



*Ruth Abernethy*  
A Portrait in Three Dimensions,  
a Documentary

Throughout her career, Ruth Abernethy has shone her artistic spotlight on others. She has memorialized in bronze, giants from a wide spectrum of backgrounds: history, science, art, sports, the labour movement, medicine, royalty, human rights, World War II, business, and politics.

Whether it's Glenn Gould inviting passers-by to sit with him outside of the CBC Broadcast Centre in Toronto, Oscar Peterson gazing over the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, or Queen Elizabeth II in Queen's Park, Dr. Norman Bethune, Margaret Atwood, Arnold Palmer, Sir John A. Macdonald, or Abe Lincoln, Ruth is a national treasure who has told the story of so many others through her work – now it's time to tell hers.



*Author Margaret Atwood being presented with a portrait bust by Ruth.*



*Ruth in the studio sculpting Bob White.*



*A* *Portrait in Three Dimensions*, is a documentary that acts as a companion piece to her new book, *In Form: Life and Legacies in Bronze*. The film is an intimate portrait of the artist; her history, growing up in a family of musicians, her journey into the world of theatre as a props maker at the Stratford Festival, and how she transitioned that experience into her true calling as an artist and sculptor.

We introduce Ruth on her farm/studio just outside of Stratford, Ontario, where she can be found most days working on her latest piece, a sculpture of Nobel Prize-winning scientist Michael Smith known for his groundbreaking achievements in the field of genetic engineering.

*Sculpture of Glenn Gould  
outside of the CBC  
Broadcast centre.*

We track the evolution of Ruth's 40+ year career, examine her inspiration, and creative process, and capture the artistic creations driven by her own personal interests and passions.

We explore the artist's unconventional observations of history, character, gender, sexuality, identity, love, relationships, society, and acceptance, and more broadly - her perspective on the human experience.

She touches on what it means to be Canadian, the role of art in public spaces, and the sometimes-conflicted discourse over identity and whose life is deserving of honour and recognition.



*Portrait bust of  
Ada McKenzie,  
professional golfer.*



## *Support This Film*

Our goal is to raise the budget required to produce a one-hour documentary available for broadcast in Canada on TVO or CBC. We are seeking financial contributions to bring Ruth's story and sculptures to life.

If you believe Ruth's story is one worth telling, please help support Ruth Abernethy: A Portrait in Three Dimensions. An important project that celebrates the life and work of this uniquely special, Canadian artist.



*Link to donate*

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# About Ruth Abernethy

Ruth Abernethy grew up near Lindsay (ON). At the age of 19, she was hired as Head of Props at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, MB. At the Stratford Festival (ON), where Ruth began work in 1981, she refined her method of 3D mapping. The success of her first bronze prompted the invitation to sculpt renowned pianist Glenn Gould, which began a definitive career change. The National Portrait Gallery acquired Ruth's portrait bust of Al Waxman (2003) and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II unveiled Ruth's portrait of Oscar Peterson at the National Arts Centre (2010). She was the first Canadian artist to exhibit with Sculpture in Context, Dublin, Ireland (2007), and Sculpture-by-the-Sea, Sydney, Australia (2004). For this, she was awarded a bursary from the Canadian Consulate in Sydney and was invited for a return to the Casuarina Sculpture Walk, Australia (2006). Ruth was the only Canadian artist short-listed for the Beijing Olympic Sculpture contest (2008). In addition to bronze and portraiture, Ruth's studio works combine textiles, hand-made lace and stainless steel. Ruth began her own Canadiana Collection in 2005, seeking a broader narrative for social history. Pieces from this collection were selected for The Canadiana State Collection (Ottawa, ON), exhibited with Crossing Borders (Lockport, NY, 2005), and acquired by the Royal Ontario Museum (5 pieces, Toronto, ON, 2009). Her bronzes have been commissioned for sites across Canada and she is the only Canadian artist to have sculpted Abe Lincoln for a public site in the United States.

Ruth portrayed Queen Elizabeth II, 150% enlarged, for Queen's Park, Toronto (2023). Ruth authored *Life and Bronze, A Sculptor's Journal* (2016). She was presented with an Honorary Doctor of Letters Degree from Wilfrid Laurier University (2018), and inducted into the Waterloo Region Museum Hall of Fame (2019). She sculpted Margaret Atwood, a patron of the Royal Canadian Geographic Society, and was made an Honorary Fellow of the Society, awarded the Louie Kamookak Metal (2023). Ruth continues to sculpt ideas that prompt dialogue, invite compassionate scrutiny of human experience and that hold a hint of humour!

