she celebrated her birthday with her brother by enjoying more of the slow food Italy has to offer.

“It’s just about prioritizing and working efficiently,” Schmick says. “You don’t work fast. You work efficient, and it’s perceived as fast.”

While both bartenders’ hands work quickly as they mix up various alcoholic concoctions, their eyes and minds are also moving rapidly to constantly assess the crowd. Bartenders need to be completely aware of their surroundings because, alongside mixing drinks, their job is to help regulate the crowds — whether that means cutting someone off at the bar or breaking up a fight. Although Harris and his coworkers may complain after a hard weekend, they thrive off of being put in the role of a fast-functioning bartender, and almost prefer the chaos to calmer nights, he says.

“It’s what we live for,” Harris says. “We get in that groove where I feel like I almost function better when I’m in that role instead of when you have to slow down a bit.”

With a fresh bottle in hand, Harris finishes pouring the vodka cranberry. The bartender is already prepared for what Harris will do next, and starts filling the ice bin just as it runs out. **3**

**Serving up the night one drink at a time**

**Story by Lauren Foote**

**Photo by Nick Gonzales**

“We can make drinks faster than they can drink them, and that feels great,” Harris says.

After 10 years of working at Rumors, bartender and co-manager Marcus Schmick no longer feels overwhelmed by the pressure to make drinks at a fast pace, and feels comfortable behind the bar.

“Let’s just about prioritizing and working efficiently,” Schmick says. “You don’t work fast. You work efficient, and it’s perceived as fast.”

**Above:** Rumors co-manager and bartender Marcus Schmick serves Western graduate Ian Lucas.
Not the suit!” Bjorklund cried out as he came to consciousness. His Vanson black leather full body suit from Lynnwood Cycle Barn had cost him $2,000.

He came out of the crash, suit intact, with cracked ribs and a minor concussion. Despite this traumatic event, Bjorklund continued to ride.

Nine years later, he broke the world record of special construction 1,000 cc engines at the Bonneville Salt Flats World of Speed event. He and his brother, Carl Bjorklund, now own Bellingham motorcycle shop Super Rat, where they spent a year building a record-breaking red trellis-framed custom Ducati with help from their friend, Jason Omar. A Ducati is a powerful Italian-crafted motorcycle often used for racing.

Mark Bjorklund was in the shop every night after his construction job working on the Ducati he rode in Bonneville. “I lost a year of my life chasing the dream, but in that week [at Bonneville] I lived a year,” Bjorklund says.

In mid-August, Bjorklund’s nerves and adrenaline kicked in as he waited in line to register for the five-day event. The contestants can make as many passes as they can fit into each day, usually about two or three, he says. The racetrack at Bonneville is five miles long and racers have two miles to achieve top speed. They must hold their top speed for one full mile, called the “flying mile.” Records are the average of two runs within a two-hour period to account for changing wind speeds, which can affect a racer’s time, Bjorklund says. When a racer breaks a record, they have to verify the time with a record-taker, and then prepare for their return pass.

As he approached the starting line, his heart pounding and sweat dripping down his cheek, Bjorklund swiftly rose to top speed. Bjorklund’s eyes toggled back and forth from the speedometer to the long, flat road ahead of him as he tucked his head in and squeezed every limb closer to his body to achieve maximum speed.

On Bjorklund’s second day at Bonneville, his anticipation climbed as he milled into the tent, awaiting his speed results. The record-taker gave him thumbs up and said Bjorklund had reached 159 mph, a new record. All of his passes were faster than the previous record of 150.502 mph from 1975.
Bjorklund reached his top speed on Tuesday at 166.3 mph. His return speed was 164.3, resulting in an average pass speed, and new record, of 165.3 mph. Breaking the record gave Bjorklund fulfillment from doing a little bit every day, he says.

“It was so surreal,” Bjorklund says. “I just kind of stood there and took it all in.”

