

# ArtStory

Pursuing quality of life.

## Stan Herd

Genre:  
Earthworks Artist



*“My ideal situation, it’s kind of happening now... to blend dimensional art – sculpture and painting – and film and music. I just like it all.”*

*–Stan Herd*

“Planet” is a recurring word in Stan Herd’s conversations. He’s a man who obviously feels connected to the earth. It’s apparent not only in his expressed concern for the environment, but in his art, executed on a planetary scale. (His largest work to date covered 200-acres.)

“I think of myself as an ‘environmental artist,’” he says. “In terms of art history, ‘earthworks artist’ also fits. There were people before me creating earthworks, but none of them were doing representational images.”

Stan’s inspiration can be traced to his childhood. Although he grew up on a farm near Dodge City, he never considered farming as a career. But being around agriculture instilled an appreciation for the land. He also recalls as a young boy seeing photos of the mysterious line drawings in the Nazca Desert in Peru. “You soak that stuff up,” he says.

After taking art classes at Wichita State University, Stan moved back to Dodge City and began painting seriously. One day, flying back from viewing an exterior mural he had painted, he looked down and was transfixed by a singular line of plowed black earth trailing a tractor across a winter-weathered field. “I had a glimpse of the future,” he says. “After landing at the airport, I went directly to my studio and created the portrait of Kiowa Chief Santanta for my first field design.”

Working on a canvas as fickle as Nature herself, Stan says a project can take anywhere from a few days to two growing seasons. “The work reflects the cycles of planning, planting, cultivating, harvesting.”

In addition to his art, Stan does commercial projects for advertising and promotion campaigns. He says that for years he struggled to find the balance between his art and commercial work, but came to the realization that only through financial stability could he do what he wanted in other areas.

“Everybody has to have a vehicle to the party,” he explains. “You get your discipline through years of work, and if



you’re fortunate enough to get there, you get to experiment with other things.”

While making a name for himself in a genre he virtually pioneered, Stan has continued to paint, and has branched into other art forms as well: lithography, serigraphy, printing, etching, sculpture... even filmmaking and music. “I’m inspired by pushing myself in new directions artistically,” he says. “All of this feeds kind of from the same channel.”

“I believe that every artist, musician, poet or filmmaker worth their salt believes they have some insight for what’s happening on the planet. You’re not creating it just for decoration or the heck of it. Life’s kind of a serious thing. I want my life spent endeavoring to do something that makes a difference. Sometimes that seems highfalutin and silly. But most of the time I believe that.”

