JACQUES LIMOUSIN Wessex Mudlark

New Art Centre, Roche Court Sculpture Park 13 September – 2 November 2014 I always had a taste, which will no doubt seem curious to you, a taste, more or less disguised, for waste and rubbish.

This line from the French poet and novelist Raymond Queneau, Les Enfants du limon, sums up the approach and the passion of the artist Jacques Limousin. For more than fifty years, Limousin has developed a taste for rubbish, collecting and then assembling objects, finds and remains in often delightful and surprising ways, giving waste a new life as art.

The seashore has always been Limousin's favourite hunting ground and he has trawled the beaches of Le Havre, Venice and Île de Ré for flotsam and jetsam, collecting what he found on the surface of the sand. More recently he has extended the scope of his explorations to England and since the 1990s he has explored the banks of the Thames collecting the detritus of London's past. Flea Markets, streets, fields, and now eBay, are equally good resources for him. The sculptures presented here in the Artists House at the New Art Centre are the result of his most recent excursions and comprise his latest finds made in Wiltshire, walking through the park at Roche Court and on a visit to Wessex Archaeology.

The sculptures are typical of the general framework of Limousin's creative logic (the series of magnifying glasses, for example), with his everyday life (the earthenware plates made in Sheffield), his engineering studies (industrial waste) or with his other great passion (collecting African sculpture).

Dr Elisabeth Vitou Art Historian



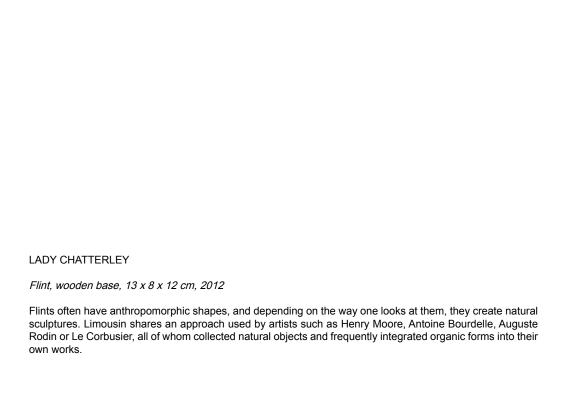
Since the dawn of time, mankind has fashioned and altered raw materials to create meaningful objects. These objects, in turn, found themselves central to the workings of societies and in the developmental trajectory from tribes, through chiefdoms and kingdoms, to great civilisations, many came to exhibit a ritualised significance inseparable from the customs and ceremonies in which they were a key component. And we have curated for as long as we have created, treasuring selected objects of ancestors and enemies alike whilst at the same time disposing of, depositing, and discarding others with or without meaning.

With an antiquarian fetishism the centuries approaching the Enlightenment saw the drawing together of collections of both the alien and the bizarre which, in acts of conscious nationalism were migrated into the showcases of the emerging museums. Here the wider world could cast a marvelling eye upon and gaze incredulously at the mysterious forms presented to them, wondering at the lost and hidden meanings. Imagination alone was the vehicle by which such objects were associated with a narrative past and our place in the present.

