



Man of Stones

Edwards, Laurence

On display

Title/Description: Man of Stones

Artist/Maker: Edwards, Laurence

Born: 2019

Accession Number: L.114

Copyright: © The Artist

Credit Line: Paul and Louise Cooke Endowment

Man of Stones is an oversize figurative bronze sculpture, approximately 2.4 metres (8 feet) tall. It is situated on a promontory of land between the River Yare and the broad. The sculpture is placed on the riverbank, in a deceptively remote and wild place. The natural vegetation of reed marsh and woodland surround the sculpture.

The sculpture was conceived as if it were emerging from the landscape and is sight specific. It is best viewed from the nearby path so that the immediate environs remain wild and the river and woodland form a backdrop. Edwards's work is concerned with the merging of his figure with landscape. It is intended to relate to our relationship with nature, ecology, geology and the environment. [1]

The sculpture was modelled in clay before later being cast in bronze. Edwards exploits the alchemic transformation that occurs in bronze casting to enhance his sculptures with metaphor and meaning, through the use of allegory, themes recalling ancient myths and particularly metamorphosis. The artist collected source material from the site, branches, bullrushes and flints. They were later incorporated into the figure. Although the flint stones could be viewed as a burden, in fact, they symbolise the ground from which the figure has emerged. *Man of Stones* is inextricably connected to the geology and the landscape of the region.

Edwards has worked on a number of projects in similar natural environments such as coastal creeks and marshland. He is known for his dramatic but sensitive and respectful interventions in the landscape. The spectator may initially be startled by *Man of Stones* emerging as if from the river. However, it is hoped this will be followed by a more benign or even celebratory response and the figure will be seen a guardian offering protection to its watery home: less a haunting presence and more of a blessing.

Laurence Edwards is a contemporary sculptor who studied at Canterbury College of Art and the Royal College of Art, where he trained in bronze casting and sculpture with Sir Anthony Caro. After winning a Henry Moore Bursary, the Angeloni Prize for Bronze Casting and an Intach Travelling Scholarship, he studied casting techniques in India and Nepal, an experience that not only influenced his treatment of form and technique, but also gave him the necessary tools to establish his own studio/foundry. He is now one of the few sculptors who casts his own work and specialises in lost-wax bronze casting. This technique is largely unchanged since the European Renaissance and Edwards's work is informed by this sense of continuity with artists such as the Italian master, Giambologna.

Edwards is represented by Messums and his sculptures have been shown both nationally and internationally. The work, *A Thousand Tides*, resides in Butley Creek on the Suffolk coast. *Man of Stones* was commissioned by Paul Cooke on long loan to the Sainsbury Centre and forms part of the Sainsbury Centre campus Sculpture Park.

Calvin Winner, December 2020

[1] Bill Jackson, 'Man of Stones' (2019) <https://vimeo.com/343520542>

Further Reading

Bill Jackson, 'Man of Stones' (2019) <https://vimeo.com/343520542>
