

Interview with sculptor

# Greg Ratchuk



Location **Buffalo, NY, USA**

Website

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/gravenny>



<https://instagram.com/gregatchuk>

## Ingredients

- Sculptor
- Wood Carver
- Horror Fan

## Preparation

### 1. Artistic Weapon of Choice:

Lately, I've been using paper-pulp clay for sculpting projects. The price of polymer clay has gone up, so paper-pulp has been the preferred choice. Paper-pulp clay (homemade clay) is basically paper mache. But instead of using strips of newspaper dipped into flour, you use toilet paper. You boil down the toilet paper in a pot of water until the paper fibers completely separate. Then you strain out the water, and squeeze the water out of the paper fibers, and then add in Elmers Glue.

### 2. If you don't mind telling us about how you approach your work, for example do you create sketches or Photoshop references first, do you go right to attacking the media, etc.

I go in to attack the media. I'm not very good at making sketches, and I'm also not very proficient with Photoshop. I'm actually going back to school taking up art classes to help with my skill so I can develop better methods of approaching my work.

### 3. Was your childhood particularly creative, or was there a singular event that sparked this incredible imagination

<https://ceceliaivy.com/>

**you have?**

My childhood was not very creative. I would say that watching horror movies is what sparked my imagination. I was always fascinated with special effects.



**4. Do you experiment with other art forms and media?**

I primarily sculpt, but once in a while I will try painting. Painting is challenging for me. It doesn't come as easily as sculpting. I have a hard time working 2 dimensionally

**5. Who are your influences? I'm guessing horror movies and metal.**

Yes, horror movies, for sure. I've been trying to broaden my horizons with figure sculpturing.

**6. Do you have a day job or are you able to live off your work?**

I have a day job. I work full-time as a press operator at a small print shop. I have worked in the same place for 22 years!

**7. How has business been during Covid?**

My hours were reduced at my full-time job, but partial unemployment picked up the slack. As for my artwork, I had more time to spend with the extra time I had at home.

**8. If you weren't an artist, what is another career path you may have taken?**

I really don't know, because I really can't picture myself any other way than how I am now. That's a scary thought for me because art is therapeutic for me and I don't know how I would be if I wasn't an artist....I would probably be a Tops Supermarket employee if I wasn't an artist.

**9. Of your own work, what would you say is your favorite and why?**

I've been making progress working with paper-pulp clay. It's the perfect medium for making corpse heads. And there is one corpse head in particular that turned out great. It is titled "The mummified Head of Edward Mordrake" on my Etsy page.



**10. Has the industry changed at all for you? Do you think it's flooded?**

Yes, the industry has changed. It has become more flooded over the years. I've been on Etsy since 2011, and

since then it has very much become flooded.

- 11. Do you have a studio space? Can you show us what it looks like? Any tips on sorting/organizing or are you of the mindset that creation comes from chaos like myself?**

Yes I have studio space...My spare bedroom at my apartment, lol. Right now it looks like a junk room, so I will have to get back to you about showing it to you, lol. Yes, my mindset revolves around chaos when I create.

- 12. I'm not sure how many of your creations are commission based, where you are working for a client with some kind of deadline in mind. Do you find it easy or limiting to work within a deadline?**

I have had some commission work over the years. Working with a deadline pushes me mentally to keep moving forward, which I see as a good thing because I tend to get lazy when I don't have a deadline.



- 13. Do you work to a strict schedule each day or week? Or is it more of a fluid process?**

I'm more fluid, but I try to stick to at least a weekly schedule. I would like to be

more consistent with working on projects, and that's something I feel I can accomplish better if I was stricter with my schedule.



- 14. What is the most challenging piece that you have had to create?** 14. A lifesize corpse sculpture...the 2nd attempt. Lol. I did a better job at my first attempt. I think I got over confident when working on my 2nd attempt. The most challenging aspect of working on a lifesize corpse sculpture is the lack of space I have at my apartment. Someday, I would like a proper studio.

- 15. How did you come up with the vampire stakes |**

I was googling on the internet and accidentally came across images of old-school farming tools that had rope handles. And the idea just randomly popped in my head. Then I did some



searching on Etsy and realized that only a very few made vampire stakes with the rope handles. I managed to make mine look a little bit different from what others make. I recess the wood a bit to accommodate the area where the rope lays in the handle area.



**16. Would a successful artist such as yourself have advice for underlings trying to break out into the world?**

The only advice I would give is try presenting your work at as many art shows as you can. Etsy is great, but it has really become flooded over the years. I think people remember your work better when they meet you in person.

**17. Can you tell us what you're currently working on/what you most recently produced?**

Currently I'm working on a corpse head of a vampire along with some Witch dolls made with the same material. Really digging the paper-pulp clay.

## Upcoming Shows:

18. I'm going to be vending at The Deadcon in Fort Wayne Indiana; Oct 15 th –

17 th





