

WORKING ON EDGE

John Crawford's large wooden (heavy timber—it is not a monolith, which is of rock) sculpture **"Marker W-6"**, culminates his many years of interest in Prehistoric Art. Crawford has long examined (prehistoric) dolmens and cromlechs in Britain, is intuitively drawn to these forms, and uses their essence in massive timber shapes. **Marker W-6** uses precisely interlocked baulks of pine, the tight joints contrasting with the rough-textured surface.

Peter Dudek's **"X"**, is a Minimalist sculpture of plywood bent in a semi-cylinder with holes punched at various points. The simple shape juxtaposes jarringly with its outrageous florescent orange paint job. The large Dudek work was prefigured by his "Gasket Prints" series, showing shapes with large rings cut out like industrial gaskets. His simplicity of form evokes Richard Serra's Tilted Arc. During a residency in Poland last year, Dudek made a series of sculptures that had material sandwiching an old quilt, with the quilt pushing out on the edges. His **"X"** here poses the same contrast of materials, textures, and shapes, the smooth serene curve of plywood punched with holes, which makes us ponder these gaps in serenity.

Steve Keister's "S.I.T.E." reflects his explorations into the Origami. It uses aluminum tracking and orange fencing, and folds them precisely as in the Japanese paper art form.. These common industrial materials refer to our environment of building and renovation. Keister's art is founded on early 20th-Century Russian Constructivists, Naum Gabo and Pevsner, who also used industrial materials. The unpretentious materials are also appropriate to Minimalism's tendency to understate. "S.I.T.E.", with its references to Origami and to earlier Russians, as well as its Minimalist flavor, carries elements of both Eastern and Western aesthetics.

Laura McCallum's "Crossing" presents a personal metaphor for life's passages. The long gray-green slate platform runs into and apparently through a mound of white broken pebbles that break the platform in two. Or is it a bridge? Or the skeleton of a tunnel? The smooth, dark mottled surface of the slate contrasts with the pale-gray pebbles. The work comes from McCallum's long interest in bridges and prehistoric structures such as passage graves and early temples. She has also been fascinated by the meaning of crossings—over water, danger, crisis . . . from one part of life to another.

McCallum comments on the meaning of the stone: "These slabs of slate aren't overdressed. Their colors and textures show like a pressing of life they held in primordial clay. I

feel the elemental power of the stone and some connection with the ancients who made primitive structures in a time we call the Neolithic and Bronze Ages but which actually were ages of vivid spiritual sensibility, when rivers, trees and rocks were believed to have nymphs and daimones living in them.”

David Seccombe's totemic wooden sculpture called “Ypsilanti” conjure ancient people chanting to an idol. His work is widely recognized and has won many commissions and awards. In this, his most recent work, he began building from the ground and created a topographical , layered construction which gives the feeling of solidity and weight; this is quite different, he says, from the lightness and motion of his earliest structural work.

Seccombe says, “The negative interior form is still important for me however, and most of my work still allows a glimpse of the interior void from above.” Made from scraps of wood from his earlier and much larger pieces “Ypsilanti” is open-ended, elevated and enfolded by advancing and receding planes. It carries on a theme he developed earlier in his “Ramp and Tunnel” Projects.

Nancy Steinson’s “The River: Homage to the Tigris and Euphrates”, invites the viewer into a meditative and contemplative garden. This polychromed steel sculpture of planar forms floats in a river of blue glass shards. Steinson uses planes to induce clarity.

She worked on the sculpture during the Gulf War; the separate parts developed into three low geometric shapes as the image of a river kept surfacing in her mind. The river became for Steinson, a metaphor for the cycle of suffering, rebirth and joy throughout centuries of war and revolution “River” addresses in silence unspeakable events, healing, and new life. Steinson addresses in her sculpture a concern for purity of form as embraced by the Minimalists, believing in the power of abstraction to provoke the experiential.

The work of these six talented artists use elemental materials and simple forms cleverly fitted; they are fundamental in a physical sense, and sophisticated in their significance, posing questions of mass, shape, power, life, and time as they reach from earth over space.

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Curator