

Casting Shadows Artist Statements

Barbara Beyer - Barbara Beyer's sculptures show a great clarity in form and often resemble almost archetypical shapes, however imperfections and fragmentation, balance and tension evoke ambiguous feelings of sturdiness and vulnerability at the same time.

Rosalyn Burgin – Ros Burgin is a sculptor working with Found Objects / Material and interested in sustainability and women's role in society. Scaled map made with the names of boats along this stretch of the River Thames. The print considers values both of water and names and a characteristic of water in this case the transient mark-making from the disturbed surface of the River as a boat passes through. Boat names resonate all over the oceans and serve as a reminder of the intrinsic value of a name and the first point of contact with others.

Fiona Campbell - One of a new series of precarious stilt structures, thinking about resilience and making do. The work has been made using labour-intensive processes such as hand-stitching and wrapping, which relates to care and repair. These hybrid forms are a response to our unstable climate of floods, animal extinctions, overconsumption and waste, escalating in the name of progress.

Dwellings exist on the edges of safety raised high on make-do scaffolding to avoid floods and other threats. Nomadic Somali tribes carry their homes on over-laden camels (symbols of adaptability, endurance, trade routes). Shepherds in France used to herd on stilt legs in boggy ground.

In order to adapt, change the narrative of consumerism and economic growth, imagination is key.

Martin Cody - Mute Body: block, is a grid-like cuboid held in mid-air on its plinth. The evident slashes, scarring and splatter across the painted surfaces and the tilt provided by a fulcrum serve to disturb any expectation of equilibrium of the form. In effect the surfaces double as planes of a sculptural construction on the one hand which are subject to a painter's activity on the other.

The piece fulfils William Tucker's dictum that sculpture is fundamentally to do with gravity and light.

Dallas Collins RWA - Remnant #III can be viewed as an object engineered by gravity and light. It resides in that dark unfathomable sea of energy and matter that surrounds our world. This continuously accelerating force can be seen and heard through reverberation and resonance, hiss, and stutter. The work owes its very existence to a game of chance that's dictated by our concept of objective knowledge and the written word of science. This record of time becomes an index of how the unseen, the unknown, and the deep distant past can all leave their mark as a record of events in the process of making sculpture.

Alice Cunningham – This bronze was made from a direct plaster cast taken from the patterns left in the sand from tidal waters. It is a unique cast from a series of 3 casts taken from the beach sands.

Deborah Duffin - Working with wire and found materials, Deborah Duffin creates organic, 3D drawings exhibited as individual pieces or installations exploring space, human interaction, and the elements. She undertakes commissions, often in awkward and interesting spaces in private homes and public spaces.

Chris Dunseath – This original Pen & Ink drawing, 'An Horizon Problem' locates three of my sculptures in an imaginary landscape. It also acknowledges the influence of Samuel Palmer's etching 'The Weary Ploughman' where the moon is surrounded by a dramatic sky containing the constellation, The Plough and in my drawing Orion appears in the night sky. The border of the drawing contains partly hidden names of significant friends.

This drawing is included in the recently published limited edition book titled 'Square Drawings by Chris Dunseath'. Signed and numbered copies are available as well as unframed editions.

Jane Fox - Cradle is a living mycelium sculpture; Oyster and Coral Tooth species.

Mycelium is the mass of branched, tubular filaments (hyphae) of fungi. The different species are fed sterilised straw, soy and beechwood substrates which contain the necessary nutrients.

Cradle is still growing and possibly will sprout fruit (mushrooms) during the exhibition and display signs of myco-welding. Myco-welding is living glue; a white velvety growth that sticks the building blocks of mycelium together for durable construction. The blocks of mycelium for

Cradle are aged between 6-18 months (Oyster) and 6 weeks (Coral Tooth).

Much mycelium naturally exists underground, is invisible and responsible for sustaining a symbiotic ecosystem. We are familiar with mushrooms, antibiotics, statins and chemotherapy drugs developed from fungi. In recent years, mycelium is increasingly grown for food, fashion, design, furniture, building construction, insulation and architecture etc. Much manufactured mycelium is grown using bi-products from agriculture and the food industry ie grain husks, coffee grounds which provide nutrient-rich substrates.

Myco-remediation is when mycelium helps eliminate non-biodegradable waste from the environment such as nuclear radiation, unrefined oil and plastics. For example, Oyster mycelium can digest PCBs, cadmium, mercury, dioxins, synthetic dyes, E.Coli and oil hydrocarbons.

Since 2022 Jane Fox has been researching and developing ecological materials for sculpture (incubating mycelium and fermenting probiotic microbial cellulose to date).

Alice Freeman – Epiphyte is a plant or plant-like organism that grows on the surface of another plant. It can derive its moisture and nutrients from debris accumulating around it.

Parasitic plants use a structure called a haustorium to penetrate their host plant. This specialised organ forms a connection between the two plants, which they use to drain nutrition.

