

Sister, Sister

Masters' final sculpture project looks inwa

By Courtney Rastatter
Staff Writer

The three sculptures seem to loom over the Rose Garden, their massive figures casting a protective presence over their new home. Students who have been on campus during intersession may have noticed the forms covered in black plastic, wondering what they were.

For the past two weeks Deborah Masters and her assistants have been chipping away at the molds. Standing nine and half to 10 feet tall, the sculptures are of three women clad in long robes.

Masters' sculptures are derived from and named after Antoine Chekov's play *The Three Sisters*, which deals with the three sides to everyone's personality: strength, weakness and ambiguity. Masters wants to bring out the same introspective feelings of the play in the women. Through the size, shape, curves and angles of their bodies, she hopes to bring those characteristics to life.

The women's faces look lost in thought and sad, portraying a feeling of weakness, Masters said. But from behind, their figures have very broad backs depicting hard work and resilience. The side, however, illustrates the query about life.

"When a passer-by looks at the side, they will not get any direction as to what to expect from the front or back," Masters said, "It will be a surprise to see the emotion captured in clay."

Masters said, the broad backs are an illustration of herself. "Most of my work is personal to a point. That is why the backs are broad because mine is."

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Masters brings self-portrayals and expression to all her pieces. Her work represents womens position in society today.

When the University first asked her to create the sculptures, she pointed out the locations she wanted. She decided on the Rose Garden.

"I wanted it here because it is a very beautiful area and very well cared for and it is a place to sit and think," Masters said. She hopes students will appreciate not only the sanctuary of the garden but the aura of the statues as well.

While in New York last year, Michael Bishop, art professor at Chico State, came across Masters' works during a show. Along with Donald Hines and James Kuiper, chairman of the art department, Bishop commissioned Masters to come to Chico State to do sculptures.

"I did not have the problems with red tape that everyone else seems to



Top photo: Deborah Masters (left) stands next to her latest sculptures with student assistant Kim Couchett

Photo at right: Masters describes the expression on each of *The Three Sisters* as introspective.

**Staff photos by
Chris Gartmann**

