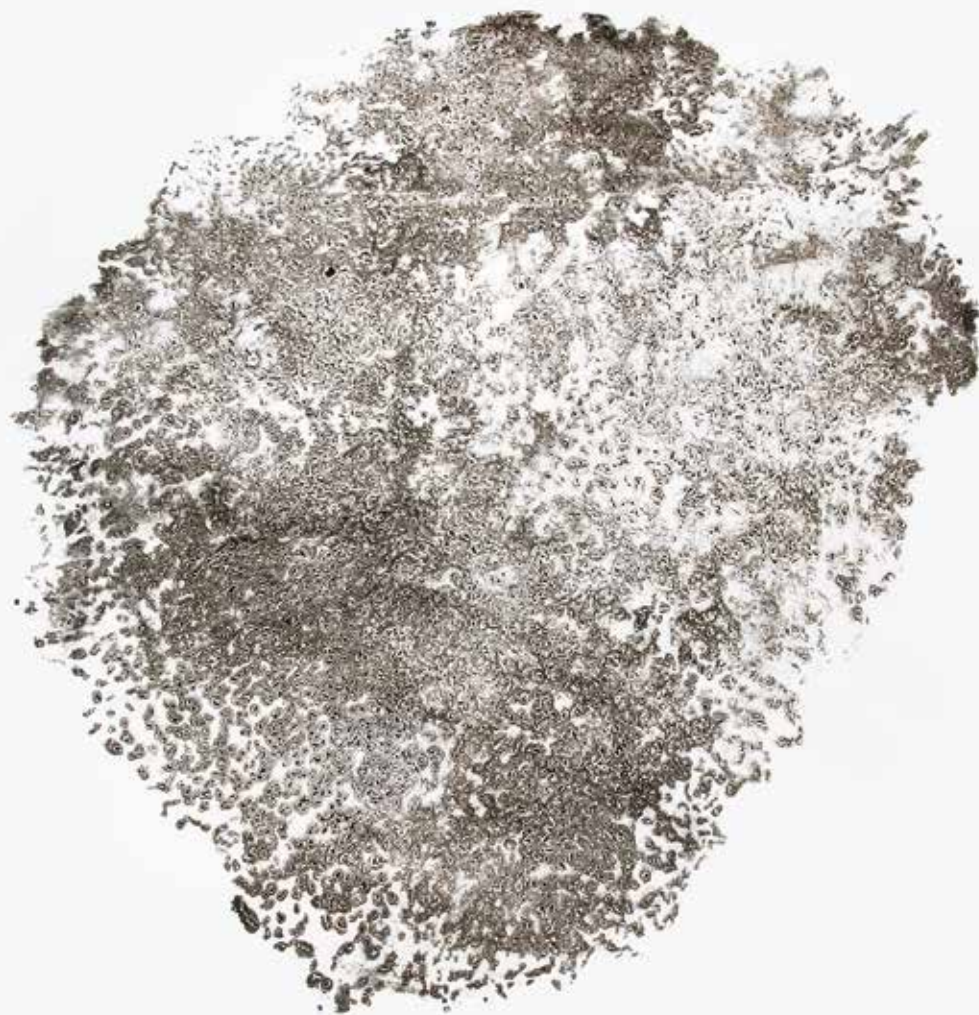


TIM HARRISSON
AS IT WAS IS NOW





36
A Pattern of Life IV, 2013
Etching, Sugar Lift
1/10
120 x 120 cm

TIM HARRISSON
AS IT WAS IS NOW

Saturday 7 April - Sunday 13 May
2018

MESSUMS WILTSHIRE

IN THE SLOW ZONE

Christopher Nicholson

TH slides open the door. Light enters the barn: pale walls, dusty pallets, a concrete floor, also a little dusty. A high ceiling. A broom leans on its handle while the surprised air adjusts itself to our presence. High on the Wiltshire downs, in an untidy group of farm buildings, this quiet place has been TH's studio for more than twenty-five years. In the centre of the studio, there stands a single sculpture. North.

'I'll leave you for a while.'

So here I am, on an ordinary morning in late summer. And here it is, this thing of stone, alone with me. We are on a blind date, of a kind. There is a certain tension waiting to be resolved.

From outside come the lively, chirruping calls of house-martins flying up to their nests, and the steady sigh of the breeze in the leaves of a beech tree. Inside, by contrast, everything is tranquil, but not in a passive way. The quietness seems active and attentive, as it might be in the body of a chapel suddenly opened to public view.

