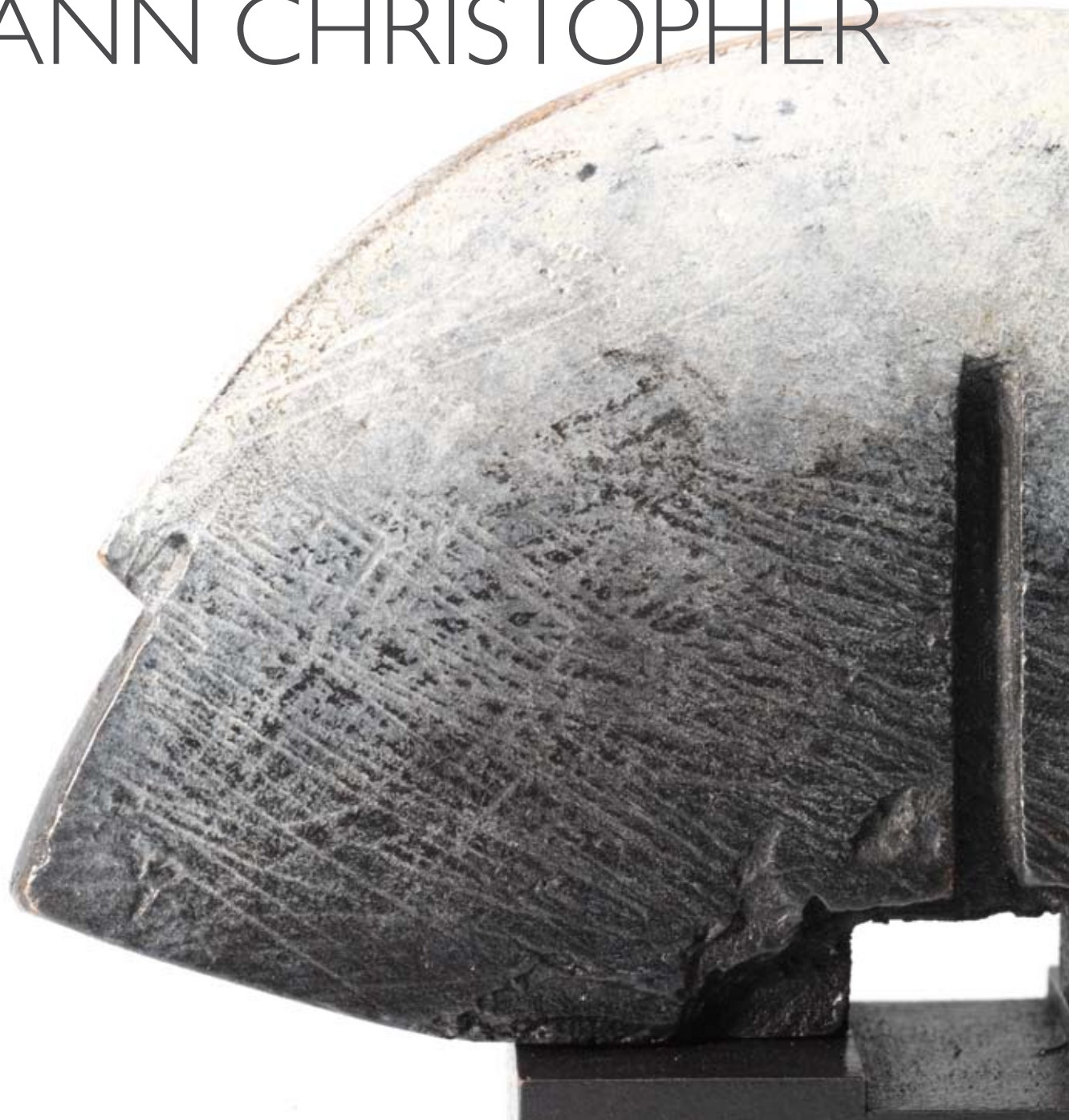


ANN CHRISTOPHER



TO KNOW WITHOUT REMEMBERING

*True beauty in which every century recognises itself is found in
upright stones, ships' hulls, the blade of an axe, the wing of a plane*

Primo Levi, *The Periodic Table*



Shelf of found objects
and sculpture in Ann
Christopher's studio
during her residency
in Ireland, 2012
Photo: the artist

INTRODUCTION

What a wonderfully enigmatic title for an exhibition, and how intriguing. It suggests a dream-like quality where a memory is snatched back as it hovers on the edge of consciousness before fading forever. Ann Christopher collects phrases in long lists until suddenly a single form of words will detach itself and float invitingly free. This was how the exhibition title was born, a mysteriously beautiful phrase which seems to encapsulate the spirit of her present body of work.

