Making a Mark

by Nicolas Moreton MRSS
Details of the featured works

In the Cloisters

Gooseberry Fool
Ancaster Hardwhite Limestone
46cm x 46cm x 46cm  1985
Carved in 1985 as part of Moreton’s degree show at Wolverhampton Polytechnic. The title is taken from the Victorian love code meaning ‘foolish anticipation’. It deals with the emotional interpretations of relationships.

Curling Inwards
Ancaster Weatherbed Limestone
81cm x 71cm x 63.5cm  1991
This work, first shown at the Mall Galleries, London in 1991, is a true representation of what Moreton refers to as ‘free flowing’ carving. This curled-up, inwardly-reflecting work can be a passive or dynamic form depending on its positioning.

Open and Out
Ancaster Weatherbed Limestone
51cm x 46cm x 86cm  2002
This striking form, first shown at the Hutson Gallery in London, is a fine example of how the duality of male and female form is manipulated in one sculpture, setting up questions about our sexuality in a direct and confronting way.
No Desert Rose Ever Bore Petals So Exquisite
Kilkenny Limestone
76cm x 61cm x 152.5cm  2003
This poetic title is taken from a passage in a Wilbur Smith novel and refers to the beauty of a woman. Notice how the sculptor uses the monochromatic versatility of the stone to enhance the imagery of the figure.

Transition
Ancaster Weatherbed Limestone, red cloth and metal frame
50cm x 50cm x 180cm  2005
Made for the ‘Transition’ tour 2004-2006 around four English Cathedrals, the work depicts the blood and fluid that supports the unborn baby, while the zip beckons the viewer to reveal the image behind the cloth to birth the child.
In the Cloisters (3)

Rising Son
Clipsham Blue Limestone and 24c Gold Leaf
51cm x 61cm x 167cm  2005
Moreton says this is an image he would never have carved without having a son of his own. Most parents at one time or other will ‘do shoulders’. This affectionate work celebrates the joy of fatherhood. Using symbolism of floral heads and hand gestures, the father stands proud, supporting an excited and vibrant child.

Sunflowers (Man and Boy)
Clipsham Blue Limestone and 24c Gold Leaf
35.5cm x 46cm x 122cm  2002
A simple carving celebrating those first steps. Over the years, the ‘sunflower’ head has become a personalised symbol for the sculptor’s character.
Rising Form III
Italian Marble
30cm x 8cm x 132cm  2017
These rhythmic pulsating forms connect the earth to the sky, reflecting upon the energies of life that surround the everyday.

Chrysalis
Ancaster Weatherbed Limestone, Italian Marble and LED
201cm x 55cm x 30.5cm  2008
Since 2005 Moreton has explored, and created to great effect, stone works which have included electrical light and sometimes heat. This elemental ribbon shell form is an excellent example. The hollowed-out marble inset ‘breathes’, emerging from its textured shell, a form that can be open or closed.
In the Cloisters (5)

In the Fullness of Time
Portland Roach Limestone and Ancaster Base
127cm x 30cm x 27cm  2016
Notice how the sculptor has chosen the fossil-rich stone to enhance the feeling of movement and energy of the life forces around us.

Nighttime Stories
(left of photograph)
Kilkenny Fossil Limestone and Portuguese Marble Base
70cm x 20cm x 180cm  2020
The dark black stone with its dancing calcite fossil shell is used to take the viewer into a dream state portal. Again, the fullness of form motif harks back to Moreton’s earlier work.

White Light Dream
(right of photograph)
Portuguese Marble  
70cm x 20cm x 180cm  2021
As a counterpoint to Nighttime Stories, Moreton has made a sculpture that echoes its story but with a quite different feel. The treatment of the marble with its frosted, hand-smoothed finish creates a softer, calmer, white, dreamlike state that pulls you through the portal into another world.
Catching Nature’s Gift
Ancaster Weatherbed Limestone
120cm x 60cm x 165cm  2020
Ancaster Weatherbed is Moreton’s favourite British stone and this work shows why. Notice the textures of the hair against the smoothness of the body and how the hands are left rough as if to say they are working hands. See also how the sculptor has tried to use the bands of colour to help convey the ideas behind the work.
In the Antechapel

Pregnant Reclining Figure Turned
Ancaster Limestone, Plaster, Seed Cones
90cm x 46cm x 49cm  1986
After leaving college, Moreton set up studio in a disused pig barn in rural Northamptonshire. Influenced by the landscape and the fertile fields around him, he set about celebrating this in a figurative sense. Carved by hand, this is an excellent exponent of his use of bespoke forged 90cm-long chisels.

Warm and Tender Breast
Ancaster Hardwhite Limestone
51cm x 51cm x 41cm  2004
The child nestles into its mother, suckling, safe, comfortable and warm. This carving shows all the sensitivity of the artist understanding his subject and using his tools to express it.

Lifeboat
Pink Ancaster Limestone
56cm x 28cm x 28cm  2003
The womb as a boat is a simple but effective metaphor for the journey that carries and eventually brings its precious cargo to our world.

Breathe
Rosa de Monte Marble
41cm x 35.5cm x 23cm  2004
A beautifully moving work in Rosa de Monte Marble from Portugal which captures the first gasp of new life. Simple and sensitive, celebrating the wonderment of new life.
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Works are available for purchase directly by contacting the sculptor via email (moreton.nicolas@gmail.com) or via mobile (07966736058).

Please ask at the Tourist Gate for a price list.

Further information on the sculptor can be found at www.nicolasmoreton.com

Please note works purchased from this exhibition will be released early and delivered.

Exhibition is held in the Cloisters and Antechapel of New College Oxford
From 17th October 2021-8th July 2022

For opening times, check www.new.ox.ac.uk/nicolas-moreton-exhibition