

Wild Things

Sculpture lives among the wildlife at the Maine Audubon



Howling Wolf, 2010, steel, 60" x 70" x 36"

You won't find any wild caribou roaming the Gilsland Farm Audubon Center in Falmouth these days. But for the past six months and until May 2011, an exhibition of animal sculpture by artist Wendy Klemperer offers visitors an opportunity to witness elk, wolves, mountain lion, lynx, and deer in plain sight.

The pieces of sculpture are part of an exhibition curated by June LaCombe called *Re-Imagined*. Klemperer uses recycled materials pulled from industrial salvage piles, which gives the animals a rough visceral

quality. Says LaCombe, "Her sculpture invites us to become more aware of our relationship with wildlife and the land we share"—making it a perfect fit for Maine Audubon, where real animals coexist with their sculptural counterparts. Klemperer's rendition of these mammals takes on a mythical quality—many feature oversized proportions and an exaggerated ferocity. Larger-than-life features and abstracted antlers and racks reflect the place the wild holds in our imaginations, according to LaCombe.

“The work uses the body language of animals to express a feeling or state of being, with motion conveying emotion.”



Walking Elk, 2004, steel, 93" x 108" x 44"



Running Fox, 2010, steel, 32" 48" x 14"



Catamount, 2009, steel, 60" x 120" x 56"



Fenrir (Omar), 2009, steel, 52" x 100 x 36"

Klemperer's observations of animals and their behavior come through her sketches in steel. Born in 1958, she attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 1984. She received a BFA in sculpture from Pratt Institute in 1983 and a BA from Harvard-Radcliffe in biochemistry in 1980. She has sculpture in private and public collections throughout the country and does commissioned work from herds of deer to small tabletop pieces.

"I'm interested in how animals, being for the most part nonverbal, express themselves through body language," she explains. "Bodies change shape depending on what they are doing—there is no one shape that means cat: it could be coiled like a spring, or stretched like an elastic band. I try to convey motion through a network of steel lines, drawing and redrawing the form. The work uses the body language of animals to express a feeling or state of being, with motion conveying emotion." **MH+D**

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