Christopher usually works on a larger scale than in the present exhibition but, due to a recent shoulder injury, all the pieces displayed here are on the small side, easily handled, with one remarkable exception.

From the wide variety of shapes in the exhibition *The Edge of Memory* (p.34) is a seminal piece, its axe-head shape spreading like the wings of a bird. Christopher has long been fascinated by knives and blades, and in particular an Eskimo seal skinning knife belonging to a friend which she eventually acquired. The lovely shape of this lethally sharp object can be linked to several of her small sculptures. There are other associations such as regal ceremonial headgear, which Christopher acknowledges may come from her visits to Uganda, and her interest in other so-called 'primitive' cultures. Perhaps there are also distant memories of Mexican sculpture and its sacrificial rites.

The Edge of Memory began its existence as a piece of hardboard which Christopher cut out to its present shape. Building up layer upon layer of resin paste, a material with which a beautifully even surface can be achieved, she smoothed the paste manipulating and teasing it into craggy, pitted shapes like the surface of the moon. Repeating this process until she was satisfied with the depth and shapes of the applied surface, the piece was then cast in bronze and patinated in a rich, rusty red, with touches of black intervening along the sharp, black edge.

Christopher has worked in France, Menorca, Uganda and Ireland, and is profoundly influenced by the landscape and particularly the seascape of those places. The coast in particular is an ever-present influence: the sea at dawn, rocks and seaweed all creep into her work. Striations of cliffs and escarpments, the sense of countless geological strata, are vividly present, although often veiled.

Contrasting with the relatively low sight-line of *The Edge of Memory* is the tall tower of *From the Edges of Silence* (p.17), a bronze piece patinated in a soft pinky-red, quietly self-contained, a gentle presence, monumental despite its small size. The pitted and bitten surface of the arrow-head-shaped piece has a very precise cut line in it, made by a milling machine, which contrasts with the marks made by the hand of the artist, creating a tension between the machine-made and the hand-made.

In *Light Shadow* (p.33) Christopher adds an extra dimension using a positive as well as a negative line by means of an external neoprene band contrasting with an incised cut. Shaped like a fat arrow, broad and earthy, one side is markedly more worked upon than the other, and Christopher leaves it to the viewer to decide which is back and which is front.

Held Memory (p.9), in stainless steel, is a prime example of Christopher's unique sensibility to material. Irresistibly tactile, its surfaces are reminiscent of fissures in a craggy surface, of deeps and hollows, promontories and valleys. The material has a coolness about it which makes one think of a fish darting through the depths. It is made so that it can be displayed on its small base or lying down, which immediately offers the temptation to pick it up and handle it, hence the title.

Christopher's use of cords, strings and bands as embellishments to her sculpture is a new development in her work. *Held Line* (p.25) is a larger, curved piece of bronze held in gentle tension by two cords and *White Lines* (p.21) and *Light Shadow* (p.33) also incorporate their use. Here there is a clear crossover between the sculpture and the drawings. The title of the drawing series, made in Ireland, *Drawing Lines* (p.14) sees Christopher drawing lines with string as well as physically drawing lines in charcoal and graphite. The starting point for *Drawing Lines -6* was a white line of light on the horizon with a cloudy sky above, the setting sun shining on the very edge of a dark sea. Christopher's interpretation finds form in a drawing of dense charcoal, the white line left as a negative space and a piece of mylar (a thick opaque paper) hung over the charcoaled paper with metal clips, like little half-moons peeping over the top. The drawing also incorporates shredded nylon string which Christopher found on the beach and rubbed and pressed hard over the mylar, biting into the surface leaving marks that recall the ghosts of the seaweed she saw on morning walks. The cotton string, dyed black, which zig-zags across the surface are reminiscent of the telephone wires that divided the big grey skies seen from her Irish studio.

