

DIDO CROSBY





DIDO CROSBY

3 – 31 December 2011


campden
gallery

As a student at St Martin's Dido Crosby swam against the fashionable tide of 'good ideas' by working figuratively and, even worse, by making animals! She stuck to her guns and in so doing has proved that passion for subject matter, perseverance and a strong work ethic pays off. Years on the success of this strategy is evidenced in this body of work.

Animals have been represented in cave paintings and from then on their forms have been depicted throughout human history, used as symbols of independence, loyalty, nobility, evil, and power. Artists have not always copied natural forms; they have exaggerated or enhanced features to impress, to inspire, to illustrate myths, to heal and to install terror. Animals in their various guises bring magic into our lives. It is inevitable that this tradition should be kept alive by contemporary artists.

Animals have reappeared in fashionable galleries, they have reappeared as corpses suspended in formaldehyde, exploited to create sensation, to serve an idea, to carry a title with no aesthetic intervention from the artist. Those are soulless wonders that can be comprehended at a glance. Nothing could be further from these works, which command close inspection and speak for themselves without the addition of encyclopaedic titles.

'Never work with children or animals' is a piece of advice most commonly doled out to people working in the performing arts. Here also lie pitfalls for sculptors and painters. Apart from the odd domestic pet included in our daily life, our relationship with farm and wild animals is, at best, second hand, at worst, non-existent. Meat is anonymously packaged, unconnected to the living, breathing flesh that is comfortably tucked away in anthropomorphic childhood illustrations, caricatured, high on the cute index, miles away from the brutal magnificent creatures that share the planet. Dido's sculpture is not cute; it is not sentimental or ornamental. It does not sensationalise, gesture or caricature. It celebrates creatures from the engineered breeds of domestic pets to the ancient stag, the sinister raven.

These animals are not boneless; they are palpable from their skeletons out to their skins. The eye must respond to something living and although these works are static they are strong, they are vital, they seem to be about to move. They have a life of their own, independent of the animals they represent. Animals have an alert grace even when they are in repose; the challenge is to capture the

otherness of their nature as creatures in their own world. The Stag tests the air before moving off, from another view the interior of the sculpture is revealed allowing us to read the structure.

The cat is arrested mid stride, prowling the night. The Raven, like Ted Hughes's dreadful crow 'makes a noise suspiciously like laughter'. The smooth full surface of the beached Black Sow accentuates her weight as she waits for her piglets to suckle, an epitome of motherhood. The elegant Roe Doe looks ahead, light on her fragile legs.

Some of these works are portraits. It is not just breed that distinguishes these dogs one from another. They each have an individual pulse, they present features we are familiar with, and they have an inner life that shines through. The Terriers are, of course, contemplating a sudden fast move and the Black Pug does seem pugnacious and, what is more, it looks at the world with certain ennui.

Sculpture is unable to give detailed natural colour unless it is skinned with paint, denying and disguising the weight and texture of the underlying material and creating havoc with three dimensional perceptions. Patination reveals the chosen metal but, nevertheless, the surface relief needs to be deepened in order to mimic the effect of colour. The definition on the face of the Pug captures all the subtleties of the black. The violent scored marks on the Raven match the loud character of this bird as well as implying the subtle shades of its feathers.

The surfaces are carefully considered, considerable skill is involved in making anatomy not only correct but believable; sculpture cannot correct its own stance and yet it is standing for a living creature that cannot remain stock still for very long. Weight, mass and verisimilitude must be evoked without sacrificing intuition and creativity. Dido achieves this balancing act between technique and imagination to make work that sings.

Dido has a practical as well as an inventive turn of mind, her approach to making is direct, unaffiliated to any theory of art. Here is detached observation in tandem with a close affinity to the subjects who are realised with vigour, humour and dignity. These works are not merely pictorial, they are not monuments, they are not vessels for a narcissistic personality, they bear witness, and they give pleasure.

