

# Sculptor explores personal themes

BY JOHN PITCHER

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Multimedia artist Iggy Sumnik came to Omaha three years ago to study with Jun Kaneko.

"I wanted to learn the great man's secrets," Sumnik said. "I learned instead what it feels like to put in a 14-hour day."

The 26-year-old Detroit native has now finished his apprenticeship with Kaneko. To mark the occasion, he's holding his first solo exhibition in Omaha, which runs through Feb. 1 at Jackson Artworks.

The show includes several collections of both abstract and representational works. The pieces are sculpted from clay, and many feature spectacular glazed finishes.

"Cityscapes" takes familiar urban objects — such as a fire hydrant or streetlight — out of their usual context.

"A fire hydrant is a functional tool, but it's also a symbol of a modern society with a sophisticated underground sewer and water system," Sumnik said.



## ► IF YOU go!

Iggy Sumnik's abstract and representational sculptures, above, are on display at Jackson Artworks, 1108 Jackson St., through Feb. 1. Sumnik was recently nominated for Best Group Show and Best Visual Artist in the third annual Omaha Entertainment and Arts Awards. Gallery hours are 1 to 9 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. Call 341-1832.

Some of the "Cityscape" sculptures have more obvious meanings: The oversized gas pump was created last summer, when fuel prices soared. Other works are personal: The Camel cigarettes are a symbol of Sumnik's ongoing struggle to quit smoking.

Two collections, "Wall Chunks" and "Jellybeans," are more abstract.

"Wall Chunks" are small, ceramic shapes — ovals, circles, teardrops — affixed to one of the gallery's walls. "Jellybeans" are larger ovals. Some have intricate patterns and designs carved into the clay. Others are smooth and glisten like Easter eggs.

The most unusual work in the exhibit is "Cultural Fossils." These sculptures feature gears, grids and other industrial objects that hang from the ceiling. From a distance, they look almost like a child's mobile.

"Zulu Pipes," on the other hand, looks at first like a simple collection of 10 water pipes. On closer inspection, one notices that each pipe has a different shape and color.

"There are like a theme and variation," Sumnik said.

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