

sculpture

January 1998 Vol. 17 No. 1

Commissions

Ursula von Rydingsvard, *For Ursie A.*, 1996

Providence, Rhode Island

Ursula von Rydingsvard's recent project for T.F. Greene Airport marks a series of professional firsts. Commissioned by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, *For Ursie A.* is von Rydingsvard's first percent-for-art commission.

Although the artist typically works with wood, *For Ursie A.* is von Rydingsvard's first large-scale bronze piece. The artist made a life-size cedar version of the sculpture by cutting cedar beams and then laminating them together one layer at a time. The bowl form was glued in sections so that later it could be disassembled by the foundry to produce molds for the bronze casting process.

For Ursie A. is a variation of the bowl, a form that von Rydingsvard has explored throughout her career. According to the artist, the bowl form can embody a number of metaphors. "In its position at the airport entrance, the work bears a strong relationship to the elemental qualities of the earth, in contrast to the sleek, monumental qualities of the building and the technology of flight," says project consultant Jennifer McGregor. Because the work is located between a parking lot and the main airport entrance, one of the artist's concerns was whether the piece would maintain its presence once sited. To address this problem, the artist built a 5-foot-high grass berm on the 55-foot-high grass berm on the 55-foot-high grass berm, creating a "stage" for the sculpture. Commission: \$133,855.

**Ursula von Rydingsvard, *For Ursie A.*,
1996. Bronze, 12 x 7.5 ft.**

