

Kidwelly Industrial Cat By Danielle Jones

Kidwelly Industrial Museum is the inspiration for a university 'Interpretive project'. We were issued a brief to select a piece of art or an artifact from a museum or exhibition to use as a basis for our interpretive project. The museum is of great historical interest for my local area and generally the south of Wales. The museum site was once the main employer of the inhabitants of Kidwelly.

As a sculptor, the museum was of interest to me personally because of the methods and history of manufacturing tin plate. I have visited the museum on a number of occasions, the 'Hot Rolls' exhibit I found particularly interesting. I found the cogs and gears to be fascinating and found myself imagining what it once would have looked like as a place of work. I thought it would be interesting to also incorporate the same methods that would have been used during production, such as blacksmithing, into the production of my sculpture. I enjoy the idea of recycling broken or discarded pieces of machinery to give them another function. The sculpture is my representation of the Kidwelly cat. Legend claims that the black cat was the first living thing to emerge from Kidwelly after the plague.

The sculpture is a large scale piece as it was built around pre existing shapes. The cheeks of the cat are made from bicycle parts, the nose is constructed from steel rod and is in-filled with gear type shapes, round nail heads and nuts and the eyes are clutch plates with brake shoes and sheet steel. As well as the aim of creating sculptures during this project, it also aims to improve studio skills, for me these were MIG, TIG and MMA welding. Not only was the aesthetic value important but the way it would be displayed, fixed and transported were equally crucial during the 'making' process. To accompany the practical skills it has also been of great importance for me to develop my professional skills as a young and emerging artist.

The large steel sculpture has an accompanying series of smaller 'maquettes' as part of the exhibition. A smaller version of the 'Kidwelly Industrial Cat' made from stainless steel and clock parts and a series of plastic cat's heads which have been digitally sculpted and printed in plastic using a 3D printer.

Studying at Carmarthen School of Art has given me a great range of opportunities and has enabled me to work at varying scales. I've also been lucky enough to experiment with innovative techniques such as 3D printing and digital sculpture which has encouraged me to be inquisitive and really inspired me to educate myself.

Fabrication and the automotive industry are of great personal interest to me as well as themes in my art work. I have been working closely with a company in Leicester, Beaver Bus, creating concept vehicle designs and vehicle decals. I have also been a member of Kidwelly Motor Club for the past 3 years as a driver and navigator in local driving events. The motor club has also provided me with an excellent network of trades people for resourcing materials and gaining automotive knowledge. This project has been a great opportunity to engage with my local community.