In addition to the competition, the conditions at the salt flats are vastly different than the conditions in Bellingham, which challenges the racers to adapt. The average temperature in August at Bonneville Salt Flats is 89 degrees Fahrenheit and the elevation is more than 4,200 feet, causing the engine to heat up quickly.

“WHAT YOU’RE TRYING TO DO IS KEEP THE BIKE AT THE HIGHEST SPEED IT’LL GO FOR A WHOLE MILE WITHOUT BLLOWING UP THE ENGINE,” Carl Bjorklund says.

When a racer blows up the engine, the chain seizes the back tire, the motorcycle stops abruptly and the driver flies forward off the bike. Fortunately, Mark Bjorklund has never endured this hurdle.

Mark and Carl Bjorklund have been riding bikes for 25 years. In 2001, they opened Super Rat together, custom-making motorcycles to ride and sell to customers all over the world. They are self-proclaimed motorcycle enthusiasts who love everything about motorcycles, from riding them to fixing them to building them from scratch.

“I LOST A YEAR OF MY LIFE CHASING THE DREAM, BUT IN THAT WEEK I LIVED A YEAR.”

Mark Bjorklund, who broke the landspeed record on a motorcycle, sits on one of the many bikes the Bjorklund brothers’ shop.

Above: The record-breaking custom Ducati motorcycle the brothers built and later raced at the Bonneville Salt Flats. A small decal of Leonardo Da Vinci sits just inside the frame facing the driver.

Super Rat pays for everything out of pocket and the motorcycles are relatively inexpensive to make. The brothers spent about $2,100 on the Ducati, which assembled could cost as much as $16,000. The brothers buy 4-foot by 10-foot sheets of metal for $60 each and create everything on the bike except for the wheels and engine, Carl Bjorklund says. They construct their bikes to be as low to the ground and narrow as possible to create the least amount of wind resistance, Mark Bjorklund says.

“You’re basically trying to construct a bullet,” he says.

Videographer Chad DeRosa accompanied the brothers to Bonneville and shot more than 90 hours of footage of the brothers’ experience at the speed trials. Mark Bjorklund asked 2005 Western film graduate Andrew Lahmann to help produce the documentary. Lahmann immediately knew it could be a feature-length production.

It was obvious there was some serious scope there,” Lahmann says. “It was pretty epic. It would have been silly of me to pass up an opportunity to help put together something that was already so incredible.”

Through the production called “Out of Nothing,” Mark and Carl Bjorklund say they hope the Ducati will become iconic to viewers and inspire people to work hard to pursue their dreams.

“It is not a documentary about racing motorcycles,” Lahmann says. “It is a documentary about the American dream and human spirit.”

The brothers’ dream continues as Carl Bjorklund cuts, bends and shapes sheet metal into a motorcycle that he will use in attempt to break a world record of his own at the 2013 World of Speed event in September.

“I lost a year of my life chasing the dream, but in that week I lived a year.”
"Everything happens for a reason," Dominguez says. "Having a Sonics basketball game playing on TV during such an important life moment means something to me."

Rheumatic fever is an immune system reaction to a strep infection. The body creates antibodies to fight the infection and these antibodies can cause inflammation in the heart, conduction system and valves. The effect of the inflammation on the heart valves causes rheumatic heart disease, cardiologist Mark Daniel says. Despite his illness, which keeps him from taking the court himself, Dominguez fulfilled his love for basketball by going on to become head coach for Western's men's basketball team. "When you've told you're going to die, and then don't, it changes you," Dominguez says. Two of the four valves in Dominguez's heart have a murmur, meaning that backflow raises his heart rate, forcing his heart to work at a more aggressive speed. "Most high heart rates come from abnormal rhythms," Daniel says. "The heart has to work harder and faster to circulate blood throughout your body and, if sustained, can weaken the heart."

