

DAVE CLARKE

Sculpture

The
Strand
Gallery



Visualisation

To research each work, Dave Clarke uses dozens of images to build up different profiles and gain a 3-dimensional visualization of the subject.

Obscure angles and videos are required for accuracy and to overlap profiles, this helps Dave gain a better understanding, especially with a complicated structure, or something camouflaged, like a Lionfish.

A storyboard of these images is printed out and used for reference as the creation begins.

Clay form

Each artwork starts as clay, at first using the storyboard images to sculpt each angle separately, then turning and refining to eventually form it into a 3 dimensional clay form.

This is then used to produce a mold by painting silicone onto the surface, thin layers at first to pick out the details carved into the clay but eventually it is built up to around 2cm's thick. A fibreglass jacket is formed around this which helps support the silicone mold after the clay is removed.

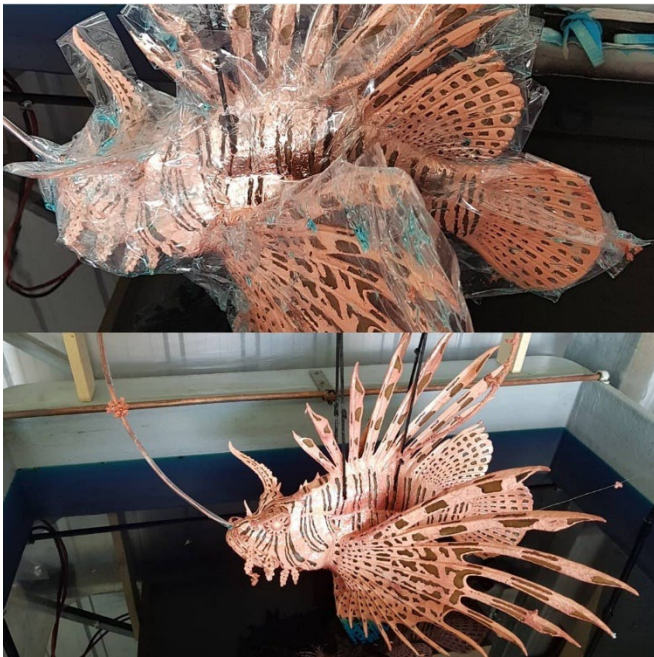
The silicone mold will be used to create one of Dave's unique *lost wax electroformed copper* sculptures or a *bronze* sculpture.



Lost wax - electroformed copper

Wax is poured into the silicone mold, again care is taken to capture detail, so the wax is warm at first, then cooler to build up thickness. Once the wax is thick enough and it has set, the silicone is removed to reveal a wax cast of the initial clay model.

At this stage, a bath of solution is prepared while the wax cast is painted with a conductive paint and attached with a transformer wire. Copper pellets are added to the solution bath and once the wax cast is submerged, an electric current dissolves the copper which then begins to attach to the conductive paint.



This process is repeated multiple times, over many days, as the copper is built up in very thin layers.

As the copper skin forms, it builds faster on the thinner areas like the tips, so these are taped up midway to maintain an even around the entire piece, which is less than 1mm thick.

To whole sculpture is then set on fire, completely melting the wax, and leaving nothing but the thin copper shell.

Dave's work is finally rendered to the required patina and mounted.



Bronze

Dave's bronze work begins with the same process as above but rather than a complete form, these pieces start off as many small clay sculptures.

At the stage where the wax molds are removed from the silicone, all the pieces are sent to a foundry to be cast in bronze.

Once they return Dave can sculpt the final piece. Below you can see 49 bronze components, ready to be cleaned and welded together.



Patinas

Each sculpture, whether copper or bronze, gets polished to highlight form. Various chemicals such as liver of sulphur are applied to the surface to create a range of patterns and textures, known as a patina.

If you are interested in acquiring work by Dave Clarke, please contact us.