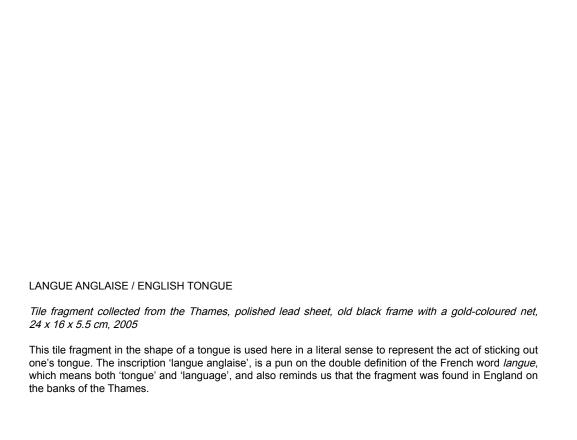
Today the artefact has become the primary medium through which we explore the physical past of societies beyond text-aided horizons, as well as the worlds of those people in more immediate remembrance. Archaeologists have found ways in which to provide object-driven narratives, stories from the earth, from collections, assemblages and distributions. In the process, we have corralled objects into typologies, chronologies and catalogues. Theirs has become a narrative of processes; processes have become practices which in turn are interpreted as the rituals through which we express identity and a sense of the human self. As social scientists we have constructed cultural, economic, political and ideological paradigms for past societies, all from the cumulative evidence presented to us by objects. The findings of generations of archaeologists, be they antiquarians, excavators, mud-larkers, beach combers or hobbyist metal-detectorists, have become incarcerated in theoretical, conjectural and reconstructed pasts, themselves abstracted models of the human experience.

What the artist Jacques Limousin does is to take the found object, remove it from the dogmatic contexts of social theory, and to place it once again centre stage in the study of the human condition. For Limousin, the Artists House at Roche Court becomes his own 'cabinet of curiosities'. Here, he invites us to read off a more direct association with humankind and to see the object as a thing of beauty in its own right, in its perfect unquestionable form. In allowing mute objects to speak thus, to inspire their own narrative and to express their own sense of being, we are provided with a timely reminder that what sets humanity apart is the artefact: something taken from raw material, fashioned by the human hand, cherished and, in the final phase of its biographical trajectory, discarded. Dr Alexander Langlands

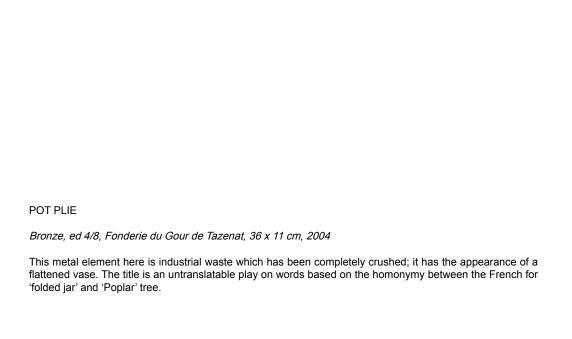
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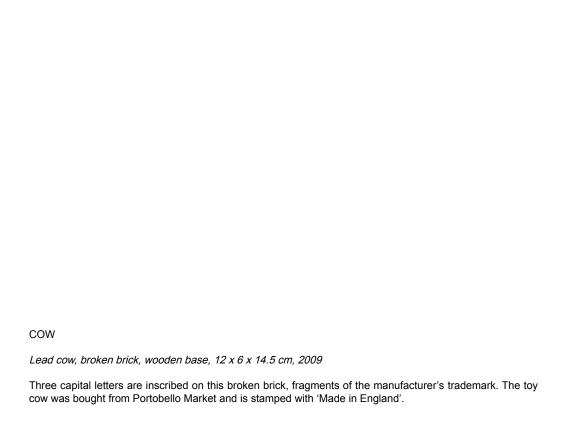








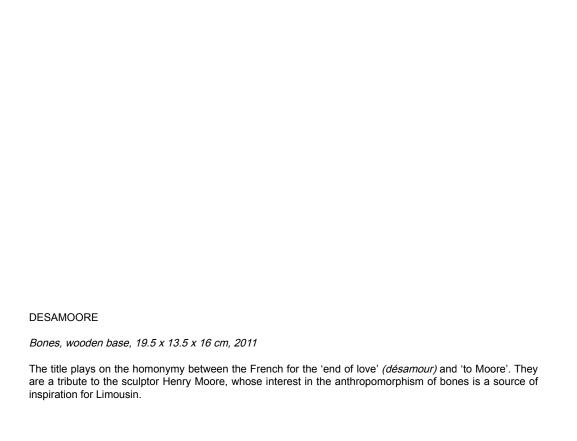






LA VUE Tin figures, magnifying glass, wooden box, lead sheet, 18.5 x 14 x 13.5 cm, 2003 This small installation is an illustration of the French writer Raymond Roussel's book, La Vue. In part of this poem, written in 1903, Roussel imagines in great detail what might be seen in a tiny jewel on a souvenir penholder. Roussel was not content with describing what we actually see but raises questions about the very nature of description itself. The use of the photograph and the magnifying glass operates in a similar way, altering scale and our sense of perception of another world.