Growing up, Dominguez continued to play basketball. After college basketball player Hank Gathers died on the court in 1990 of a heart disorder, Dominguez says his basketball coaches forced him to sit on the bench. In high school, he resented his coaches. He thought they were preventing him from doing what he wanted. But over the years, he learned to understand their decision, Dominguez says. Twenty-four years later, this disease is still part of his life. Dominguez takes four pills a day to manage his disease, and is advised to exercise 20 minutes each day. Medication is only prescribed to people with serious heart conditions, Daniel says. He encourages anyone who experiences sustained heart abnormalities to see a doctor. Some at-home exercises can also reduce a sporadic heart rate, he says. Reducing stress and consumption of stimulant drugs, such as caffeine, and increasing the amount of sleep are all ways to take care of the heart. Daniel advocates conditioning exercises as a way to keep a healthy heart rate. "When you have a heart condition, you learn to appreciate every minute of every day," Dominguez says.

Growing up, Dominguez fulfilled his love for basketball by going on to become head coach for Western's men's basketball team. "For Tony it's not just about basketball," Kristi Dominguez says. "It's about family." He was offered the position as head coach after Western won the NCAA Division II National Title in 2012.

He uses this philosophy in all aspects of his life, says Kristi Dominguez. "When we found out, I called my dad and even he started crying," Kristi Dominguez says. "Everyone who knows Tony knew how hard he's worked for this."

Though Tony Dominguez has been involved with Western's basketball program for almost 20 years, he says this season marks a new beginning. Last season Western earned the opportunity to play Duke, a college basketball team Dominguez actively roots against. "To have a college team and walk into Cameron Stadium with the intent of winning was a dream come true," Tony Dominguez says. As he watched his players running up and down the court he knew that he had made it. "These last two years have been…" Tony Dominguez pauses and looks around his office as he takes a deep breath and tries to find the right words. "A great redemption."

"When you're told you're going to die, and then don't, it changes you."
Dipping a steel rod into molten glass like a honey dipper gathers honey, Henry Jackson-Spieker begins the process of manipulating molten glass, as hot as 2,300-degrees Fahrenheit, into a product of his imagination.

As Jackson-Spieker stands in front of a furnace, heavy heat radiates on his arms and face. Even through goggles he can feel blinded by the bright yellow light of the molten glass in the oven. He moves fast and focused around a shiny, lava-like blob, constantly spinning and reheating the steel rod. All of his mental focus is on the deep, cherry-red bubble of glass. Jackson-Spieker adds more color and glass to the piece as he slowly transforms it into a shallow decorative vase.


Jackson-Spieker is a senior at Western earning a bachelor’s degree in fine arts with a focus in sculpture. He has been blowing glass since he was 13 years old. Working on a glass piece requires extreme focus, precision, timeliness and speed, he says. The intensity of the process mentally consumes him, and he does not have time to think of anything else.

Niko Demetrijevic, a glassblower at Tacoma’s Museum of Glass, demonstrates the creative process of glassblowing to live audiences during all hours the museum is open. The museum, founded by world-renowned glass sculptor Dale Chihuly, exhibits collections of glass artwork from sculptors all over the world.

Demetrijevic is one of six members of the museum’s “Hot Shop team” and spends every workday playing with fire and molten glass. Standing inside the museum’s Hot Shop Amphitheatre, a 90-foot-tall building in the shape of a silver steel cone, Demetrijevic and his team work in front of nearly 200 people. In as little as an hour, the audience can witness the artists transform a colorful blob of liquid glass into an elaborate, original work of art.

“We’re glass junkies,” Demetrijevic says. “We live for what we do, seven days a week.”

Demetrijevic immediately knew he had found his niche in life at 16 years old when he took his first high school glassblowing class. “It was captivating,” he says. “It was clear to me the first time that I manipulated glass.”

Demetrijevic’s inspiration for pieces is always changing, he says. He prefers creating sculptures, or non-functional objects, more than traditional glass vases or bowls. His art can reflect anything that captivates him or something intensely personal that has happened to him, he says.

