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*Zen Toad*

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I don't really consider myself to be an artist. That seems like way too high and mighty a word to describe what I do. To be in the company of true artists who possess creativity, talent and vision is unfamiliar territory for me. Maybe what I have is a skill; maybe it's just the ability to follow directions. Call me a technician. Whatever you call it, I signed up for a "garden sculpture" class at the Jacksonville Center for the Arts in Floyd at a time when I was feeling the need to 'create.' I envisioned the frog as a lawn ornament for our house. The frog, or "Zen Toad" as he has become known, was the result. With guidance from the class I made a wire frame, covered everything with paper-mache and finally with a layer of cement, exterior paint and varnish.

The frog critter stayed in my workshop for quite a while because the right outdoor spot at our house never presented itself. When the Hahn Horticulture Garden art exhibit came up it seemed the appropriate time for 'Zen Toad' to make his public debut. He appears to be right at home among the ferns near the waterfall. And, of course, he's in good company among all the truly great works of art in the show.

-Bill Pulley