



**RECLAMATION**

Edward  
Cartwright

'Everything has a story, which only ends, when change is impossible' (JD Francis)

Edward Cartwright's impressive, contemporary steel sculptures are both evocative and enigmatic. The work is easily recognisable as figurative, but holds an abstract quality, lending a narrative of fantasy and story telling, and of worlds beyond. The often whimsical characters lead the viewer into a world of possibility.

Cartwright will reclaim metal objects, such as cutlery and other materials, and also use traditional steel sheeting and blown glass, to construct an array of beautiful and sensual pieces of work that make you stand up and take notice. Visually, links to Dada and the Surrealists and Kurt Schwitters are evident in the playful nature of the work, particularly with 'Bird' and 'Bust'.

Other pieces such as 'Pods' and 'Sketch Of A Woman' are part of a new body of work which is ongoing, where Cartwright is exploring materials, process and nature.

Cartwright lives and works in the West Midlands.

JD Francis

## Artist Statement

Cover image courtesy Edward Cartwright

[DaphneFrancisGallery.com](http://DaphneFrancisGallery.com)

## Early Beginnings

I grew up in Stourbridge, West Midlands, always enjoying art in school (and at home) but always expecting at some point I would have to study something else and get a proper job.

After taking an excellent Foundation course at Stourbridge College where I was given free range in a large and well stocked workshop I went on to study Contemporary Crafts at University College Falmouth in Cornwall, a beautiful place to learn and make art. After 3 years of trying my hand at the wide range of techniques and materials made available to us, I moved back to the West Midlands in 2008.

## Work

The first pieces I produced after graduating from Falmouth were made from recycled cutlery. Driven by a need for cheap resources and armed with a small single phase MIG welder I began making beetles and dragonflies out of knives and forks sourced from charity shops, this then developed into birds culminating with a swan with wings made from over 200 knives in 2013.

During this time I worked for Sculptor Tim Tolkien on several public commissions allowing me to further develop my skills with steel. I also started working for Birmingham Rep Theater fabricating scenery, giving me a range of new skills in carpentry and mixed media.

The Cutlery project morphed into the 'Man in The Metal' project (2014/15) in which I pulled together human forms from the pieces of cutlery. The work attempted to play on the notion that we leave an imprint of ourselves in the everyday objects we design and utilize, both in the ergonomics of their construction and in the aesthetic choices of their design. These objects can be used in turn to piece together an image of ourselves much like an archaeologist re-creating a civilization from pottery fragments.

“This artist threatens the boundaries of what is functional design and what is artistic product, confusing both and expanding the notion of the ornamental” Ornamental Status III Exhibition catalogue, March 2013

I continue to build up a body of work exploring materials and form. Whilst there is no single overarching inspiration linking all of my work, common themes that emerge include an exploration of materials, our relationship to those materials and the relationship of those materials to each other.

Currently I am developing new work with Blown Glass and Steel in the 'Pods' project and continuing to develop my figurative work with 'Sketches in Steel'.

I am heavily influenced by the post industrial landscape of the Black Country, a part of the UK named after the abundance of mining and manufacture that once dominated the area and covered everything in a blanket of soot. Much of this industry is now gone with mines and factories being reclaimed by nature.

This encroachment of nature on the man-made took root in my mind early on and has bled into many aspects of my work. Other influences include our own relationship to the man made materials around us and the inter-relationship of materials with each other.