GLASSBLOWERS SHAPING WORKS OF ART

Story by Mary Lyle
Photos by Evan Abell

Right: Museum of Glass Hot Shop starter Niko Demetrijevic steadies a rod while manager Benjamin Cobb uses shears to separate excess glass. Hot Shop artists work together to produce high-quality glass art seven days a week.
The sequence shows a colored rim being applied to a goblet by Museum of Glass Hot Shop artists. Artists continually rotate hot glass to maintain its form.

“Art is a way of storytelling and interpreting the world,” Demetrijevic says. “It is representational.”

Physically, anyone can blow glass, Demetrijevic says. Body mechanics and becoming extremely dexterous come with frequent practice and repetition. The longest amount of time in a single session Demetrijevic has spent on a glass piece is 10 hours. This is not an average amount of time, and is very rare, he says. The shortest amount of time could be as little as five minutes, depending on what an artist is making and how fast he or she works, he says.

“Speed is critical. Timing is critical. Moving fast is critical. It is something that is constantly challenging.”

“Speed is critical. Timing is critical. Moving fast is critical,” Demetrijevic says. “It is something that is constantly challenging.” Sculptors have to reheat glass they are working on to keep it at a pliable, moldable consistency. To do this, they continually insert steel rods with glass into “glory holes,” which are small ovens with temperatures ranging from 2,100-2,300 degrees Fahrenheit. When glass is at its hottest temperature, it is a honey-like consistency. As it cools, it becomes more solid, like stretching taffy, until eventually a hard plastic.

“Speed is critical. Timing is critical. Moving fast is critical. It is something that is constantly challenging.”

At Kuru Kuru, chefs aim to make a roll every minute. Usually, Joves can make 200 rolls during his lunch shift and about 240 during dinner.

“Usually I’ll be out of rolls right when we open,” Joves says. “That’s 32 [California rolls] with eight [Philadelphia rolls] and eight spicy tunas, and I’ll be out of those within the first 20 minutes of coming here, and I just keep making them.”

“When it gets busy Joves tries to tune out the people around him so he can focus on the task at hand, he says. “You can’t let your mind wander too much because you’ll fall behind,” Joves says. “It takes a lot of focus to keep up with the flow.”

Joves didn’t expect to be a sushi chef. A friend threw him into the business, he says. He trained at Kuru Kuru and has been cranking out sushi ever since.

“A N ARMY OF BRIGHTLY COLORED PLATES FILLS THE TWISTING CONVEXER BELTS AS THREE CHEFS PREPARE THE DISHES. EACH PLATE CONTAINS VIBRANT SUSHI CREATIONS THAT CATCH THE EYES OF THE HUNGRY CUSTOMERS CLOSELY WATCHING THE BELT IN SEARCH OF THEIR FAVORITE ROLLS AT KURU KURU.”

Sushi chefs keep up with their fast-paced jobs

**Story by Haley Cross**

**Photo by Nick Gonzales**
Fencers use blade and footwork to foil their opponents.

Story and photos by Jules Guay-Binion

GArd

ENTaha Rabbani sized up his mysterious opponent — a slow-moving, gray-haired man. The director commanded them, “Fence!” Neither fencer moved a muscle. They stared each other down for nearly 10 seconds. Without warning, Rabbani lunged and thrust his blade at the other man. In a flash the man blocked and countered Rabbani’s attack. Rabbani’s opponent scored.

Western junior Taha Rabbani, president of Western’s fencing club, waits for his opponent to strike.

“His parries were so quick I wouldn’t even know it was happening,” Rabbani says. “All of a sudden I’d be looking down and his weapon would be at my cheat, and I’d think to myself, ‘Well, how did that just happen?’”

The man was slow on his feet, but made up for it with incredibly quick bladework, Rabbani says.

Rabbani remembers watching Olympic fencing when he was young, and not being able to see the blade movement between the two duelers. All he could see was the blur of their blades moving back and forth.

“All of a sudden the lights come up and somebody scores,” Rabbani says. “I would think ‘How do the referees ever see what’s going on?’”