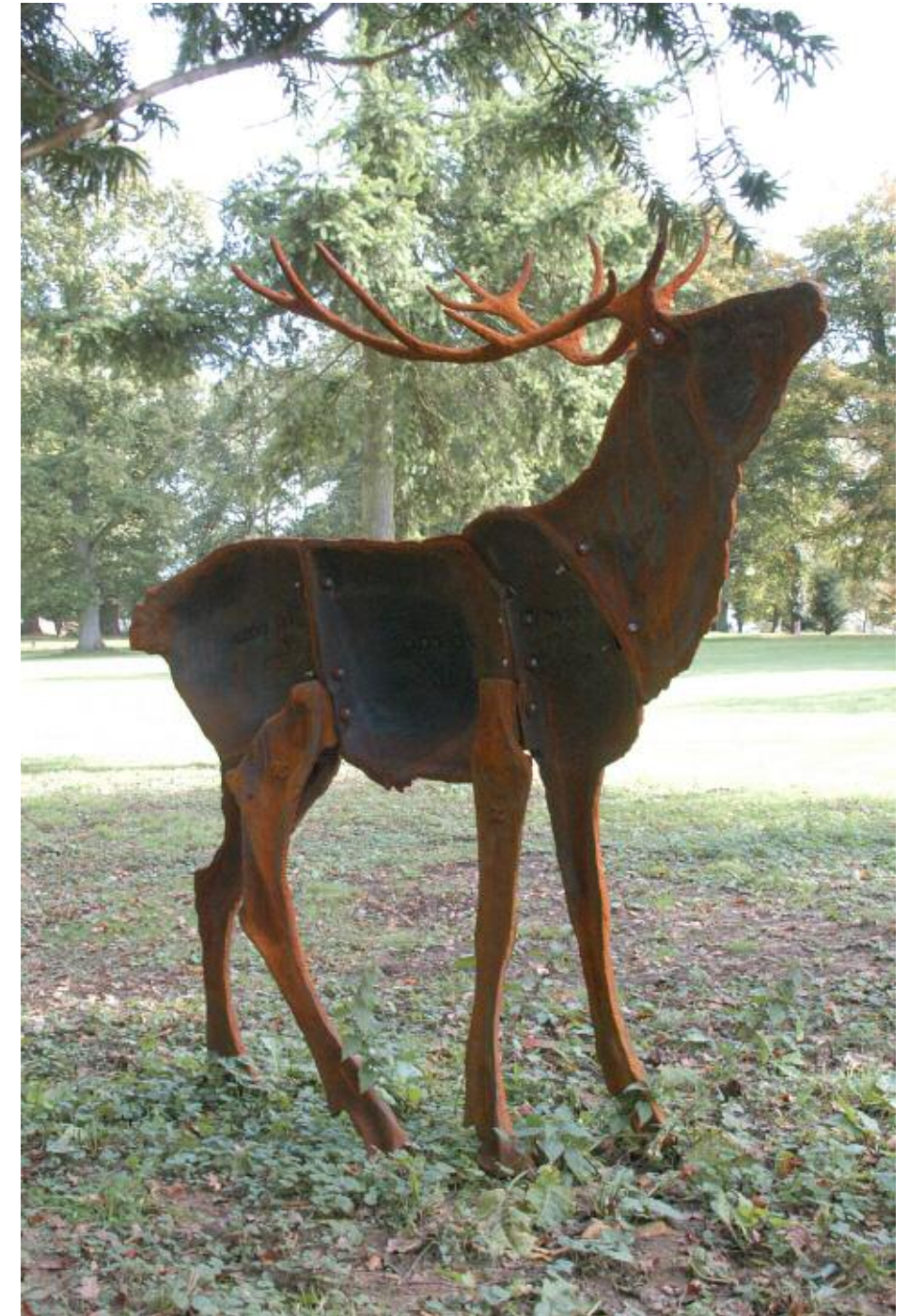
Viv Levy, MA RCA



Iron Stag
9 pieces of cast iron, steel bolts
212cm high x 205cm x 96cm
edition of 6



Iron Stag
as page 2, rear view detail



Iron Stag
as page 2, rear view

Roe Doe
bronze
95cm high x 97cm x 28cm
edition of 9



Sleeping Piglet, Left
bronze
11cm high x 44cm x 25cm
edition of 12



Sleeping Piglet, Right
bronze
11cm high x 44cm long x 25cm
edition of 12



Sitting Piglet
bronze
24cm high x 40 cm x 19 cm
edition of 12



Standing Piglet
bronze
23cm high x 48cm x 15cm
edition of 12

Black Sow (with piglets as pages 8 & 9)
bronze
40cm high x 190cm x 100cm
edition of 6





