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## Geoffrey Nelson

American

Geoffrey Nelson grew up overseas, mainly in North Africa, in a diplomatic family. He attended high school in Spain and Morocco and then went to California to complete his university studies at the University of California at Berkeley. His peripatetic childhood set him on a path as a travel photographer which morphed into twenty years as a fine art and commercial photographer. His subject has always been the nude since his early days in Berkeley. In the last few years his work has taken a three dimensional turn spurred on in part by his many years attending the Burning Man festival as well as working with another artist on her sculptural project. His use of heat molded plastic strips to create these figures is unique and opens up unlimited possibilities.

### Statement

*Beautiful Creatures*

*People often ask me how I came to this point with my sculptures.*

*I used to tell them that they evolved out of my long career as a photographer and my photographic series of mythical feminine creatures like angels and fairies. I would also usually mention that I was intent on sensualizing the female nude statue and presenting her in a 21st Century context.*

*But then someone came to a show and out of the blue asked me if I go to Burning Man. I asked him if he does and he said "No, but your work looks like you do."*

*And I realized that my work does come out of that crazy, dystopian, hallucinogenic state fair that is Burning Man.*

*Not in the literal sense. Though I have been going for many years I have never constructed a piece specifically for Burning Man. More in the sense that the women that attend the festival dress and act like my sculptures look.*

*They are feminine, tough, creative people of all ages and body types who are there to celebrate being a woman. They dress in headdresses, horns, corsets, long flowing skirts, topless or with more clothes than Marie Antoinette but always with a distinct and powerful femininity.*

*I realized that my statues have come out of that world. They may have wings or horns or corsets lit but they are always their own unique and powerful women.*

*The technical innovations in my work are more prosaic but also have Burning Man origins. I developed this technique of using heated acrylic strips while helping build a friend's piece for the event. Frustrated by the inability to create a lit human figure that would be transparent I experimented with various materials until I hit upon the technique of molding heated acrylic to a built form. The base human form is built out of epoxy, fiberglass and other materials. The heated strips are laid down on the piece and then form is pulled out and the pieces are screwed back together. I am then able to paint, rust, flock, patina, silver, gold and copper leaf to my heart's content.*

*As my work continues to evolve the materials I use may change but the basic desire to create these strong powerful feminine creatures does not.*