Rabbani, now a Western junior and president of Western’s fencing club, has competed in several collegiate fencing tournaments. However, there is still a lot he needs to learn about the sport, he says.

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Rabbani, now a Western junior and president of Western’s fencing club, has competed in several collegiate fencing tournaments. However, there is still a lot he needs to learn about the sport, he says.

“A lot of people think it’s just ‘stab, stab, stab,’ and then right away you get the point if you’re the first one there,” he says. “But that’s not always the case. It’s more complex than that.”

Fencers repeatedly practice offensive and defensive movements, thus improving their muscle memory and enabling fencers to execute quick and accurate reflexes, Rabbani says.

Reflexes in fencing are activated when the sight of an incoming lunge or thrust stimulates the eye. Once stimulated, the eye fires a signal to the spinal cord, where it is transformed into a motor neuron and is sent to the appropriate part of the body, such as the muscles in a fencer’s arms, to block the attack. This process is referred to as the reflex arc, according to a study by Jerry Halpern of Harvard University.

Once the director commands the fencers to duel, each fencer has a variety of offensive and defensive options they may pursue.

“Sometimes you’ll have a fencer who’s right away in your face,” Rabbani says. “But then there are fencers who will stand there and see what you will do.”

Establishing quick footwork is the first step to becoming a good fencer, Rabbani says. When opponents make an advance, retreating from them is usually the best defense, he says. If fencers put enough effort into their footwork, they can defeat their opponent with average blade work, he says.

“If you’re constantly running up and down the strip and your endurance isn’t really the strongest aspect of your skill set, then it’s definitely going to make you suffer,” he says.

On the other hand, if a fencer is skilled enough with their weapon, they do not need to be quick on their feet, as was the case with the man Rabbani fenced back in high school, he says.

Fencing bouts often devolve into dizzying combinations of offensive and defensive blade movements.

“[Fencing] ends up being this storm of bladework.”

“It’s like in tennis, volleyball or badminton, where you start to get a rally back and forth and it does not seem to end,” he says. “[Fencing] ends up being this storm of bladework.”

Fencers may choose to lunge and thrust their blade — called a foil — at their opponents with the intention of scoring, or they may feint, or fake, the attack in order to gauge their opponents’ reaction to various movements, Rabbani says.

Defensively, fencers may block, or parry, bind, disengage and counter any incoming attack. Reliance on parrying may prove useful for blocking swift attacks, but it can have its setbacks if not used with variety. For example, parrying in the same direction can be a bad habit among fencers because it makes their movements more predictable, Rabbani says.

Speed doesn’t have to be in every single aspect of fencing, Rabbani says. Fencers may focus on just their blade work, footwork or decision-making.

“I’ve maybe you have all three — that’s what will make an amazing fencer,” he says.

Time seems to slow down while Rabbani is fencing, he says.

“But to someone who’s observing from the outside it just looks like quick, back and forth ‘bang, bang, bang,’ back and forth constantly,” he says.

As Rabbani walks away from fencing practice he notices a familiar sight while watching the remaining fencers battle each other — nothing but the blur of blades slashing through the air.
How time is of the essence when it comes to cheese

Story and photos by Brooke Warren

Number 515 wanders into the milking barn. She strolls lazily ahead and smacks her lips as a farm worker gently cleans her udders with iodine before attaching tubes that squeeze out her milk.

Number 515 is used to this routine — she gets milked three times a day.

She is one of 200 cows that contribute milk to a 1,000-pound tank where cheese forms at Appel Farms in Ferndale, Wash.

Gouda, cheddar and feta cheeses are displayed inside the farm’s store, which is a short stroll across a gravel parking lot. There, a visitor nibbles dice-sized squares of cheddar and Gouda flavored with garlic, bacon and dill before settling on smoked Gouda, the farm’s most popular flavor.

But more than a parking lot separates cows from customers.

