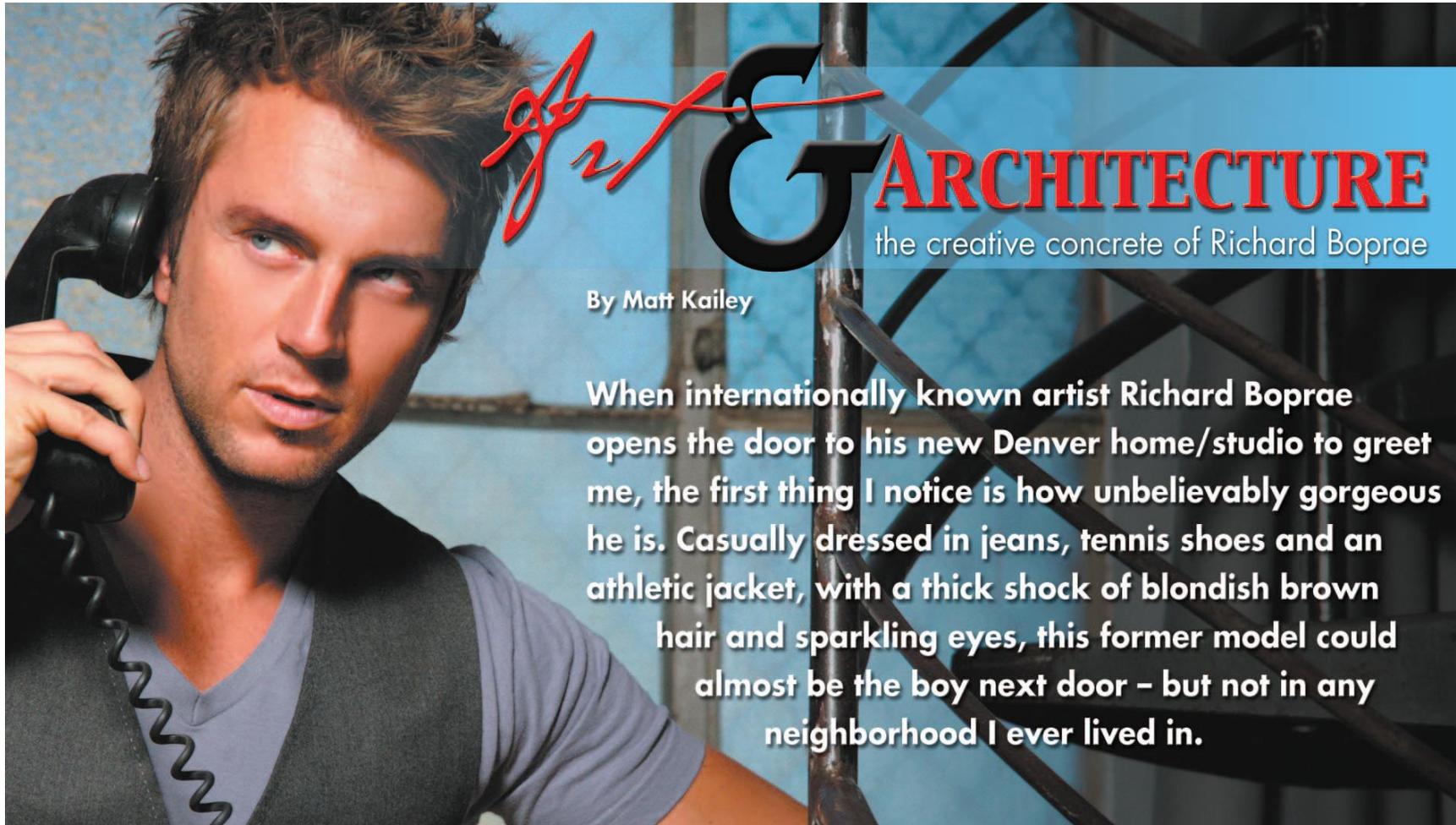


Out Front Colorado – Oct 2007 – Richard Boprae/ Boprae Studios ([www.boprae.com](http://www.boprae.com)) / 303.376.6382



By Matt Kailey

**When internationally known artist Richard Boprae opens the door to his new Denver home/studio to greet me, the first thing I notice is how unbelievably gorgeous he is. Casually dressed in jeans, tennis shoes and an athletic jacket, with a thick shock of blondish brown hair and sparkling eyes, this former model could almost be the boy next door – but not in any neighborhood I ever lived in.**

All Richard Boprae needs to do to make the world a more beautiful place is to be alive in it – but he's doing much, much more than that. His art, which can be found in private homes, office buildings, hotel lobbies and dozens of other venues all over the world, is as breathtaking as he is – and it's all uniquely Boprae, created with a technique that he developed himself that utilizes cement and resin to create works of art that can become entire walls, sliding doors or outdoor statuary.