The largest sculpture: *Restless Shadow* (p.11), is a grand and magisterial piece which leans nonchalantly against the wall, its gentle curve just touching at the top. It started life with two pieces of wood which Christopher leant against the wall and spent many months simply looking at. She moved them around, eventually into a larger space where the sunlight caught them, the shadows following the sun, softly or sharply, depending on the intensity of the season. Then by electric light they looked different again. The tall tapering forms fabricated in corten steel are drawn together towards the top by a small intricate locking piece, and rounded off smoothly. Christopher confesses that she herself felt restless during its long gestation, to which the moving shadow is a living testament.

From *Restless Shadow* to the smallest of the sculptures, inspired by such disparate and mundane objects as a magnetic soap-holder and a tiny bobbin, there is an unmistakable thread of shape-consciousness in Christopher's work. It runs from the tall aspiring cone, perhaps inspired by skyscrapers or missiles, to the axe-head, with its ceremonial suggestions. Behind it all stands the landscape, with its wind-bent trees and grasses, caves and hollows, and above all the rocky coast, with its seaweed-draped boulders and the eternal roar of the sea, contrasting with the absolute precision of the machine-made line. Thus the natural world and the man-made world come, not into collision, but into a seamless harmony. Ann Christopher's work combines antiquity and modernity, her voice is calm and serene, qualities urgently necessary in our increasingly frantic world.

MARY ROSE BEAUMONT
August 2013



CATALOGUE

HELD MEMORY
2013
Stainless steel
Edition of 9
7.5 x 29 cm

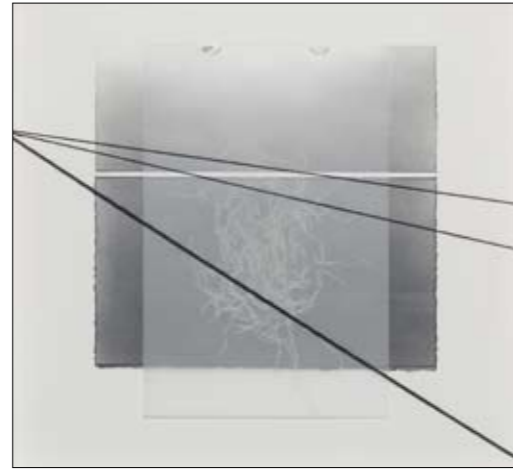




RESTLESS SHADOW
2013
Corten steel
Edition of 3
260 cm high

TOWARDS THE LIGHT
2011
Stainless steel
Edition of 9
24 cm high





DRAWING LINES 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6
2012
Mixed media
Unique
46.6 x 47 cm framed



FROM THE EDGES
OF SILENCE
2012
Bronze
Edition of 7
75.5 cm high





RED LINE
2013
Bronze
Edition of 9
12.5 cm high
Working model



WHITE LINES
Sterling Silver
2013
Edition of 20
2.5 cm x 13 cm



RESTING LINE
2013
Bronze and neoprene
Edition of 9
7 cm x 35 cm

HELD LINE
2013
Bronze & leather cord
Edition of 9
76.5 cm high





FOUND LINE -3
2013
Bronze
Edition of 20
6.5 cm high



FOUND LINE -2
2013
Bronze
Edition of 9
13.5 cm high



FOUND LINE - I
2013
Bronze
Edition of 9
20 cm high





OUTSIDE THE SHADOWS I-21
2013
Pastel, graphite, crayon & steel
18 x 25 cm unframed