Smooth Cat
bronze
42cm high x 74cm x 11cm
edition of 12



Rough Cat
bronze
42cm high x 69cm x 14cm
edition of 12

Polished Vixen
bronze
56cm high x 61cm x 33cm
edition of 12



Polished Dachshund
bronze
38cm high x 24cm x 47cm
edition of 12





Black Pug
bronze
34cm high x 32cm x 37cm
edition of 12



Sitting Terrier
bronze
39cm high x 25cm x 52cm
edition of 12



Raven III
reverse view
details opposite



Raven III
bronze
38cm high x 80cm x 26cm
edition of 12



Ravens II and III together



Raven II
bronze
48cm high x 50cm x 24cm
edition of 12

DIDO CROSBY

1961 Born December, London

Education

1973–80 Bedales School, Petersfield, Hants
1981–84 BA(Hons) Zoology, St Hilda's College, Oxford
1991–96 BA Fine Art, Sculpture, Central St Martin's College of Art and Design

Selected Exhibitions

2011 'Sculpture at Lord's Wood' Messum's, Marlow, Buckinghamshire
2010 '5th Show' Big & Small/Casual Gallery, Long Island City, New York
2009 'The Dog Show', Dollar Street Gallery, Cirencester
2009 'Dog Show', The Globe Theatre, Bankside, London
2009 Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London
2009 Campden Gallery
2009 'Beast', jaggedart, London
2007 Campden Gallery
2007 'Art et Jardin', Langham Fine Art, Hillwatering, Langham, Suffolk
2007 'The Far Horizon', jaggedart, London
2004 and 5 Csaky Art, Arndean Gallery, London
2004 'New Grafton Gallery in the Country', West Sussex
2003 'Zodiac', with Csaky Art, Arndean Gallery, London
2002 'Menagerie' with Csaky Art Arndean Gallery, London
2000 'Harbour Point 2000', Rye Harbour, East Sussex
1996–1999 Christmas, Spring and Summer Shows, Gallery Duncan Terrace, London
1992 Windows Gallery, Central St Martin's, London
1991 '12 Artists', The Eagle Gallery, London
1990 Whitechapel Open, London
1989–1990 Ann Stokes, Christmas Shows, Hampstead, London

Work on Public Display

White Gazelle, 2010 winner of the Bernard Noble Sculpture Prize, Colletta, Italy.
Dunderave Horse, 2005, bronze, Loch Fyne, Argyll, Scotland.
Pair of Barn Owls, 2005, bronze, Acton Court, Iron Acton, Bristol.
Iron Heifer and Iron Sow and Piglets, 2002, cast iron, Acton Court, Iron Acton, Bristol.
Mary, Mother of the World, roundel, 2000, Jesmonite, glass fibre, acrylic and gold leaf, St Mary's Primary School, Enfold Street, London.
Indonesian Cow, 1999, Jesmonite glass fibre, The Conquest Hospital, Hastings, Sussex.
Four Falcon Finials and a pair of Acanthus Leaf Balls, 1996, stone, Shakespeare's Globe, Southwark, London.
Dragon Head and Tail, 1996, carved reclaimed teak and marbles, in a garden for visually impaired children, the Woodside Family Centre, Kingswood, Bristol.
Beef Heifer, 1995, GRP and gold leaf, Tseh O'Hora, Kiltimheh, Co Mayo, Ireland.
Standing Stag, 1994, bronze, in the foyer of the Gloucester Hotel, London.
Athene Owls, 1994, two pairs in brass, The Barbican Centre, London.
Steel Eagle, 1993, on The Eagle Public House, Farringdon Road, London.
Manatee, 1992, skeleton reconstruction and sculpture, Fidelcomiso de Conservacion de Puerto Rico, Faro, Fejardo, Puerto Rico.
Four Dogs' Heads water spouts, 1992, bronze, on a fountain, Plaza Centre, Rotterdam.

First published in 2011 by Campden Gallery Ltd, High Street, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire GL55 6AG

www.campdengallery.co.uk

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electrical, mechanical or otherwise, without first seeking the permission of the copyright owners and the publishers.

All images in this catalogue are protected by copyright and should not be reproduced without permission of the copyright holder. Details of the copyright holder to be obtained from Campden Gallery.

Copyright ©2011 Campden Gallery Ltd.

ISBN: 978-1-908753-03-8





High Street
Chipping Campden
Gloucestershire GL55 6AG
Tel: 01386 841555
info@campdengallery.co.uk

www.campdengallery.co.uk

Open Tuesday to Saturday 10.00am – 5.30 pm
Sunday 11.00am – 4.00pm