Hard to know where to begin. How to behave. Whether to sit or stand. Whether to go up close or to keep a respectful distance.

The sculpture is composed of three blocks of rippling sandstone, each one an irregular oval. They fit perfectly on top of each other, and rise to the height of about six feet. Several colours are present in different shades, some red, others pink and brown and purple; the overall hue is rich and dusky. My first impression is of a work that holds out the desire for intimacy, even if, right now, it seems a bit aloof. In its northern reticence, it is giving little away. It has a very poised, assured presence.

Silence. On a blind date silence is always a bit disconcerting.

If I'm conscious of its silence, I'm also acutely aware of its stillness. Human beings are never quite still, if only because so much of us is liquid; even when we try to be still, we breathe, we tremble, we move in tiny ways as we respond to the local environment. North seems a monument to stillness, although it too has an old association with liquid. Some two hundred and fifty million years ago, when the world was recovering from one of its mass extinction events, layers of damp sediment composed of particles of sand and grains of quartz or feldspar were compressed and compacted with enormous force. The last traces of liquid were squeezed out. So the stones were made. You can read the history of their stratified formation in the slightly darker lines that run horizontally across their bodies. Are these iron deposits? How much time is marked out by the space between one line and another?

1

North, 2017
St Bee's, Cumbrian
Sandstone



Humans live in fast time. Not as fast as the time of a bird like a house-martin, but weeks and months are significant periods, and a century is as long as any of us is likely to live. Our perceptions are built around that fact. Stones live in the slow zone. For aeon after aeon they remain as they are, their molecular structures frozen, while the millennia slip past without so much as a murmur. Nothing changes or seems even likely to change. To begin to understand the power of this sculpture, I suspect, we have to see it as a creature locked in a long coma. We have to dump our usual sense of time, and instead try to imagine something almost unimaginably slow.

A famous composition by John Cage, *Organ2/ASLP* (As Slow as Possible), addresses the same issue. Just how slow is 'as slow as possible'? A performance of the work, currently in progress in the medieval church of Halberstadt, in Germany, is set to run for six hundred and thirty-nine years. When it began, on September 5th, 2001 (Cage's birthday), it did so with a pause that lasted a full seventeen months, and only then came the vibrations of the first chord. After two and a half years, the chord ended and silence resumed. The idea makes me wonder what the music to this sculpture might be. How long would the silences last? What would the notes sound like? If the sculpture could sing, I guess, it might express astonishment that someone had chosen to disturb its stones in their age-old resting place and to transport them here in a lorry. Why us? Why were we chosen?

There are good reasons why artists are drawn to work in stone. One is surely the elemental quality of stone, its ability to connect us surface-dwellers in a direct way with the body of the earth. Another is that no other material, not paper, parchment, vellum, wood, canvas nor clay – not even metal – approaches

stone for its resilience, its resistance, its intractability. Stone forces the sculptor into a sort of slow zone. I can imagine TH prowling round these sandstones for weeks and months, examining them from different angles and in different lights, drawing them deep into his mind. This is how the work begins: not with a chisel, but with a long meditation that gives rise to a sculpture-shaped intuition that gradually hardens and sets. There is a curious relation between the heavy weight of the actual stones, and the airy lightness that they possess in the artist's imagination. Nothing is lighter than an idea.

As I too prowl around, I start to be preoccupied by the light itself, which arrives from the barn's open doorway



and from a high, cobwebby window. Landing on the sculpture, it explores the complicated colours and surfaces of the stone. It reveals the graininess, and the little imperfections that are somehow satisfying parts of the stone's personality; it picks out the upraised curves of the ripples and leaves the adjacent troughs in shadow.

These mysterious ripples seem to me profoundly interesting. The fact that they are slanting implies that the sculpture could be extended much further, that these stones are merely three of what might be a long and even infinite series. But the real puzzle is that the ripples are there at all. Stone ought not to ripple. Stone is dead and ought to be inert, without any hint of inner movement. Yet the more I stare at them, the more I am intrigued. Putting out a hand to touch them, I am reminded of the ridges and furrows of a ploughed field. Of folds of heavy velvet curtains hanging in a theatre. Of patterns left in wet sand by the ebb and flow of the tide.