LIGHT SHADOW
2012
Bronze & neoprene
Edition of 9
20 cm high





THE EDGE OF MEMORY
2013
Bronze
Edition of 9
20.5 x 56 cm



SOLITARY LINE
2013
Stainless steel
Edition of 9
54.5 cm high



ONE LINE
2012
Bronze
Edition of 9
15 cm high

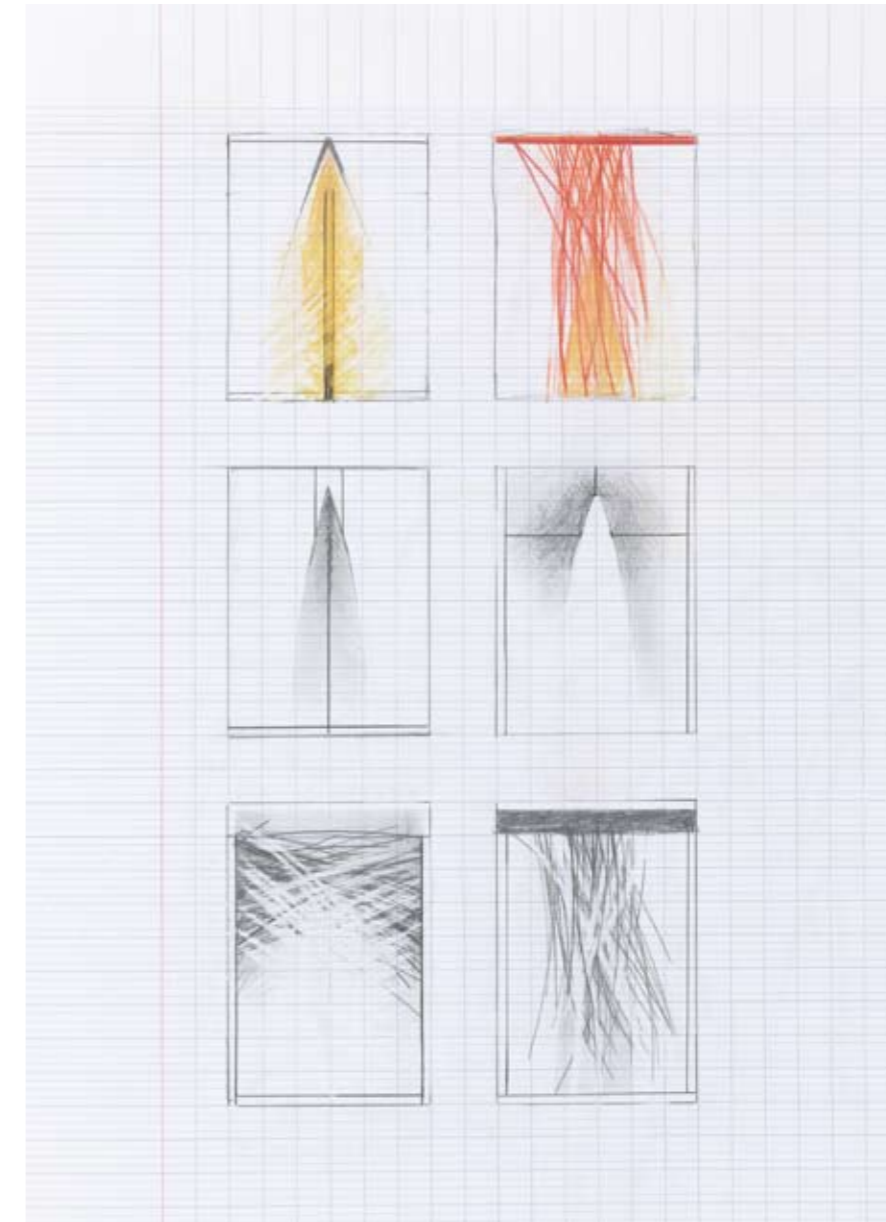




MAKING LINES
TRIPTYCH FOR RUWENZORI
2012
Bronze
Unique
22 cm high

ANN CHRISTOPHER

- 1965/66 Harrow School of Art
First visit to Greece
- 1966/69 West of England College of Art - BA Sculpture
- 1968 Won 1st prize in Harrison-Cowley Sculpture Competition
- 1969 First exhibition at Mignon Gallery, Bath
- 1971 Prizewinner in Daily Telegraph Magazine, Young Sculptors Competition
Received Peter Stuyvesant Award
First exhibited at the Royal Academy, London
- 1972 Sculpture presented to Daily Telegraph Young Writer of the Year
Elected Associate of the Royal West of England Academy
- 1973 Received Birds Charity Award
Commission for Bristol Literary Dinners, Publisher of the Year Award
Arts Council Award, Thornton Bequest
- 1976 South West Arts Award
- 1977 Arts Council Grant
Chantrey Bequest purchase
- 1979 Commission for Bath City Council
- 1980 Elected Associate of the Royal Academy (ARA)
Contemporary Art Society purchase
- 1983 First visit to New York
- 1985 Commission for Society of West End Theatre, The Laurence Olivier Awards 1985 - 87
- 1987 Visits India
- 1989 Elected Royal Academician (RA)
Commission for Grosvenor Square Properties
Ann Christopher 1969-89 Dorchester County Museum and Art gallery
- 1990-01 Three industry awards for ATE International
- 1992 Elected Fellow of Royal Society of British Sculptors (FRBS)
- 1994 Awarded RBS Silver Medal for Sculpture of Outstanding Merit
- 1995-97 External assessor of sculpture at City and Guilds Art School, London
- 1996 Frampton Award for sculpture in a public place
Curated *A Sculptors Choice* Royal Academy, London
- 1997 St Cuthbert's Mill print award
- 1997 Otto Beit Medal for Sculpture of Outstanding Merit
First working visit to Menorca
- 2001 First studio residency in France
- 2003 Visits Iceland



2004 Medal for British Art Medal Society. Visits Madagascar