Whirling knives, vats of brine and refrigerated rooms connect cow number 515 and the Gouda that might later be consumed with red wine. The process to turn cows’ milk into an edible delicacy involves...
an eight-hour day followed by what could be years of aging. Each of the 1,000 cheeses in the world requires a slightly different process.

Gouda and cheddar are some of the most common cheeses made at cheese farms in Washington. While they use the same ingredients — milk, vegetable rennet and a bacterial culture — how the ingredients are heated, chopped and soaked makes all the difference.

John Appel, owner of Appel Farms, wakes up at 4 a.m. to pasteurize milk. The milk heats to 145 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 minutes inside a giant stainless-steel cylinder in order to eliminate harmful bacteria. Then Appel adds a freeze-dried bacterial culture, which breaks down lactose to intensify flavor, into the pasteurized milk.

Next, the warm milk swirls through tubes to fill another steel container where rennet, an enzyme, speeds up the coagulation process, which makes cream thicker and firmer. Thirty minutes later it is ready to break into curds and whey.

“It looks like white Jell-O,” Appel says. “But it is very, very soft.”

As cheese makers slice the coagulated mass, liquid whey seeps out, leaving chunky curds separated from the moisture in the cheese.

Everything in the room is damp: the floor, the walls and the constantly cleaned machinery. The windows drip with condensation.

Warmth is what separates cheese from other dairy products; cheese needs to stay above 90-degrees Fahrenheit for the entire three-hour cooking process. Appel says. Heat makes sweet-smelling humidity rise from the fresh curds.

At this point, the processes to form Gouda and cheddar begin to differ. When making Gouda, Kyle Hanko and Andrea Winslow, cheese makers at Appel Farms, drain the whey, flooding the floor outside the tank with warm, fragrant liquid. They wear rubber boots so they can walk through the whey while it drains into a hole in the floor. Milk yields about 10 percent solid cheese, so 1,000 pounds of milk becomes 200 pounds of cheese for Appel Farms to ripen and distribute to customers.

For cheddar, the whey stays in the vat while salt flows into curds the consistency of fresh tofu. The curds are then run through a machine similar to a French-fry cutter to make “squeaky” cheese. Some cheddar curds are sold fresh, but most cheeses, including Gouda, are packed in molds.

Cheese makers pack curds into circular plastic molds about a foot in diameter. A press smashes about 50 pounds of pressure onto the molds for two to three hours to squeeze out the remaining liquid and let the creamy morsels of cheese combine to create a unified mass.

“Once you let it sit it’s really cohesive,” Hanko says. “It doesn’t take long to turn it into a wheel.”

Wheels of Gouda are submerged in a pool of brine for two days, which helps preserve the flavor.

“Brine develops its own special characteristics that enhance the cheese,” Appel says.

Once the rounds of cheese have finished forming, they are vacuum-sealed to age in a room kept at 41 degrees Fahrenheit. The shelves are stacked with 10-pound rounds of cheese. While Appel Farms ages cheeses for one year, Beth Namba, owner of Quel Frommage?, an artisan cheese store in Fairhaven, Wash. has heard of a 15-year-old cheddar from Wisconsin.

The difference of three or four years can completely alter the flavor of cheese, says Patrick Stickney, an employee at Samish Bay Cheese in Bow, Wash. As a cheese ages it becomes riper, bolter and more condensed. For most cheese, the firmer it is, the older it is.

Fresh cheddar curds have a smooth taste. The cheese is so fresh that the mouth squelches. With age, the taste buds with a tangy, sour bite. Aged cheeses have a more acidic taste because lactic acid breaks down and forms crispy pockets of crystalized protein amid a creamy filling. The flavor lingers long after chewing the older cheddar.

Every season the cows’ diets change, which creates subtle flavor changes in each cheese.

“What you get is just a real authentic taste,” Stickney tells a customer visiting the farm as he slices a morsel of farmstead cheese.

In the days to come, cow $15 will return to the milking barn to contribute to the next batch of cheese.
KLIPSUN

Is a Chinuk Wawa word meaning sunset

Western Washington University

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