'Steel Trumpeter' Mild Steel Sculpture





'Pods', Blue' 2016 Steel and Glass Sculpture



'Pods' 2016 Steel and Glass Sculpture

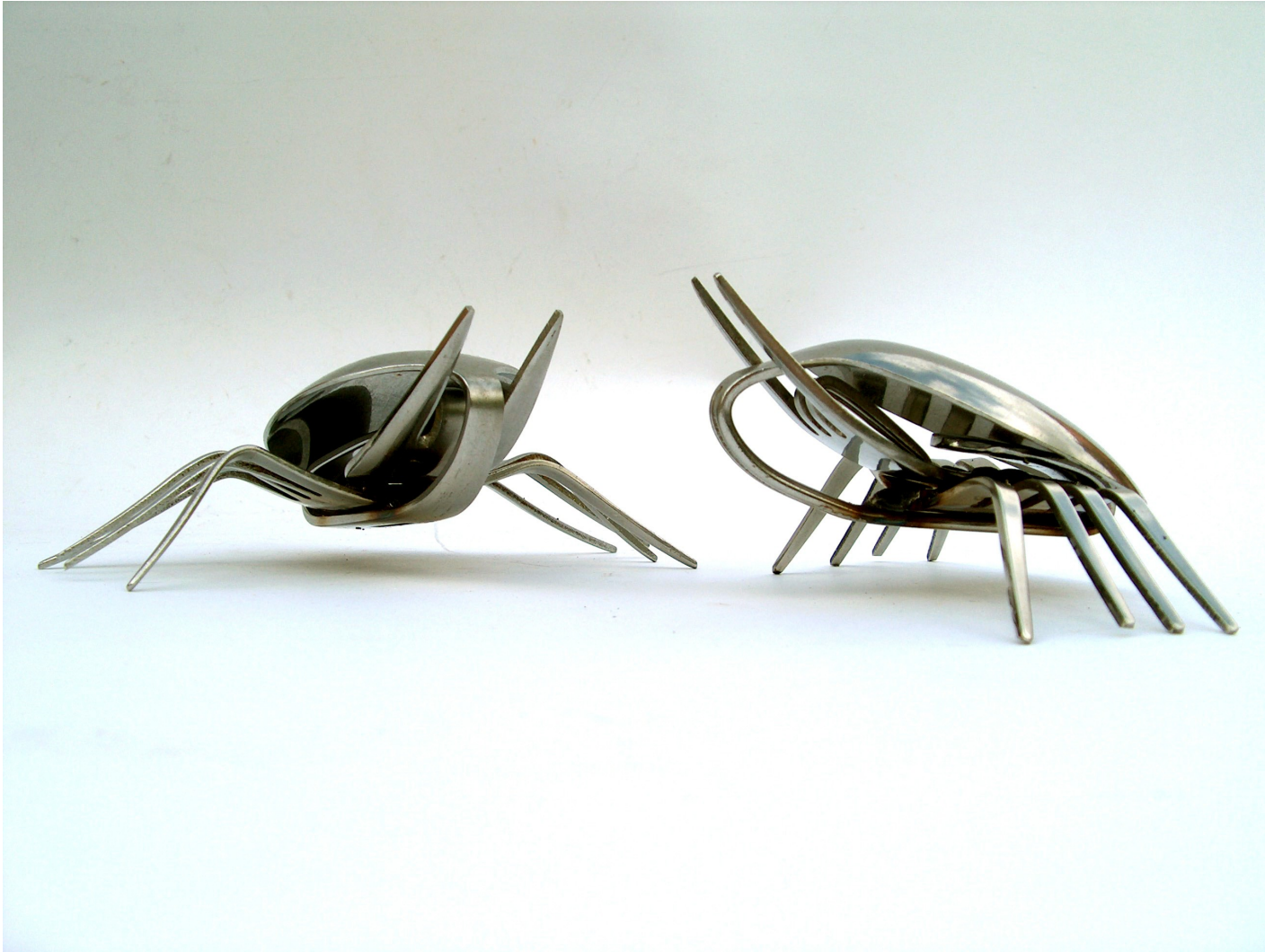


'Sketch Of A Woman' 2017 Steel Sculpture





'Swan' Recycled Cutlery Sculpture



'Beetle' Recycled Cutlery Sculpture



'Bird' Recycled Cutlery Sculpture





'Bust' Recycled Cutlery Sculpture



'Woman In The Metal' Recycled Cutlery Sculpture

## **Exhibitions**

Within the Land Exhibition  
Showcase Gallery Birmingham October 2016

Mental Spaces Summer Exhibition  
Bantock House August 2016

Dudley Arts Council Summer Exhibition  
Stourbridge 2016

Newhampton Arts Fair March 2016  
Wolverhampton

Asylum Art Gallery Solo Show Oct 2015  
Wolverhampton

The Boars Head Gallery April 2015  
Kidderminster

Wolverhampton Art Gallery March 2015  
Junction Festival Show

Leicester Train Station Jan 2015  
Collaborative Public Commission

Scary Canary: The Venue Oct 2014  
Stourbridge  
(solo exhibition)

Wolverhampton Art Gallery June 2014



Royal Birmingham Society of Artists April 2014

Tanya Holland Gallery Bridgnorth Feb 2014 - 2015

5th Base gallery London Dec 2012/March 2013

Art Block Falmouth May 2012 - 2014

Volte Gallery Wolverhampton July 2011

Aa-rt Gallery Stourbridge June 2009 - June 2011

Qbar 'Stolen walls' Falmouth Sept– Oct 2008

New Designers London July 2008

Royal Cornwall Museum Truro June - Nov 2008

University College Falmouth June 2008  
Degree show

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Daphne Francis Gallery  
The Custard Factory  
Birmingham  
B9 4AA  
T: 07707278398

**E:** [DaphneFrancisGallery.com](mailto:DaphneFrancisGallery.com)

**Twitter:** @D\_F\_Gallery

**FB:** [www.facebook.com/DaphneFrancisGallery/](http://www.facebook.com/DaphneFrancisGallery/)

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