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# Laurence Edwards In Conversation

With Sculptor Derek Morris and 3D & Graphics Designer Andy Campbell

## A reflection on the evening by Derek Morris

On the evening of Saturday 12th November, a sizeable audience of NCAS members, students, staff and sixth formers from the Norwich School gathered in the school's Blake Theatre to watch a film about the making and installation of a new work by Laurence Edwards, the Suffolk based sculptor. After the film, 3D Design and Creative Projects Co-ordinator Andy Campbell and I asked Laurence questions about his practice and his journey to arrive at the point of being one of the most significant figurative artists of our time.

The film gave us clear insights into the creative development and manufacture of the work, The Yoxman, the eight-meter high bronze figure which is permanently based by the A12 road at Yoxford in Suffolk. The extraordinary vision and intense energy required to achieve such a successful work continued to be evident as Laurence's answers to the questions asked by Andy and me revealed Laurence's intellectual and imaginative energy, not to mention his physical energy, in creating such a truly monumental and heroic figure.

The possibilities for Laurence himself in making such a large sculpture in bronze lie in the many years of experience he achieved as a jobbing bronze foundry man, and the accumulation of equipment and appropriate spaces that allow him to be completely in control of the conception and construction of his sculptures. This makes for an element of spontaneity in the working process (which is unusual in bronze casting) and that the special qualities of bronze as primarily a fluid material go a long way towards achieving the unique qualities of his sculptures.

Laurence has spent much of his life in Suffolk, and its history and prehistory have formed a significant part of his imaginative development over the years. So these timeless figures, the ambience of which stretches back into the deep past, carrying with them the tools and objects needed for their lives, seem curiously appropriate for our uncertain vision of what the future may hold for us.

The audience were very appreciative of Laurence's enthusiastic desire to communicate to us the mysteries of his art, and they contributed a good number of appropriate questions to the discussion. Some of Andy's school students were present and I felt this experience would be very helpful for them in developing views of what it is like to be an artist of stature, and understanding how much work is required to be good.