

**Kurt Steger's Burden Boat Project Docks in Charlottesville at
Les Yeux du Monde through 25 March 2012**

**Lunch with the Artist
Wednesday March 14 noon followed by
Artist's Talk at 12:45**

**Closing Celebration and Ceremony of Release on
Sunday 25 March 5 p.m. at
Les Yeux du Monde**

Kurt Steger first conceived of his Burden Boat in response to an invitation to show at Virginia Tech. The campus was still reeling in shock and sorrow from the massacre that had taken place just two years earlier. Steger writes "I felt a compulsion to create an art piece that might help facilitate healing." The burden boat project was born, a twelve-foot vessel made of ceramic and wood with cotton bags filled with hallowed ground from the Virginia Tech campus. It was initiated at the exhibition's opening on September 11, 2009. During the show, people were invited to write their burdens on scraps of paper or send them in by mail or email and place the written burdens into the boat. At the end of the show there was a ceremonial burning and burying of the burdens, personal and collective.

Two years later the Burden Boat would resurface in Washington D.C. as an integral part of the 9/11 Arts Project designed to remember the horror of that day ten years earlier and hopefully focus on healing. It was placed in the courtyard between the Smithsonian Museum of American Art and the National Portrait Gallery where it collected hand-written and emailed "burdens". A ceremony of healing, this time through water, took place on the afternoon of 9/11/11.

Les Yeux du Monde is honored to be the next venue for the Burden Boat Project. The Burden Boat will be on view outside the gallery as part of the exhibition of Kurt Steger's sculpture through March 25. Attendees to the exhibition are encouraged to leave their burdens in the boat at the gallery or they may email them to LesYeuxduMonde@aol.com to be placed in the boat and ceremonially burned and released on the last day of the exhibition.

There will be a **Lunch with the Artist** at noon on Wednesday, March 14 followed by an Artist's Talk. The lunch is \$12 per person (free for Collectors' Club members) and RSVPs are requested by Sunday March 11. The lunch will be followed by an Artist's Talk at 12:45 which is free and open to the public.

The exhibition will conclude with a celebration and a ceremonial burning or release of the burdens at dusk on Sunday 25 March. Of this ceremony central to the Burden Boat Project, Steger writes:

This is an uplifting event and it is a time for reflection and celebration, of moving forward in our lives and becoming wiser from our experiences. The ceremony and Burden Boat brings people together; it creates common bonds on a deep level and fosters compassion, empathy and trust.

Les Yeux du Monde is located at 841 Wolf Trap Road in Charlottesville, VA and is open 1 – 5 Thursday through Sunday and by appointment. For more information, call 434-973-5566 or visit our website, <http://www.LesYeuxduMonde.com> or follow [LYDM on Facebook](#).