

A SELECTION OF SCULPTURES BY CLAUDS ØRNTOFT

The sculptures of Claus Ørntoft deal with form, movement, hidden energy, and humour. His animal sculptures often seem to be about to break through the surface of the stones, or they have in fact already broken through the hard material. Lions, wolves, and cattle, fluffy, bear-like fantasy animals, and fish that seem to appear out of the deep blue ocean are all part of his artistic universe. Claus Ørntoft's sculptures are full of tension, liveliness and a great deal of humour, such as the Sea Creature in Hirtshals, gasping its breath so heavily that its tail is twisting and turning, or Belly Up, lazily and playfully dazing in the Sun.

Ørntoft, Claus. Human Creature (Menneskedyr), Skagen Landevej, Bjergby

The artist calls this, "Such an odd man creature". It sits on its crooked pedestal, and looks across the road. Some may do a double-take as they rush past when they see this man creature.

Ørntoft, Claus. Two Animals / Little Space (To dyr / lille plads), 1994. Søndergade, Lendum

The two animals are on their way out of their respective blocks of stone in front of the local supermarket. One almost expects them to rise up and go running off into the landscape. Until then, one can take a rest on the bench between them- if one dares.

Ørntoft, Claus. Thundercalf (Tordenkalv), 1999. Nørrebro, Bindslev

The little calf seems to be on its way out of the rock. It is full of energy, and perhaps a bit dangerous. The artist finds inspiration among the imaginary creatures of the middle ages, and with very simple means, seems to wake the power of the natural stone to life.

Ørntoft, Claus. Sea Creature (Havdyr), 2005. Hirtshals Gl. Rådhus, Jørgen Fibigers Gade 20, Hirtshals

Claus Ørntoft's animal sculptures are imaginary creatures that share a heritage with the dangerous gargoyles created for churches by medieval stone masons. This one is a fish that seems to be longing for the sea.

Ørntoft, Claus. Animal Cry (Råbende dyr), 1996. Nørrebro, Hjørring

This little animal stands all alone on a busy corner. One feels a bit sorry for it, and one is led to think that this creature is perhaps not the only thing in our busy lives that might need some extra attention.

Ørntoft, Claus. Sculpture Bench (Skulpturbænk), 1993. Østergade, Hjørring

This bench sculpture features a seat that rests upon the head and back of a sheep- or goat-like creature, whose back seems, in genuine medieval style, to belong to a much stronger and more dangerous creature. The bench has a latent energy and power.

Ørntoft, Claus. Field of Suspense (Spændingsfelt), 2003. Parallelvej / Jernbanegade, Hjørring

Two almost identical imaginary creatures look at each other across a busy road. Their tense glances connect them visually, and create the suspense of the title.

Ørntoft, Claus. Ram And Volute (Vædder og volut), 1991. Vendiavej, Hjørring

A volute is a curved architectural element that tops columns, especially in ancient Greece and Rome. In this sculpture, a curved volute is placed next to a stylized ram's horn which naturally shares a similar curving shape.

Ørntoft, Claus. Belly Up (Bugvendt), 2003. Vrå Skole, Indskolingen, Vestre Skolevej, Vrå

This friendly beast that shows its belly and invites one to climb on it, has a special talent: it can tell if one is lying! The artist says, one just needs to lay one's hand in its mouth and if it bites down- bad news, you've lied. Try it if you dare!