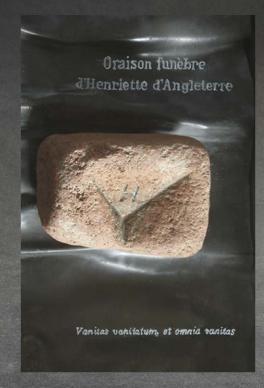


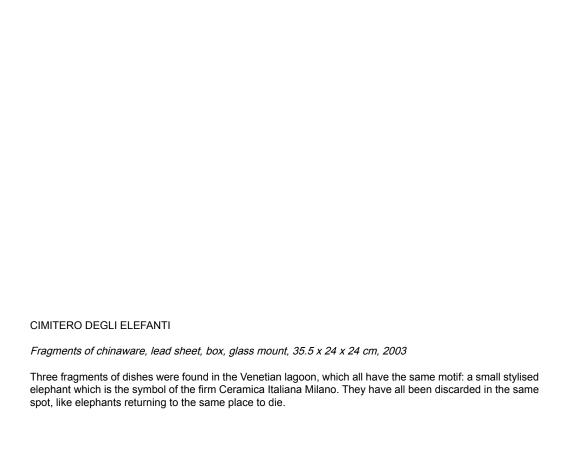
NIL Fragments of clay pipes, wooden box, glass mount, 59.5 x 26 x 6.5 cm, 2000 The bowl parts of clay pipes evoke images of Egyptian Pharaohs wearing the Hedjet (the white crown of South Egypt and part of the Pschent) and endowed with false beards. Between the pipes are painted the letters N I L. In French, nil has two different meanings: it refers to the river Nile but is also a famous manufacturer of cigarette papers. The irregularities in the glass mount suggest the waters which re-conceal fragments at each tide of the Thames.



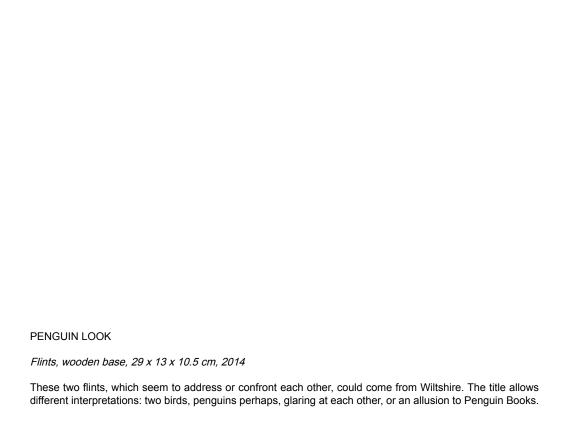
ORATION FOR THE FUNERAL OF HENRIETTA MARIA OF ENGLAND Box, lead sheet, brick, beaten glass mount, 52 x 21 x 11 cm, 2004 From a fragment of brick collected in the Thames resting on a lead lining, Limousin has created a memorial for Queen Henrietta Maria of England; the capital V imprinted on the brick suggests her sex while the letter H is her initial. The daughter of Henri IV of France and Marie de Médici, Henrietta Maria returned home following the execution of her husband Charles I. At her funeral in St. Denis in 1670, the theologian and Bishop J. B. Bossuet gave a famous oration from which the words Vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas are taken and engraved on the glass.







