

Bottoms Art Galleries

Bella Arte / Bella Vista

By ERIN J. SMITH / CASA

A REVERENCE FOR NATURE AND A PASSION FOR ART have led James “Bud” Bottoms in his life-long pursuit of protecting the environment.

“All earth’s creatures are connected,” said Bottoms, who is perhaps best known as the founder of Get Oil Out! “Through art, I connect with living things, in the here and now.”

Bottoms will show off his latest artwork this summer first as part of the Bella Arte event series at the Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore in June followed by a month-long show at Santa Barbara Arts in July.

The Bella Arte series, which is presented in conjunction with Bella Vista

restaurant’s Thursday night seafood buffet, combines art, wine, music, and good food in the beautiful setting of the Biltmore. New artists will be featured every other Thursday throughout the summer. As part of the series, Bottoms’ artwork will be on display in the La Salita room along with oil paintings by Benjamin Brode, who will join Bottoms for a meet-and-greet and presentation on Thursday, June 25th from 5 to 10pm. Bottoms will also sign copies of his children’s books.

“Children and dolphins make my heart leap. No things make me happier,” said Bottoms, who is known for his dolphin-family sculptures like that at Stearns Wharf. “They are the essence of joy.”

As a child growing up in West Los Angeles, Bottoms was given grocery bags and pencils by his grandmother to keep him occupied. What started out a pastime soon became a passion. He participated in art activities through school and went on to study art in college. After serving in the navy as an electronic technician during World War II, Bottoms attended Jefferson Machamer School of Art in Santa Monica and went on to earn a bachelors degree in Art from UCSB (class of ‘52). He was encouraged by one of his teachers to get a teaching credential and taught in local Santa Barbara schools before becoming a commercial artist in



The Gift by James “Bud” Bottoms

the 1950s. Bottoms ultimately became the Art Director at Tempo, a General Electric think-tank, where he worked until 1975.

Bottoms turned to sculpture following a series of life changes, which included a divorce. While working closely with a psychotherapist, dreams involving a woman and a dolphin prompted him to start drawing.

It wasn’t until getting his hands on some clay, however, that

Bottoms was able to create the image as he saw it. Bottoms then took classes at SBCC to learn the ins and outs of casting his work in bronze. He now has sculptures placed locally and throughout the world. New pieces include a life-size, California condor and *The Gift*, inspired by the election of President Obama.

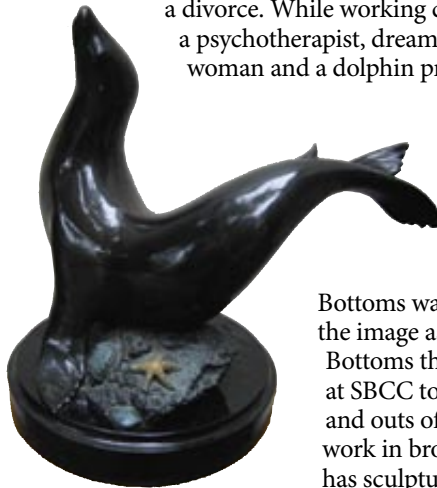
Bottoms, now 81 years old, has recently begun writing children’s books with the hope of inspiring ethical behavior in young people.

“There are no small dreams,” he said.

“I’ve learned that during my life.” His latest book, called *Davy and the G.O.M.*, was inspired by the 1969 oil spill.

Bottoms will also be featured at Santa Barbara Arts for the month of July. A 1st Thursday artist reception will be held July 2nd from 5 to 8pm.

For more information, contact Bottoms Art Galleries at 695-0888 or Santa Barbara Arts at 886-0255.



Selene by James “Bud” Bottoms



Sea Babies by James “Bud” Bottoms



Photo by Saren Brown

James “Bud” Bottoms