Unexpectedly, this last thought leads back to the part that liquid played in the origins of the stones. Like the faint sound waves that astronomers say they can detect from the seconds after the Big Bang, the ripples seem to be echoes of the patterns in the river-sands out of which, so long ago, the stones were formed. They give the sculpture a dynamism, a fluidity, a musicality, and I find myself thinking of TH, with his chisels and rasps, as a composer whose patient work unlocks the inner music of stone. And suddenly, after all, North is not so silent. In its odd, slow fashion, below the usual auditory level, it hums with meaning.

This is perhaps the greatest thrill of the piece: that it sets your mind going. It seems to offer silence, but out of the silence comes a strange and haunting music that might even be part of a very long, slow concert, much longer and slower than the Cage performance, with notes or chords spaced thousands of years apart.

The house martins continue to call outside, and the wind to stir the beech leaves. Stillness and movement, light and weight, silence and music. The long drift of time. 'Once upon a time, somewhere in England....' – did someone write that, or have I made it up? I back off, give the sculpture a nod of thanks, and go to the open doorway.





2
The Oldbury Chapters V
2011
Acrylic and Pastel on Paper
110 x 74 cm



3
As it Was is Now
2018
Jordan's Whitbed,
Portland Stone
240 x 80 x 70 cm



4

The Oldbury Chapters II, 2011
Acrylic and Pastel on Paper
110 x 74 cm

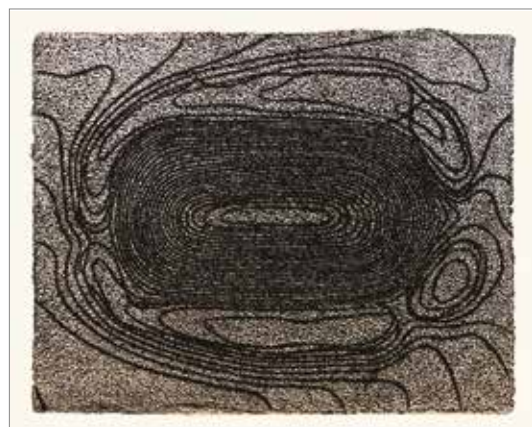
5

Cervairole, 2017
Carrara Marble
175 x 35 x 35 cm





6
The Pitt Rivers Series, South Lodge Camp II, 2009
Charcoal on Paper
72 x 72 cm



7
The Pitt Rivers Series, Handley Down II, 2009
Charcoal on Paper
73 x 94 cm



8
Base Bed, 2017
Chicksgrove Limestone,
'St Bees' Cumberland Sandstone
and Portland Base Bed
53 x 83 x 155 cm



9

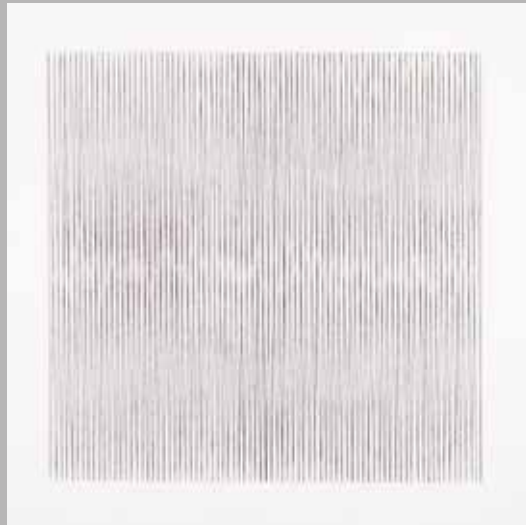
The Oldbury Chapters VI, 2011
Acrylic and Pastel on Paper
110 x 74 cm