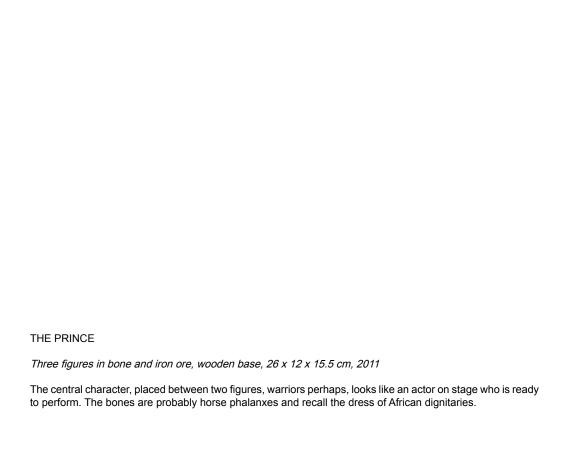












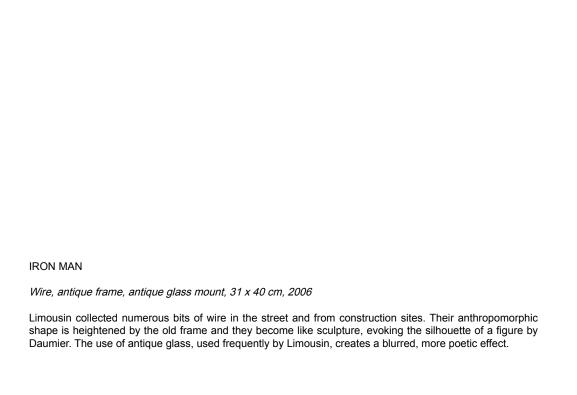
















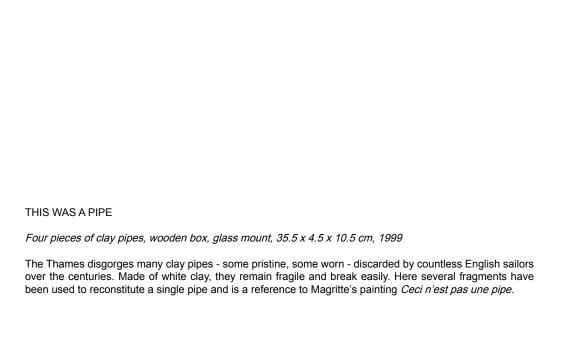




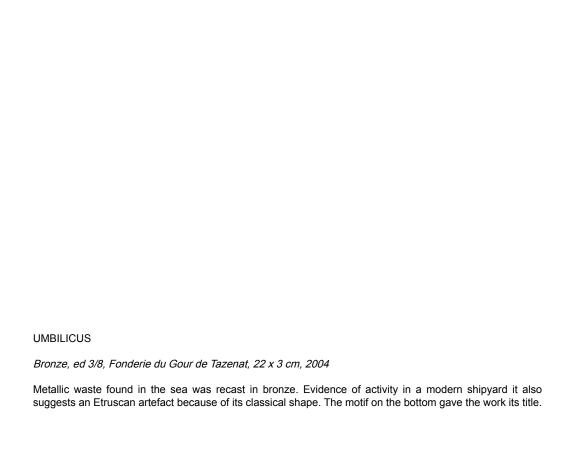


LE SCULPTEUR ET SON MODELE Iron ore, wooden base, magnifying glass, mobile, 14 x 13 x 19 cm, 2010 Limousin found this vein of native iron ore at the foot of a cliff in Île de Ré. Found iron ore often has anthropomorphic or geometrical forms. Using a magnifying glass here allows the viewer to focus and to change the scale of the figures, thereby entering into the scene. Limousin also found some iron ore in meadows at Roche Court

