

Creek Head 3, 2008

Laurence Edwards

Sold



Description

Sculpted from the clay remains of the third Creek Man
Bronze, this sculpture is unique, an erosion of the third Creek Man
Signed

The first clay giant, the first Creek Man is finished. I will cast him into bronze and his clay remains, which under other circumstances I would discard, I will keep, revive, repair and work on again to create a second giant. This giant will represent an evolution, and advancement; one that I realize will mirror my own evolution. If I keep saving and rebuilding the clay figures after every casting, I will end up with a series of figures, all derived from the same sculptural gene pool. They will develop with me through time, retaining elements and physiognomies. A tribe or dynasty of figures will emerge.

I have always had the idea that I could make a series of sculptures from one figure; a figure that would never be finished.

Sometimes I think this is because I have always been frustrated at finishing a bronze and realizing as I complete it, that I have filed and polished the story of its making away. In my imagination this figure has always been bigger than me, so that it isn't just continuous and unfinished, but large enough to carry the weight of the many things I haven't yet worked out.

The idea of creating such a figure daunts me, because I have never made or cast anything before on the scale I envisage, and I do not know if the foundry I've built will cope. But it feels like this is the right time.. I begin to make a giant. I build a steel armature which will support the clay, and begin the long process of modelling. Making a figure of this size is physical. I see the clay as mud, I like it sloppy, I prefer to squelch and squeeze my shapes letting them dry and harden over time. Once the clay dries to leather hard, I set about beating its shape with whatever is handy, hammers, lengths of wood, fists, shovels. Over next few days a large figure emerges. I feel strange, beating on the chest of something bigger than me. This larger than life scale changes the relationship I usually have with a sculpture; it is somehow beyond me. I find strange white fungi called 'leather strop', growing from dead silver birch. I like their oozing, globular shapes. There is something interesting about the way this fungus takes the death from a tree and converts it into life. Apparently these leather stop possess knife-sharpening properties. I start to cast and arrange these curious fungi, and out of the corner of my eye, the giant's massive presence feels like that of a tree. I try placing the fungi on the man, and see that beyond the obvious associations of death and decay one could make with fungal growth, there is also a connection with this ancient sense of power. One could argue that this man is undergoing a conversion. As the fungus grows out of him, the man could be emerging from a sort of torpor, projecting a sense of survival and self-reliance. I like the territory this opens up, how it introduces into the giant and ancient culture and the natural world.

True to my idea, I resurrect the remains of the first man, and work on them to create the second Creek Man. I have emphasized the nicks and incisions on his face to remind me of the strange scene...