10

Jervaulx, 2017
Witton Fell, Yorkshire
Sandstone
180 x 40 x 40 cm



11
A Different Landscape
Part 1, 2015
Etching, Hard Ground
1/10
77 x 77 cm



12
A Different Landscape
Part 2, 2015
Etching, Hard Ground
4/10
77 x 77 cm



13
A Different Landscape Part 3, 2015
Etching, Hard Ground
1/10
77 x 77 cm



14
A Different Landscape Part 4, 2015
Etching, Hard Ground
1/10
77 x 77 cm



15
A Different Landscape Part 5, 2015
Etching, Sugar Lift
1/10
77 x 77 cm





16
Gneiss III, 2006
Etching/Photogravure
60 x 60 cm
Unique



17
Bearing, 1991
Purbeck Limestone
'Spangle'
125 x 260 x 58 cm



18

Return, 2011
Chicksgrove Limestone and Carrara Marble
44 x 60 x 30 cm



19

Untitled, 2014
Purbeck Limestone and Carrara Marble
17 x 19 x 69 cm



20
 The Hurdcott Stone, 2012
 Wiltshire Sandstone
 and Carrara Marble
 77 x 66 x 30 cm



21
 Portland, 2017
 Jordan's Whitbed,
 Portland Stone
 180 x 40 x 40 cm



22
 Silent Rhythm, 2001
 Portland Stone
 140 x 360 x 60 cm



23
 Root, 2006
 Belgian Black Carboniferous
 Limestone
 143 x 40 x 28 cm



24

Rotherely Stones 1 and 2, 2016
Purbeck Limestone 'Marble'
131 x 181 x 5 cm



25

Rotherely Stone 3, 2009
Purbeck Limestone 'Marble'
5 x 135 x 180 cm



26
A Single Vision, 2018
Chicks Grove Limestone
30 x 30 x 30 cm



27
Double Vision, 2004
Carrara Marble
88 x 122 x 75 cm



28
Shadow II, 2018
Purbeck Limestone and Carrara Marble
47 x 47 x 18 cm



29
Carrara, 2014
Carrara Marble
125 x 52 x 46 cm



30
Hinterland I
2010 - 2017
Acrylic and Charcoal
on Paper
124 x 100 cm



31
Hinterland II
2010 - 2017
Acrylic and Graphite
on Paper
124 x 100 cm



32
Hinterland III
Acrylic and Graphite on Paper
124 x 100 cm

33
End Piece, 2015
Ham Stone
127 x 130 x 57 cm





2018
APRIL 7TH TO MAY
13TH: SOLO EXHIBITION,
MESSUMS, WILTSHIRE

ONE/ TWO PERSON
EXHIBITIONS:

2015
LAND/STONE/
COLOUR, CANARY WHARF
LONDON

2014
BEARING, THE CLOSE, ELY
CATHEDRAL

2012
THE OLDBURY CHAPTERS,
RABLEY CONTEMPORARY
DRAWING CENTRE,
MARLBOROUGH

2011
MARKS THROUGH THE
LANDSCAPE – CRESWELL
CRAGS, CRESWELL CRAGS
MUSEUM

2010
DRAWINGS FOR A
GEOLOGICAL ROOM,
ATRIUM GALLERY,
BOURNEMOUTH
UNIVERSITY

MARKS THROUGH THE
LANDSCAPE, SALISBURY
AND SOUTH WILTSHIRE
MUSEUM

2009
LAND MARKS, RABLEY
CONTEMPORARY DRAWING
CENTRE, MARLBOROUGH

2007
SCULPTURE AND WORKS
ON PAPER, THE EAGLE
GALLERY, LONDON

2005
PRINTS, THE JENNIFER
NEWMAN STUDIO,
LONGBRIDGE DEVERILL,
WILTSHIRE

2001
NEW STONE CARVINGS,
NEW ARTS CENTRE, ROCHE
COURT

2000
RECUMBENT
STONES, DORSET COUNTY
HALL, DORCHESTER

1999
STONE WORKS, GALERIE
SEBASTIANSKAPELLE, ULM,
GERMANY

1997
SOUNDING, WINCHESTER
CATHEDRAL

1996
THE MATTER OF
LANDSCAPE, SIX CHAPEL
ROW CONTEMPORARY ART,
BATH

1995
RUSSELL-COATES MUSEUM,
BOURNEMOUTH

1993
FOUR STONE
SCULPTURES, NEW ARTS
CENTRE, LONDON

1991
RECENT SCULPTURES, NEW
ARTS CENTRE, LONDON

1989
ARTSITE GALLERY, BATH

1988
HALESWORTH GALLERY
SUFFOLK (PRINTS AND
DRAWINGS)

1984
SALISBURY ARTS CENTRE,
SOUTH HILL PARK ARTS
CENTRE, BRACKNELL

THE FLAXMAN GALLERY,
STOKE ON TRENT

PURDY POMEROY GALLERY,
LONDON

GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

2016
‘BRONZE AND STONE’,
MESSUMS WILTSHIRE

‘IMAGINED LANDSCAPES’,
THE ROYAL WEST OF
ENGLAND ACADEMY,
BRISTOL

2015
‘DRAWN’, THE ROYAL WEST
OF ENGLAND ACADEMY,
BRISTOL

2014
THE ROYAL ACADEMY
SUMMER EXHIBITION

‘CONTEMPORARY
PRINTS’, THE ART STABLE,
BLANDFORD DORSET

2013
‘THE SCULPTED STONE’,
THE GARDEN GALLERY,
STOCKBRIDGE, HAMPSHIRE

‘STEWARDS OF THE
EARTH’, SARUM COLLEGE,
SALISBURY

LONDON ART FAIR
ISLINGTON, THE FINE ART
SOCIETY, LONDON

2012
CARVING IN BRITAIN 1910
TO NOW, THE FINE ART
SOCIETY, LONDON

THE ROYAL WEST OF
ENGLAND ACADEMY
ANNUAL OPEN EXHIBITION

2011
‘THE FIGURE IN THE
LANDSCAPE’ WINCHESTER
DISCOVERY CENTRE

‘SCULPTURE SHOW’ ADAM
GALLERY, LONDON

LONDON PRINT FAIR,
RABLEY CONTEMPORARY
DRAWING CENTRE

2010
LONDON ART FAIR
ISLINGTON, RABLEY
CONTEMPORARY DRAWING
CENTRE

2009
‘AN EXCHANGE OF LIGHT ‘
SLADERS YARD, BRIDPORT,

DORSET

‘ELEMENTS TRILOGY’
RABLEY CONTEMPORARY
DRAWING CENTRE,
MARLBOROUGH

2008
‘TOUCHING THE DIVINE’
MICHAELHOUSE CENTRE,
CAMBRIDGE

STONE, SALISBURY ART
CENTRE

MILLSTREAM SCULPTURE
GARDEN, BISHOPSTROW,
WILTSHIRE

2005
STONE, CANARY WHARF

THE CASS FOUNDATION,
PERCY STREET, LONDON

THE HANNAH PESCHER
GALLERY, SUSSEX

2004
LINE AND FORM, STEPHEN
LACEY GALLERY, LONDON

SCULPTURE IN THE
GARDEN, HAROLD MARTIN
BOTANIC GARDEN,
UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

2003
ART 34’03 BASEL,
SWITZERLAND

2002/04
THE ROYAL ACADEMY
SUMMER SHOW

2001
BOURNEMOUTH
EXHIBITION, ARTIST’S LOAN
EXHIBITION

2000
BOURNEMOUTH
UNIVERSITY, ARTIST’S LOAN
EXHIBITION

SHADOWS ON STONE,
SHERBORNE ABBEY,
SHERBORNE

1999
THE SHAPE OF THE
CENTURY, SALISBURY
CATHEDRAL CLOSE,
(TOURED TO CANARY
WHARF, LONDON)

THE PLEASURE OF
INFLUENCE DEANS COURT,
WIMBORNE

1998
ART 29’98, BASEL,
SWITZERLAND

THE STICK, SOUTHERN
ARTS REGIONAL TOURING
EXHIBITION

1997
ART 28’97 BASEL,
SWITZERLAND

LEWES SCULPTURE TRAIL,
ORGANIZED BY LEWES
COUNCIL

1996
ART 27’96 BASEL,
SWITZERLAND

1994
ARCO, MADRID, SPAIN

ART 25’ ‘94 BASEL,
SWITZERLAND

THE ORANGERY, NEW ART
CENTRE, ROCHE COURT

SUMMER DISPLAY, CITY ART
GALLERY, SOUTHAMPTON

1993
NEW ABSTRACTION
COOPERS & LYBRAND
BUILDING. LONDON

A SCULPTURE’S
LANDSCAPE NEW ART
CENTRE, LONDON

1993/2008
YORKSHIRE SCULPTURE
PARK, BRETTON HALL,
WAKEFIELD

1991
THE CLOSE SALISBURY
CATHEDRAL, WILTSHIRE

ECONOMIST PLAZA,
ST JAMES, LONDON

ART 23 ‘92 BASEL,
SWITZERLAND

ART ON THE WATERFRONT,
SOUTHAMPTON CIVIC
CENTRE

1990/08
NEW ART CENTRE, ROCHE
COURT, WILTSHIRE

1987
RUFFORD OPEN, RUFFORD
SCULPTURE PARK,
MANSFIELD

COASTLINES, THE TOWNER
MUSEUM, EASTBOURNE

SCULPTURE OPEN,
MINORIES, COLCHESTER

1986
ART FOR THE GARDEN,
THE HANNAH PESCHER
GALLERY, SUSSEX

1985
STILL LIFE A NEW LIFE,
HARRIS MUSEUM,
PRESTON

1984
R.I.B.A SCULPTURE COURT,
LONDON

1981
SALISBURY LIBRARY

WORKS ON EXHIBITION:

REFLECTION I, HAROLD
MARTIN BOTANIC GARDEN,
UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

A PATTERN OF LIFE, THIRD
COURT, CHRIST’S COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE

RECUMBENT STONES III, IV
& V, DORSET COUNTY HALL,
DORCHESTER

MEMORIES OF LANDSCAPE
V & VI, BOURNEMOUTH
UNIVERSITY,
BOURNEMOUTH

END PIECE, THE NEW ART
CENTRE, ROCHE COURT,
SALISBURY

TIDE AND SILENT RHYTHM,
RABLEY CONTEMPORARY
DRAWING CENTRE,
MARLBOROUGH

COMMISSIONS:

2010
SOUNDING, RE -INSTALLED
WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL

2005
COLUMN, WOODFORD
VALLEY, WILTSHIRE

2002
PEGASUS, CHATSWORTH
ESTATE, DERBYSHIRE

RING, WINGFIELD ARTS,
EYE, SUFFOLK

2000
REFLECTION, EPSOM
COLLEGE, SURREY

1995
HORIZON, THE RUSSELL
COATES MUSEUM,
BOURNEMOUTH

GRANITE SCULPTURE II,
SOUTHAMPTON AIRPORT

SEA EDGE, WEST PARK
HOUSE, SOUTHAMPTON

GRANITE SCULPTURE I,
NORFOLK

1990
RELATIONSHIP II, SUSSEX

GRANITE SCULPTURE I,
NORFOLK

RELATIONSHIP I, NEW ART
CENTRE, ROCHE

1989
PORTAL, MILLFIELD
SCHOOL, SOMERSET

PUBLICATIONS:

2013
‘A DISTANT PLACE’ IN
COLLABORATION WITH
SILVIE TURNER

1996
‘TIM HARRISSON: CARVED
TIME’ BY ANDREW WILSON,
CONTEMPORARY ART
MAGAZINE, VOL. 3

AWARDS:

2008
SECOND PRIZE,
‘TOUCHING THE DIVINE’,
MICHAELHOUSE CENTRE,
CAMBRIDGE

BURSARIES:

1994
SOUTHERN ARTS: TO
STUDY PORTUGUESE
STONE AND MARBLE
PRODUCTION

LECTURES:

1998
FOSTERING HIGH QUALITY
IN THE VISUAL ARTS

SOUTHERN ARTS
ASSOCIATION BOARD

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:

2013
THE BRITISH MUSEUM

2012
THE CRESWELL
SERIES, THE
CRESWELL HERITAGE
TRUST, WORKSOP,
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

1999
SOUNDING, WINCHESTER
CATHEDRAL.

1989
RED HOUSE MUSEUM,
CHRISTCHURCH, DORSET

**CORPORATE
COLLECTIONS:**

2004
BRITISH LAND

**BIOGRAPHY AND
EDUCATION:**

2012
ELECTED TO THE ROYAL
WEST OF ENGLAND
ACADEMY

1988
SCULPTOR IN RESIDENCE,
RED HOUSE MUSEUM,
CHRISTCHURCH

ORGANIZED BY THE
HAMPSHIRE SCULPTURE
TRUST

1980/83
LECTURER IN ADULT
EDUCATION (PAINTING AND
DRAWING) FOR WILTSHIRE
AND DORSET COUNTY
COUNCILS

1976/80
WORKED AS WOODSMAN
AND WELDER

1975
BYAM-SHAW SCHOOL OF
FINE ART

1970/73
NORWICH ART SCHOOL

1969/70
HAMMERSMITH COLLEGE
OF ART

1952
BORN QUENDON, ESSEX

Photo credits

Iain Kemp
David Cousins
Steven Drewett
Steve Russell Studios



35

Plough 1999

Purbeck Limestone

'Marble'

29 x 90 x 51 cm

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