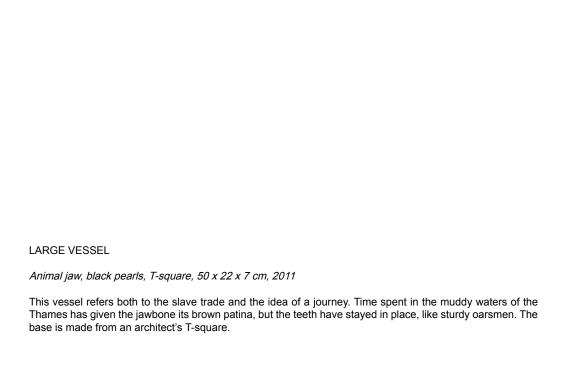




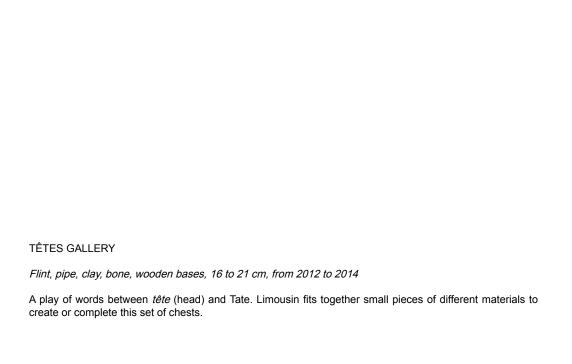














LiMouSin in NewartcentrE Toy, flint, 18 x 39 x 25 cm, 2014 This toy railway carriage of the London Midland and Scottish Railway was bought on eBay. The LMS railway company was founded on 1 January 1923 and was, at the time, the world's largest transport company. The letters LMS also suggest LiMouSin's name and NE, is both the London and North Eastern Railway and the first and the last letter of New Art Centre. The two flints have been collected in Roche Court meadows and together suggest the sculptor and his model.







JACQUES LIMOUSIN

Sculptor, architect DPLG Professor Académie Julian Penninghen, Paris

Lives and works in Paris

Selected solo exhibitions

New Art Centre, Roche Court, Wiltshire, 2014

River works, The Crystal, Thames Festival, September 2014

Casino Venier, Institut culturel français in Venice, Italy, 2013

Transparences, loupes et miroirs, Galerie L'Aiguillage, Paris 2013

Hot Art Fair, Basel, Switzerland, June 2010

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Dualité, Galerie I'Aiguillage, Paris, 2005

Dualité, Galerie Brun L'Eglise, Paris, 2005

2 x 54 sculptures-objets, Ecole spéciale d'architecture, Paris, 1998

Limousin, Institut Français Tokyo, Japan, 1993

Galerie J.-P. Harter, Paris, 1991

Galerie 1900-2000, Paris, 1989

Portes ouvertes des Frigos, Paris 13, annual exhibition 1989

45 sculptures-objets, Ecole spéciale d'architecture, Paris, 1987

Selected group exhibitions

TOOG, Ibiza, Spain, 2013

Espace Caroline Corre, château de Verderonne, 2012

Paris, Patrimoine des arts, Paris, 2010

Les Stèles de la création, Eglise de La Madeleine, Paris, spring-summer 2009

Queneau / Blavier, Musée de Verviers, Belgium, 2003

Ombre de sièges, Salon des Artistes Décorateurs, Carrousel du Louvre, Paris, 2002

Histoires Naturelles. Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle. Paris. 2002

Hommage à Henri Michaux. Paris. 1999

Association Florence, Paris, 1998

En forme de poisson, Musée Océanographique, Monaco, 1997

Les portraits d'Ubu, itinerant exhibition Bruxelles, Namur, Belgium, 1997 Hommage à Raymond Queneau, itinerant exhibition, Auxerre, Dieppe, Evreux,

Le Havre, Levallois-Perret, Villeneuve-sur-Yonne... from 1996 to 2003

3 x 91, Limousin, Rémus, Mitrofanoff, Chapelle de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1994

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www.limousin-sculpteur.com
www.newartcentre.uk.com

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