 2005 Visits Uganda with Ruenzori Sculpture Foundation and visits Southern India
 Short listed for the Charles Woollaston Award, Royal Academy
 2006 Visits China
 Quarter leader in *Drawing Quarters* a practise based Symposium, UWE, Bristol
 2007 Visits Borneo and Kerala, South India
 2009 Senior co-ordinator of RA Summer Exhibition, London
 2011 Studio residency in France (also 2009, 2007 & 2003)
 Selector for 1st Istanbul Summer Exhibition, Istanbul, Turkey
 Shortlisted for RIBA pylon competition (Ian Ritchie Architects)
 Selector for 38th International Art Competition, Gibraltar
 2012 Ruwenzori Sculpture Foundation residency, Uganda
 Ballinglen Art Foundation residency, Co Mayo, Ireland
 2013 Currently lives and works near Bath, UK
 Represented by Pangolin London

EXHIBITIONS INCLUDE

2013 ****To Know Without Remembering** Pangolin London
Gifted: From the Royal Academy to The Queen Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace
Here, There and Somewhere in Between Hatfield House
 2012 RA Now Burlington Gardens, London
Sculptors Drawings and Works on Paper Pangolin London & Kings Place Gallery
The Force and Form of Memory touring throughout Scotland
 2011 *Driven to Draw* Tennant Gallery, Royal Academy
The Force and Form of Memory Cyril Gerber Gallery, Glasgow
Women Make Sculpture Pangolin London
Sculpture at The Grove The Grove Hotel, Watford
 2010 **** Marks on the Edge of Space** Pangolin London
Crucible sculpture at Gloucester Cathedral (Pangolin)
Scultura Internazionale a Racconigi 2010 Racconigi, Italy
Material Lightness curated by Carol Robertson – Flowers Central, London
Sculpture Promenade Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
 2009 *In the Mix II* Pangolin London
 2008 *Sterling Stuff -2* Pangolin London
 2007/8 ****The Power of Place** Sir Hugh Casson Room, Royal Academy
 2006 *The Drawing Room* Royal West of England Academy
 2005 *Artists of Fame and Promise* Bohun Gallery, Henley-on-Thames
 2004 *Discerning Eye 2004* (invited by Norbert Lynton) Mall Galleries, London
Small sculpture, Redfern Gallery London
**** Still Lines** Jubilee Park, Canary Wharf, London

