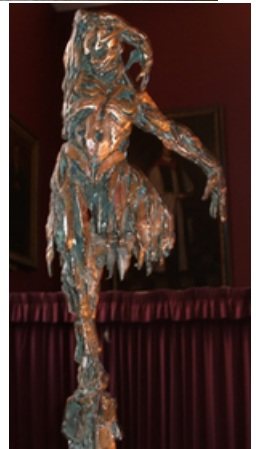


Samantha Keil

Bronze Sculpture



Sam Keil



Biography

Samantha Keil is trained in fine art and although she works primarily as a bronze sculptor she has spent a full life working in a range of artistic endeavours including drawing, metaphysics, theatre, dance and music. Her sculptural work aims to embody the multidisciplinary spirit of the Renaissance; her refined use of highly-skilled classical techniques from that era underlies a modern emphasis aiming to bring out the fire and vital energy in the form. The enthusiastic reception her pieces have received in galleries, museums and public spaces around the world bears witness to an artistry animated by a vision of pure sublimity.

Sam's sculptures are like spirits soaring to the heavens, often giving the impression of flight, and in so doing they overcome the density of bronze and achieve a state of near weightlessness. This striking effect is particularly apparent in her well-known ballet sculptures that emerged from interactions with director Matthew Bourne and the Adventures in Motion Pictures company during their highly-acclaimed 1996 production of Tchaikovsky's 'Swan Lake' - a production noted for its novel use of menacing, aggressively male swans in place of the traditional female *corps de ballet*.

In the past one of Sam's signature styles has involved dramatically dynamic horse sculptures in the full flow of rigorous movement. Horses - regarded as divine by Native American and other cultures - are to Sam highly aesthetic, highly spiritual animals. She has enjoyed riding them since she was two years old, and the unbridled, impetuous stallions she has created are similar to animals she rode bareback in the Arizona Badlands and also in the Negev desert in Israel.

Sam's principal skill is often said to be her ability to capture energy and motion in a static form. She works from her imagination and intuition, harnessing the energy that compels the form to move and revealing in her skilful patinations the gradations of colour and music that we are usually unable to perceive. She is always after the striking and unusual visual effect - something which can also be seen in her complex drawings and in her sought-after multicoloured plaster figures.

Sam received her training at the City and Guilds of London Art School under the supervision of the Chairman of the Royal Academy of Art, Sir Roger de Grey. She graduated in 1991 with first class honours. The winner of Elizabeth Frink and Madame Tussaud awards, at the beginning of her career Sam also won the Princess Grace Foundation Monte Carlo Prize for her ten foot *Horse* sculpture (which is on permanent exhibition at Hampden Guerney Street, Marble Arch, London) and the 1992 Toronto Art Show ArtFocus Best in Show and First Place Best Sculpture Awards. She has also designed sets and scenery for the Stratford Festival and the Canadian Opera Company.

Sam has recently completed a giant pair of bronze panels for the facade of the new Embassy Court building in Wellington Road, St. John's Wood - one of the most prestigious and sought-after areas of central London. These huge constructions - each more than fifteen feet across - incorporate dozens of balletic bronze figures in a sculptural ensemble on a background of inscribed sacred geometry. More recently, the team responsible for the redevelopment of the Elephant and Castle district in South London have commissioned Sam to sculpt a major piece for a new public square. The large elephant fountain 'Phoenix' with water soaring from his trunk will be a new twenty-first century update of the well-known elephant motif for the area; particular emphasis will be placed on the unusual colour patination of the bronze intended to represent his vital energy. In a radical change of scale, Sam has also modelled a series of small elephants which will be distributed as bronze key rings to the owners of the many new apartments associated with the redevelopment.

Sam has travelled widely and has lived and worked in many different countries. These days she divides her

time between her two studios in England and Italy; one by the river Cam in the centre of Cambridge and one in her Apuan Alps Centre for Sculpture and Art situated in a former monastery in Northern Tuscany where she also holds occasional art schools, exhibitions and other events. She has permanent exhibitions in London, New York, Santa Fe and Taos in New Mexico, and in Spain, and also in the following well-known individual collections: the Princess Grace Foundation in Monte Carlo, and the Lord Portman Collection, the Christopher Allen Collection, and the Andrew Stephen Collection, all in the UK.

More information about Samantha can be found on her website www.vallico.net/sam/sam.html and on the Towler Institute website at www.vallico.net/tti/tti.html.

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