

Charles Kasling is a seventy-seven year old Navy veteran of two world wars who moved to a sector of Bureau of Land Management terrain in southeast California during 1968 to make sculpture. The slides I have included are representative of over one hundred and fifty figures which occupy a one acre site near Andrade, less than a mile from the Mexican border town of Algodones. Sixty years of travel, thought, and life by this man have produced the most incredible array of naive art I have ever experienced. Each sculpture has a story, themes are predominately Biblical, Pre-Colombian, or Indian. Equipment used in this vast endeavor have been a wheelbarrow, beer can opener, and knife. Materials are simply rock, cement, and paint.

Charley's ninety pound body is frail, but his mind is alert. Until recently he lived in a mobil home in the midst of the sculpture enviroment. On Mother's Day of 1977 vandals drove him from the site, stealing and destroying some of the work. The work must be preserved in its desert enviroment. Charley would like to move back to the site if it could be fenced with a caretaker to help him in the maintenance of the land, which is minimal.

Charley's work has been documented in six publications. "All Their Own" by Jan Wampler, Schenkman Publishing Co. presents several pages covering his sculpture. Thousands of people from all over the country have visited Charley and his "friends". As Charley once said, "I don't believe in advertising. I believe in word of mouth. It's worked for me and I still wear the same hat size."

Today the only protection the sculpture has is the fact that it blends in so well with its enviroment that it is hard to discern from the road.

The problem for the sculpture to remain in situ concerns under what organization can protection be secured? California State Parks, Interior Department, National Endowment for the Arts-Art in Public Places, or California Arts Council Special Projects?

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