2003 *30th Anniversary Exhibition: part II* Bohun Gallery, Henley-on-Thames
 BLOK Canterbury Sculpture Festival Canterbury
4th Triennial Sculpture Exhibition (invited + selector) Royal West of England Academy
Sterling Stuff Sigurjon Olafsson Museum, Reykjavik, Iceland
Art Palm Beach Florida USA (Redfern Gallery)
 2002 *Sterling Stuff* Gallery Pangolin, Chalford
Thinking Big: Concepts for 21st Century British Sculpture Guggenheim, Venice, Italy
Five Women Artists Redfern Gallery
Artists of Fame and Promise Bohun Gallery, Henley-on-Thames
Royal Academicians at Insidespace Royal Academy
Art Palm Beach Florida USA (Redfern Gallery)
 2001 *Concept Editions* Goodwood Sculpture Park, Goodwood
Starting a Collection Art First, London
 2000 *Art 2000* Islington (Cyril Gerber)
Glasgow Art Fair Glasgow (Cyril Gerber)
Geneva Art Fair Geneva, Switzerland (Redfern Gallery)
Sculpture 2000 Gallery Pangolin at Milton Keynes
Sculpture in the Garden Bohun Gallery, Henley-on-Thames
Works on paper Redfern Gallery, London
 1999 ****Solo exhibition** Courcoux & Courcoux, Stockbridge
The Shape of the Century at Canary Wharf, London
****Six Academicians** (works on paper) Royal West of England Academy
The Shape of the Century City of Salisbury
Winter Exhibition Cyril Gerber Fine Art, Glasgow
 1998 *Mixed Exhibition* Redfern Gallery, London
Summer Exhibition Courcoux & Courcoux, Stockbridge
Small works by Academicians Royal Academy, London
 1997 *Exhibition of Royal Academicians Works* Courcoux & Courcoux, Stockbridge
****Solo exhibition** Redfern Gallery, London
Black, White and Colour - works on paper by members of the Royal Academy
 Sharjar Art Museum UAE
 (toured Cultural Foundation, Abu Dhabi and Bahrain National Museum)
 1996 Adelson Galleries inc. New York
Monumental 1996 Foundation Helan-Arts, Bornem, Belgium
Summer Exhibition Redfern Gallery, London
A Sculptor's Choice curated by Ann Christopher, Royal Academy, London
 1995 *Summer Exhibition* Redfern Gallery, London

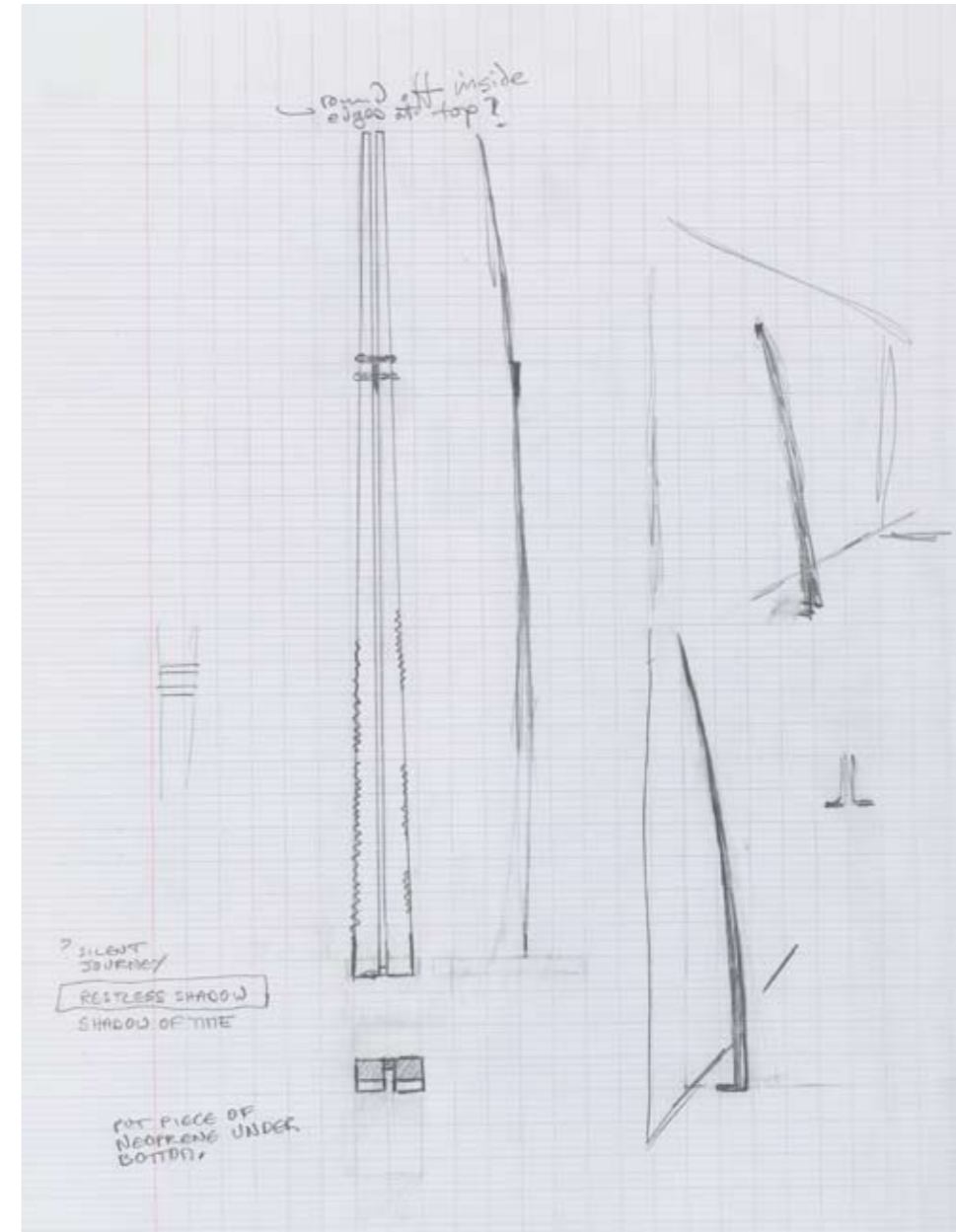
Annually at Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London (since 1971)
 RCA Secret Royal College of Art, London (annually since 2001)
****** indicates solo exhibition