Part art, part architecture, Boprae's work is sought after by those in the know with money to spend and homes that can benefit from the Boprae touch. "I don't want to shock anybody with my artwork," says the Montréal native in a sexy French Canadian accent. "I want to make sure that it suits its environment. So it's soothing and it's flowing. ... Of course, you actually see it, but you never see that it's in the wrong place. I think that's why people come to me in the first place. They want accent walls or accent something, and they know it's going to be suiting whatever else décor they have. Not overpowering."

Boprae's art takes its cue from the shapes, textures and colors found in the natural world, reflecting the artist's attachment to the environment around him. Given his love of the outdoors and nature-based living, it's not surprising that Boprae should decide to make his new home in Colorado, even though he is a wanderer. He has traveled all over the world and spent the last eight years making his mark on Miami's arts and culture scene and beyond. With clients on both coasts and in Aspen, Boprae finds Colorado's central location perfect for reaching both existing and new clients. He is also aware of Denver's developing art scene, and he loves the atmosphere as well.

"The Miami lifestyle was enough," he says. "I've done it for eight years. I'm from Canada, you know, and I'm a little more down-to-earth and I know that Colorado people are very down-to-earth people and very close to nature. ... And real estate is good here. This investment is good. I need a lot of space."

And a lot of space is just what he has. Boprae and his partner, Jordan Muraglia, who is also his business partner and a real estate agent, found a prime spot to serve as both home and studio – a former synagogue in west Denver, just off Colfax and Federal, that the couple is remodeling and restoring.

"It's a historical building," says Boprae. "It's important to just keep it and bring it back to some sort of original state as far as the look outside and just give it a beautiful modern twist inside. These buildings are fantastic. And they're worth saving."

When the studio is finished, clients will be able to make appointments to browse his collection, look at his portfolio and commission their own pieces or choose from those on display. In addition, they will get a peek into the artist's day-to-day life, one benefit of a home studio that Boprae thinks is important. "It's worked well in the past," he says. "People like to see what the artists are doing and how they're living, so it's always very interesting for people to actually see that. So I'm providing that as well. ... Not just coming to the art studio, but also having part of your life for a little bit."

A glance at Boprae's downstairs workspace will give visitors a better idea of how he creates his projects and the scale in which he works. The artist is self-taught, utilizing his cement-based compound discovery as his primary medium. "It's not complicated, really, but with trial and error, you finally discover things," he says. "And probably if I would have gone to school, I would have probably never figured that one out, because cement on canvas doesn't work. ... But over the years, I sort of found a compound that I can actually mix the cement with and it keeps it being elastic."



For his latest “Dream Catcher” collection, Boprae carved the wood panels into the various designs he wanted, applied the cement compound, then completed each panel with various metallic finishes. Each piece is created by hand and is one of a kind. And it’s not only many hours of hard work that goes into each piece – it is also personal energy and emotion.

“I feel like whenever I have to do the first session of it, like the carving and then the cement and all that, that’s like one part of me that actually does that,” says Boprae. “It’s like this energy, this masculine energy that’s working and all that. But then to finish it up, with the paint and all that, this is much more like a feminine energy coming out. It’s like, ‘OK, now it needs to be beautiful.’ So those canvases and those paintings are really a combination of my whole person. I really feel like nobody else can do that.”

In addition to the masculine and feminine energies that go into Boprae’s art, his sexual orientation figures prominently in his view of himself as an artist. “Being gay has everything to do with it,” he says. “From first of all, being gay as a kid, and all the questioning you go through. And the path that it makes you take, to accept and to discover. It pushes you a little further to discover what else is there and what abilities do you have, and from a little bit of the rejection comes a lot of other things. And you feel like you’re rejected, but then you build this whole beautiful personality because of that.”

Expect to see a lot of Boprae around Denver and Colorado – both the man and his work. And after spending the afternoon with this charming and talented artist, I, for one, would like to say, “Welcome to the neighborhood.” ■

Boprae’s showroom will be ready for guests by appointment only after the first of the year, but anyone interested in seeing his art or his portfolio before then can make an appointment to meet with him. For appointments now or in the future, call 303-376-6382. For more information or to see more art, go to [www.boprae.com](http://www.boprae.com).