



## Services Friday for globetrotting, woodturning artist who settled in Grand Blanc

Published: Wednesday, September 05, 2012, 9:00 PM



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GRAND BLANC, MI -- Keith Fulmer went on a number of adventures before finally settling down and focusing on his true passion, woodturning, after moving to Grand Blanc in 1997.

Fulmer died Sept. 1 from cancer at the age of 54. His wife of more than 30 years, Mara Fulmer, an artist and professor of design at Mott Community College, recalled a gallery showing the two shared at Buckham Gallery.

"The show we did together was called Intimate Knowledge, Buckham changed the name of it. The original name was Landscape of Art and Marriage and I think that defines it a bit more," Mara said. "We've had quite a varied landscape of art and marriage."

Fulmer graduated at the top of his class at the Riverside School of Aeronautics in Utica, N.Y., in the wake of President Ronald Reagan's firing of more than 11,000 air traffic controllers. He looked for employment in another industry.



Mara Fulmer

Photo of Keith taken around 1993.

Fulmer built his family their first house from scratch in upstate New York. He sided it with unstained redwood. In 1987, he launched Fulmer Building Specialties contracting masonry and tile work for the upper New York state region.

Not to be tied down, after his wife accepted a job in Fiji, Fulmer and their two daughters went along. Fulmer built his family a house, complete with a swimming pool, using mahogany felled by South Pacific cyclones. The locals called the structure "the house that Keith built" and were often invited over as guests by Fulmer and his family.

Fulmer spent his time in Fiji as a dive master on the Pacific Nomad, a diving boat that allowed him to swim with whale sharks and manta rays.

He did not look into doing woodworking full time until after he came back to Michigan with his family in 1997. He never felt satisfied with the jobs he found himself doing, Mara Fulmer said, adding that the routine of going to work at 9 a.m. and finishing at 5 p.m. "ate his soul."

With the support of his wife and children, Keith Fulmer began to focus full-time on woodturning, a way of carving wood by spinning it with a lathe. His pieces, finished and unfinished, are everywhere in the Fulmer house.

He taught woodturning classes at his home in Grand Blanc, for woodturning clubs in the Midwest region and at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Murphy, N.C.

Fulmer also made cabinets, tables and vases for clients and friends in Michigan and across the country, always charging far less than what the pieces were worth, his wife said.

"There was so much love, fun, talent and creativity. We were still kids doing art together, traveling together, and we were looking forward to doing more of that," Mara Fullmer said.

The family is asking that if anyone who has purchased Fulmer's work decides they no longer want to keep the piece, if they are moving or downsizing, that they be contacted in order to purchase the piece back.

The family invites Fulmer's friends and family to visitation on Sept. 6 from 5-8 p.m. with a funeral service the next day at 2 p.m.

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