Anna Gillespie - Witness

In this piece a woman reacts viscerally to the horror she witnesses unfolding in the world. Recent wars and a sickening feeling that climate change is out of control drive her response as an allegorical figure standing for us all. Powerless, aghast and sickened. The stress of reflected in the fragmentation and vulnerability of the figure itself. The 'verso' side speaks of dreams yet to come: the 'processing' of what has been witnessed, something that too will be fragmented and uncontrollable.

Nina Gronw-Lewis - Nina uses two main media: wool and ceramics. She states I see a strong connection between textiles and clay, textile processes are often long and laborious, involve natural materials with

innate inconsistencies and imperfections and dying processes have much in common with glaze chemistry.

Water Vessel 1-5 are hand-built stand-alone pieces which have a connection to each other, organic shapes that hold a quality of form, material and physicality are carried in the experimental language of sculpture territory.

The vessel form makes for an intimate experience, both in terms of surface and how you, the viewer, engages - peer in.

Wen-Hsi Harman - My ceramic practice investigates the concept of 'in-betweenness' between Taiwan and Britain.

Living away from my homeland gives me a clearer perspective of the culture in which I grew up. The cross-cultural experience provides a platform, from which I can address the questions of who I am and how I might express and communicate my experience of in-betweenness as a place where I can survive - where I can draw breath to help me cope with the challenges of living in two cultures.

Jane Jobling – The starting point for my practice is an interest in insides, outsides, and the surfaces, boundaries and spaces between them.

Paul Juillerat - Paul makes undeniably thought-provoking work that has always initiated conversations with its audience, 'whether they like it or not!' He tries very hard to make complicated work accessible to the widest audience by making it attractive, dynamic and engaging.

William Lasdun - Growing up in a milieu where visual and spatial matters were a constant topic of conversation had a profound influence on William's development as an artist.

Immersed from childhood in the ideals of modernist architecture, William became fascinated by the notion of form as something defined by the interplay of light and shadow, and throughout his career has been exploring his own ways to express this.

Robert Marshall - Robert Marshall is a conceptual and environmental sculptor. For the artist, sculpture is his 'tool' to chisel 'sense' into the complex modern world that surrounds him, in the hope of finding meaning, love and humour within it all.

Tony Martin

Poem by Seamus Heaney who owned a Level Blue etching by Tony Martin

'Level Blue has it and does it.
No flaunt, no fancy-stuff, no flinch.
Honest to earth, honest to air.
Euclid at the window - blotto as it were...'

Medium: Conte on Fabriano
Size: 50cm x 50cm

Seamus Moran - Synaptic Ammonite Torso came about when I started collecting knots from decayed trees in a woods near my home. As they are much denser than the rest of the wood in a tree, the knots (where the branches joined the trunk) were the last bits to survive and were almost like the bones of the tree. Each knot is unique in its form, a bit like a human fingerprint, but when I started to reproduce resin/iron casts from the moulds I made of them, I realised that some of them sat against each other quite well, and multiple copies of the same knot could be joined to form elegant compound curves. One such curve forms the 'backbone' of Synaptic Ammonite Torso.

Starting from the top, onto each 'vertebra' in this backbone I then attached two other knots which reached outwards and re-attached to the next but one vertebra down the backbone. I slightly lengthened the trunk of one of these two knots and shortened that of the other with each rib section that I made, which added to the overall curve of the piece. This formed one side of the 'ribs'.

The other side of the 'ribcage' was made with a similar formula, but this time joining adjacent vertebrae working from the bottom up. The resultant form was then mounted in a purpose made frame so it could just float there.

It was an interesting piece to make as I had no real idea how it would look when it was finished as I just followed the simple rules which I had set myself and let the work shape itself. It reminded me of many things, including a section from a roller coaster, but I named it after the more natural elements which it suggested to me.

Susie Olczak – This is part of a series of sculptures made in the UK after returning from the rainforests of Panama which interweave aspects of the location in the real Armilla with ideas of the imagined in Italo Calvino's Armilla from his text Invisible Cities. The works are made of recycled materials, remnants of other processes such as acetate from screen printing, photographs taken in Armilla, etchings, lino prints,

ceramics with liquid drips, material from Armilla and model makers' plants and tubes to represent pipes that carry water. Armilla is a model for a future city, it stands tall and flaglike and the intention is for this other world to feel chaotic and playful.

Kate Parsons - This work is based on the idea of ethnographic objects brought back from Kenya, East Africa, to be put into museum cases, making the objects (which in some senses are mundane), precious. They could be interpreted as real and unreal, like an object casting shadows and questioning which is the ultimate reality, as one is made of plaster (fake) and the other the genuine rock, much as Plato describes the shadows on the cave wall as an illusion of the real, in 'The Republic'. On a metaphorical level this work embodies shifting reality and the illusion of life.