RECENT COMMISSIONS INCLUDE

- 2007/8 BEYOND THE EDGE edition of 12 46 cm bronze sculptures for Kings Place, London
- 2004 IN THE SKY THERE IS NO EAST OR WEST medal for British Art Medal Society
- 2002 THE EDGE OF LIGHT 2.2 m bronze for a private site near Albi, France
- 2001 SHADOW LINE 48 cm bronze for Goodwood 'New Concepts'
- 2001 LINES OF TIME 19 cm multiple edition in stainless steel for Wingfield Arts, Suffolk
- 2000/01 TOWARDS THE SKY 5.5 m corten sculpture at Portishead for Crest Nicholson
- 1999 STILL LINES 2.5 m stone and stainless steel sculpture incorporating water at St Peters Hospital, Bristol for the John Pontin Trust
- 1998 THE SILENCE OF SHADOWS 3.3 m bronze for a private residence in Great Barrington, USA
- 1997 SILENT SHADOW 2.4 m bronze sculpture for Linklaters & Paines at 1 Silk St, London
- 1996 CUTTING LINE 4.9 m Corten steel sculpture for Spen Hill Properties sited at Marsh Mills, Plymouth
- 1994 BEYOND SILENCE 2.3 m bronze sculpture for a private site in Washington DC, USA
- 1993 LINE FROM WITHIN 4.6 m bronze sculpture for Royal West of England Academy sited in Castle Park, Bristol

WORKS IN COLLECTIONS

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATE International, London Ballinglen Art Founction, Co. Mayo, Ireland Bristol Schools Arts Services Bristol University British Museum, London Chantrey Bequest, London City of Bristol Museum & Art Gallery Contemporary Arts Society, London Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington DC USA Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea Goodwood Sculpture Park Granville Holdings Plc, London Grosvenor Square Properties, London Gruss & Co, New York, USA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harrison Weir Collection, London Linklaters & Paines, London Nef - Evelyn Stefansson, Washington DC Prior's Court School, Newbury Royal Academy, London Royal West of England Academy John Creasey Museum, Salisbury Sharjar Art Museum UAE Talboys Bequest, Bristol World Wide Business Centres, Philadelphia USA Private collections in Europe and USA. |
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Front cover: FOUND LINE -2 (detail)