

## **MARK STASZ FOUNTAIN MAINTENANCE AND TROUBLESHOOTING**

### **To Maintain Steel Sculptures and Fountains:**

Completely dry the surface of the piece. In a container combine a 50 / 50 mixture of boiled linseed oil and turpentine or mineral spirits, or you can use a ready-made product called Penetrol. These products can be purchased at a paint or hardware store.

With a clean brush apply one generous coat to the entire steel surface, including undersides and base. This will darken the steel at first. When it dries the steel will have a richer rust color. Treating steel two to three times a year will keep the corrosion of the metal to a minimum.

### **Winterizing your Mark Stasz Fountain:**

If you live in a climate that freezes during the winter, the fountain **MUST** be drained, and the pump **MUST** be shut off and pulled out of any remaining water. To shut off the pump, turn the flow valve handle to the vertical or “off” position. Store the pump in a dry storage area, such as a garage, until Spring.

Treat stone portions of your fountain with a “penetrating silicone impregnator”. The product you use may vary depending on the type of stone. You can purchase this product from a masonry supply store.

Apply with a clean, disposable brush and let dry. Repeat the process until the stone will not absorb any more of the product. This process will protect the stone from the freeze and thaw and will help prevent cracking and splitting of the stone. The best time for this treatment is after you have winterized in the Fall and before you re-start the fountain in the Spring.

**Please contact the gallery at 208.726.5079 or [info@gailseverngallery.com](mailto:info@gailseverngallery.com) should you need additional information on the care and maintenance of your sculpture or fountain.**

## **Basic Maintenance For Sculptures and Fountains**

**This letter includes instructions for maintaining your sculpture or fountain as well as troubleshooting suggestions. We suggest that basic maintenance be done two or three times a year in the Spring and Fall, before and after extended periods of use.**

### **Cleaning sculptures and fountains:**

The best method for removing dirt and watermarks is with a soft pad or cloth and Simple Green or CLR (calcium, lime, rust) diluted with ten parts water.\* Don't use a scouring pad or anything else that might scratch the patina. Use light pressure to start and adjust the pressure to avoid damaging the patina. Most watermarks will come off fairly easily. Liquid gold can be used to clean steel Delos Van Earl sculptures (not bronze).

### **For Steel sculptures and fountains\*\*:**

Completely dry the surface of the piece. In a container combine a 50/50 mixture of boiled linseed oil and turpentine or mineral spirits, or you can use a ready-made product called Penetrol. These products are available at paint or hardware stores.

With a clean cloth or brush apply a single, generous coat to the entire steel surface, including undersides and base. This will darken the steel at first. When it dries the steel will have a richer rust color. Treating steel two to three times a year will keep corrosion to a minimum.

To maintain a Delos Van Earl steel sculpture, please follow these instructions. A small disposable brush should be used to apply an oil sealant every spring and fall - Delos suggests Flecto Varathane Natural Oil Finish 66 clear. If your sculpture is frequently drenched by a sprinkler, the sealant should be applied once a month during the months when sprinklers hit the piece. Old English wax or Carnuba wax should be used periodically, though on a separate occasion from the sealant (please follow the instructions under bronze maintenance).

**\*\* If you own a steel Mark Stasz sculpture, please see specific instructions to care for your piece. All other steel sculpture maintenance should be covered in this sheet.\*\***

### **For Bronze sculptures and fountains:**

Dry off piece completely. It is best to apply wax when the sculpture is warm. Use a paste wax containing Carnuba, such as Minwax. Working in small areas at a time, apply a moderate coat of wax using a soft cloth. Then remove the excess wax by buffing with a separate clean, soft cloth. Be sure to buff off the excess so it does not leave a film on the surface. Adhering to this process will help sustain the color of the patina and reduce the effects of ultraviolet light, harsh elements and air pollutants.

### **For Polished surface stone\*\*:**

We suggest the same treatment as described for bronze. This is primarily an aesthetic treatment to recondition the luster and shine. In cases where lime deposits from hard water have formed on the stone, use a product such as CLR (calcium, lime and rust) available at most grocery or hardware stores. Be sure to dilute the CLR with 10 parts water and follow the instructions for cleaning above.

\*\* If you own a Mark Stasz sculpture that incorporates stone elements, please see specific instructions to care for your piece. All other stone sculpture maintenance should be covered in this sheet.\*\*

### **For the Fountain Basin and Pump:**

Every fountain operates in basically the same manner. The pump is housed in the base of the sculpture, whether it has a pond or is self-contained. Access to the pump is through a trap door located on the side of the base; the door is held in place with screws. The pump attaches to the plumbing via a short plastic tube held in place with a hose clamp. The flow of the water is generally controlled at this junction by a flow valve, usually located directly above the pump.

Regularly clean out all debris (such as leaves and other organic matter) from the basin and pump to help keep the water intake clear and minimize the growth of moss and algae that cause discoloration of the water. Pay particular attention to grass cuttings after lawn mowing since the chemicals can react with the steel or bronze. To help prevent buildup place a tarp over the basin while garden maintenance is being done.

Check and maintain the water level in the basin on a regular basis. Sufficient water in the basin allows for steady operation of the pump and reduces the risk of it burning out. To prolong life of the pump, check it regularly for debris. A small wire or mesh screen along the water intake may be beneficial in keeping the pump clear of debris. Smooth running water places less stress on the pump and allows for optimal auditory enjoyment of the fountain.

If you begin to notice any blistering, chipping or flaking of the basin paint it is best to remove any loose paint and touch up those areas using any brand of rust preventive paint. This will help to keep the problem from spreading. When the basin is drained and dried, a new base coat may be applied. Rustoleum Satin Black spray paint is commonly used by artists to resist rust on basins. This does not apply to stainless steel basins although you might consider painting the basin with a clear protective coat of Rustoleum to prolong the life of your basin and make it easier to keep clean.

### **Winterizing Your Fountain:**

If you live in a climate that freezes during the winter, the fountain **MUST** be drained, and the pump **MUST** be shut off and pulled out of any remaining water. To shut off the pump, turn the flow valve handle to the vertical or "off" position. Store the pump in a dry storage area, such as a garage, until freezing is no longer a concern.

### **Fountain Troubleshooting:**

Check for power going to the pump: Plug in the power line and listen. If the noise isn't obvious, feel the pump for vibration, if possible. If there is no noise or vibration, check the plug. If you aren't getting power to the pump, test the plug with another electrical appliance, like a coffee grinder or hair dryer. If these are not receiving power, then either: the plug is burnt - and you need to call an electrician, or the pump has burnt out and you need to call Mark or the gallery.

Pump is running, but no water is flowing: Make sure the water reservoir is full and the pump is completely submerged. If the pump is sitting above the water or tilted to the side, try to place it squarely back into the reservoir so it can draw water into its tube. If the water level is quite low, the pump will have difficulty in drawing water. Add water if this is the case.

The pump is running, the pump is submerged and there is plenty of water in the reservoir: Look at the flow valve - the red or blue handle just above the pump. When open, the handle should be parallel to the waterline that is running horizontally. If the handle is perpendicular to the water line, that is running vertically, turn it to the "on" position. Keep this in mind when winterizing your fountain; the handle should be turned to the "off" position.

If all of the above are okay and fountain still does not flow: It is likely that debris, leaves, dirt, etc. are caught in the pump inlet. Clean out pump inlet and pull other debris out of tub/pond. Once the passageway is clear, the water should flow smoothly.

**Please do not hesitate to contact the Gail Severn Gallery at 208.726.5079 or [info@gailseverngallery.com](mailto:info@gailseverngallery.com) should additional questions arise.**