One of the concepts behind this work is to make the viewer question which rock is more valuable, the natural, rare, original and authentic one, or the fake, gold leafed one, which is covered in what most people would value in the West, and give worth to, as a commodity.

It was interesting to test this out in my show at the St. John the Baptist Crypt, Bristol, with the general public, who had mixed feelings about the rocks, but once they had thought about it for a moment, tended to select the natural rock. I told them it encapsulated memories of living and working in Kenya for me and the walks, the time and the place I experienced when I collected it, which I would never be able to do again. The fake one was then seen as 'fool's gold' and yet was often most attractive to them. The idea of East and West, rich and poor is another theme in the work, having worked in Africa and compared it with my own culture.

Mark Richards – The impulse for this work is to make a piece of work about pilgrimage for a show I was participating in at Tremenhoe Sculpture Gardens this July. It is inspired by the work of Stanley Green who tramped this path for 25 years proclaiming protein restraint, and the sandwich board men and women who act as walking adverts. The work helped me see this place through refreshed eyes. The torso boards have the headboard slogan translated in 40 languages.

Please go to Mark's Instagram page to see the artist's performance @markmarkrichards

Alice Sheppard Fidler - I am a visual artist working across installation, sculpture and performance often operating outside the gallery context. I utilise and transform found and recycled materials and spaces to navigate often fragile and imperceptible boundaries between place, human experience and states of being.

Christopher Summerfield - My forms are inspired by nature and often their interactions with the manufactured world. 'Teardrop carapace' is a biomorphic sculpture celebrating nature, indirectly evoking (hopefully) themes of evolution, growth, emergence from hibernation, and all shell-like structures. The viewer may may not recognise all my intended associations, but will at least respond to my primary activity, my love of making sculpture, the manipulation of materials, and the language of sculpture. My piece refers to the shadows cast by nature, evolution and by the passing of time.

Jo Taylor - Ceramic sculpture influenced by the dialogue between space, structure & ornament. This Rococo inspired abstract form alludes to a creature curled around itself. Made from thrown & handbuilt elements in porcelain this hollow work has a led flex fitted to light the form from within, responding to the theme of Casting Shadows.

Nicola Turner - Turner works with found objects and organic "dead" materials to create sculptures and installations investigating interconnected ecosystems, both human and non-human.

Patricia Volk RWA - I put one colour against the other in a way that is satisfying or dynamic, it's purely visual and non-intellectual. If there is a deeper meaning, I like to think that is brought by the viewer: I don't like to limit their experience by giving a sculpture a set explanation or description. Sometimes I know what is going on in my head, but more often I let my hands do the 'thinking'. That doesn't mean it's easy – far from it, I take a very long time to consider the exact colours and weigh them up. Some might watch my activity and indecision and quite honestly think it's the total obsessiveness of a mad person. I like the thought that the pieces look light, and float – a contradiction to the obvious physical weight of clay. I am drawn to the combination of non-figurative form and colour to set off a series of juxtaposing ideas in the viewer's mind – tranquility, elegance, power, sadness, rest, action,

conflict, a sense of movement... all these things triggering human emotions of some kind.

Tom Waugh RWA – Tom Waugh is a prize-winning artist creating Hyperrealist sculptures hand carved in stone and marble.

Hamish Young RWA - My pencil lead nest is a small-scale sculpture made from pencil leads and paper pulp. It sits at the boundary of both Sculpture and Drawing, blurring the lines between these two genres. It is both a part of and apart from each genre. This reflects my experience as an adoptee being both a part of and apart from two families. The nest, constructed from thousands of mechanical pencil leads, is an 'in between', a temporary home, a boundary attempting to keep the inside from the outside. The paper pulp is supported by the interconnected pencil leads, like an 'inside out' drawing. It is empty, depicting both something having left or waiting for something to arrive or return.

This is part of a wider body of work in which I draw on my childhood experiences of loss and abandonment. It also connects with the poem "Shade-Haunted Space" by Henri Michaux, a profound exploration of the concepts of inside and outside space, which he describes as a mixture of being and nothingness. Michaux's work, including this poem, often delves into the realm of the inexpressible, attempting to articulate the indescribable and incommunicable aspects of existence. Gaston Bachelard, in his work "The Poetics of Space", uses this poem to illustrate the significance of unuttered words and unfulfilled intentions.

Bachelard's interpretation suggests that the poem's exploration of space is not just physical, but also metaphysical, dealing with the intangible aspects of existence and belonging.

Both my works and Michaux's poem play with the concepts of inside and outside, being and nothingness, and the boundaries between different states or genres, creating a dialogue between the physical and the metaphysical, the tangible and the intangible. This exploration of 'in-betweenness' and the blurring of boundaries can be seen as a reflection of the complexities and ambiguities of human existence. It's a reminder that life is not always neatly categorized, and that there is often more than meets the eye. It invites us to look beyond the surface and to embrace the complexities and contradictions that make up our world, to contemplate that most uncomfortable of emotions, ambivalence.