



Cass Sculpture  
Foundation



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## Bill Woodrow

Sitting on History, 2003

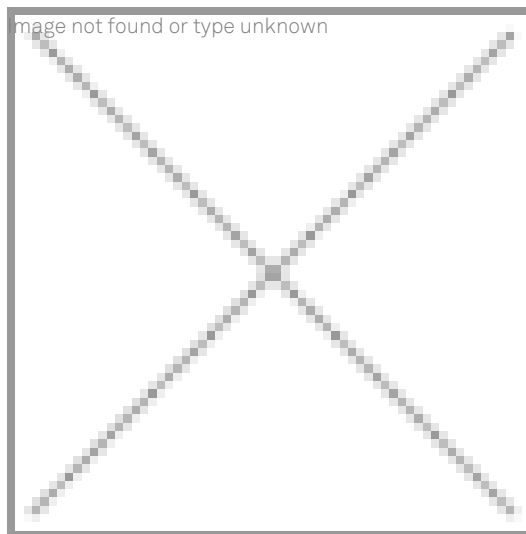
Bronze

100 W x 150H x 200D cm

Not available for sale



*Sitting on History* was proposed in response to a commission first discussed in 1990 and to Woodrow's Tate Gallery exhibition in 1996, which gave him the opportunity to realise a sculpture which could function as a seat. Woodrow had made three maquettes based on a book form: one with coins as the seat backs, another featuring two crows on the spine of the book fighting over a gold coin and this version, entitled *Sitting on History*. Woodrow's idea was to have a sculpture that was only completed conceptually and formally when a person sat on it. *Sitting on History*, with its ball and chain, refers to the book as a receptacle of information. History is filtered through millions of pages of writing, making the book the major vehicle for research and study. Woodrow proposes that although one absorbs knowledge, one appears to have great difficulty in changing one's behaviour as a result. The real books from which the original maquettes were made came from a box of books given to Bill Woodrow by a London bookseller, discarded, as they were no longer saleable. To Woodrow's wry amusement, in this haul were three volumes on the history of the Labour Party, which he chose to use for the maquettes. Woodrow finds books one of the most powerful democratic tools in the world and still the most advanced form of communication





Bill Woodrow's early work was made from materials found in dumps, used car lots and scrap yards, partially embedded in plaster and appearing as if they had been excavated. He went on to use large consumer goods, such as refrigerators and cars, cutting the sheet metal and allowing the original structure to remain identifiable, with the cut out attached to the original form. His later compositional works sought to arrange unrelated objects together, altering them in the process and creating new suggestions of meaning. Woodrow achieves this by disassembling familiar, everyday objects in order to consequently reassemble them into new compositional contexts often to surrealistic and uncanny effect.

Bill Woodrow was born near Henley, Oxfordshire in 1948. He studied at Winchester College of Art in 1968, CSM, London in 1971 and Chelsea School of Art from 1972. Bill Woodrow currently divides his time between London and Hampshire. A selection of past and forthcoming solo exhibitions includes: New Art Centre, Roche Court, Salisbury, Wiltshire (2016); WHEREVER I LAY MY HAT - SCULPTURES AND DRAWINGS; Sabine Wachters Fine Arts, Knokke, Belgium (2015); ON THE ROCKS. AGAIN, shared sculptures with Richard Deacon; New Art Centre Sculpture Park and Gallery, Roche Court, Salisbury, Wiltshire (2014); BILL WOODROW RA, Royal Academy of Arts, London (2013); LEAD ASTRAY with Richard Deacon, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield; New Art Centre Sculpture Park and Gallery, Roche Court, Salisbury, Wiltshire (2004); REGARDLESS OF HISTORY; Fourth Plinth, Trafalgar Square, London; MONOGRAPHIC ROOM; Tate Modern, London (2000); SITTING ON HISTORY; British Library, London (1998); FOOLS' GOLD; Duveen Galleries, Tate Gallery, London; Camden Arts Centre, London; IN AWE OF THE PAWNBROKER, Oriel, Cardiff; Chisenhale Gallery, London (1993); BILL WOODROW: SCULPTURE (1993); BILL WOODROW: SCULPTURE; XXI Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil; CHRISTMAS TREE, Tate Gallery, London (1988); The Whitechapel Art Gallery (1972). Woodrow was one of the finalists for the Turner Prize in 1986. In 2000, his work, 'Regardless of History' was commissioned for the Fourth Plinth, Trafalgar Square, London.

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