



Nature of the Beast

2016

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For as long as humans have made art, animal imagery has played an important and central role. The prehistoric Lion Man of Hohlenstein Stadel, Anubis and Horus of ancient Egypt, the Hindu gods Ganesh and Hanuman, the orca and bear totems of the Haida, ostriches, aardvarks and eland in Bushman engravings, as well as the lamb and wolf of European Medieval sculpture, are but a few examples of how closely associated animal images are with the culture of their makers.

Throughout the ages Man has used the beast as a means of understanding himself, and even today in the 21st century, animals continue to be an important vehicle for artists of many different backgrounds. Our exhibition is a powerful demonstration of this relationship and celebrates the diversity of expression alive in contemporary art.

The simplified form of Michael Cooper's 'Anteater' has a deeply sensual beauty which stems from an intuitive paring-down of the form to reveal the very essence of the creature. In contrast, but of equal beauty and fascination, Nick Bibby gives us a 'warts and all', anatomically perfect rendition in 'Elephant Seal' and 'Walrus'. Bryan Kneale too brings a scientific eye to 'Sea Lion', providing us with an insight into the inner structure, usually hidden beneath the skin.

Structure of a different nature is wonderfully illustrated by Lynn Chadwick's 'Beast X' which, like a crab, wears its skeleton on the outside and reveals Chadwick's intricate working method. Method is also clear and undisguised in Christie Brown's mythical 'Entre Chien et Loup: Jackal', where the bronze surface still retains the impression of textured sheets of raw clay, slumped and compressed together.

With references to poetry, myth and literature, Deborah van der Beek's exploration of a skull gives 'Tyger' mystery and power beyond direct representation. With a similarly totemic feel, Eduardo Paolozzi's Anubis-like 'Baboon' displays a wise and solemn presence like a contemporary re-working of an Egyptian animal god.

The animal in us however, is most apparent in Jon Buck's work. His sinuous 'Marked Cat' for instance, eloquently conveys the seductive beauty of the independent feline. Buck also makes a visual pun, associating the stamped pattern on the sculpture with proprietorial behaviour.

In his pair of 'Hartmann's Mountain Zebras', Jonathan Kingdon is primarily making a scientific statement about the evolution of the zebra and its stripes, and how indelibly they are bound together. At the same time he clearly celebrates the mesmerising perfection of animal markings. Zooming in ever closer with his lens in the 'Fabric of Africa' series, Steve Russell focusses solely on pattern and keeps us guessing as to the origin of his images.

The nature of the beast is that it can display many attributes: beauty, instinct, power, savagery, gentleness, elusiveness, mystery and wisdom. Thus today, 'the animal' continues to be a potent and relevant source of inspiration for artists and a useful tool with which to observe and think about ourselves.

Jane Buck
Claude Koenig

Nick Bibby
Christie Brown
Ralph Brown
Jon Buck
Lynn Chadwick
Michael Cooper
Terence Coventry
Steve Dilworth
Damien Hirst
Marcus James
Jonathan Kingdon
Bryan Kneale
Anita Mandl
Eduardo Paolozzi
Lorraine Robbins
Steve Russell
Deborah van der Beek

Elephant Seal 2
Nick Bibby
Bronze
Edition of 9
29 cm high

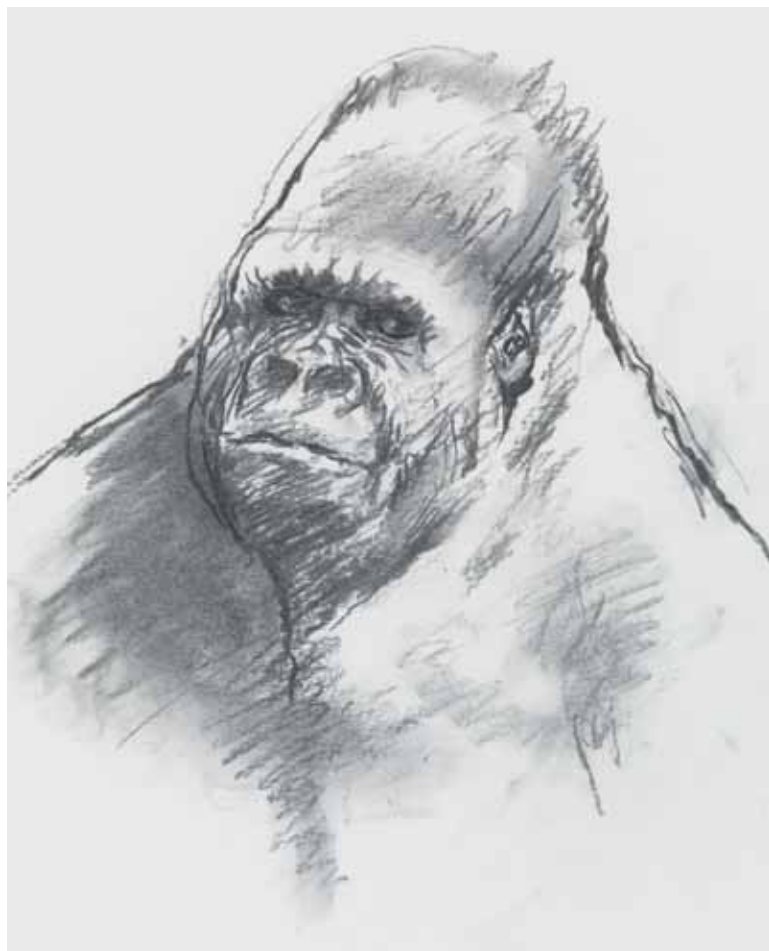




Walrus
Nick Bibby
Bronze
Edition of 12
11.5 cm high

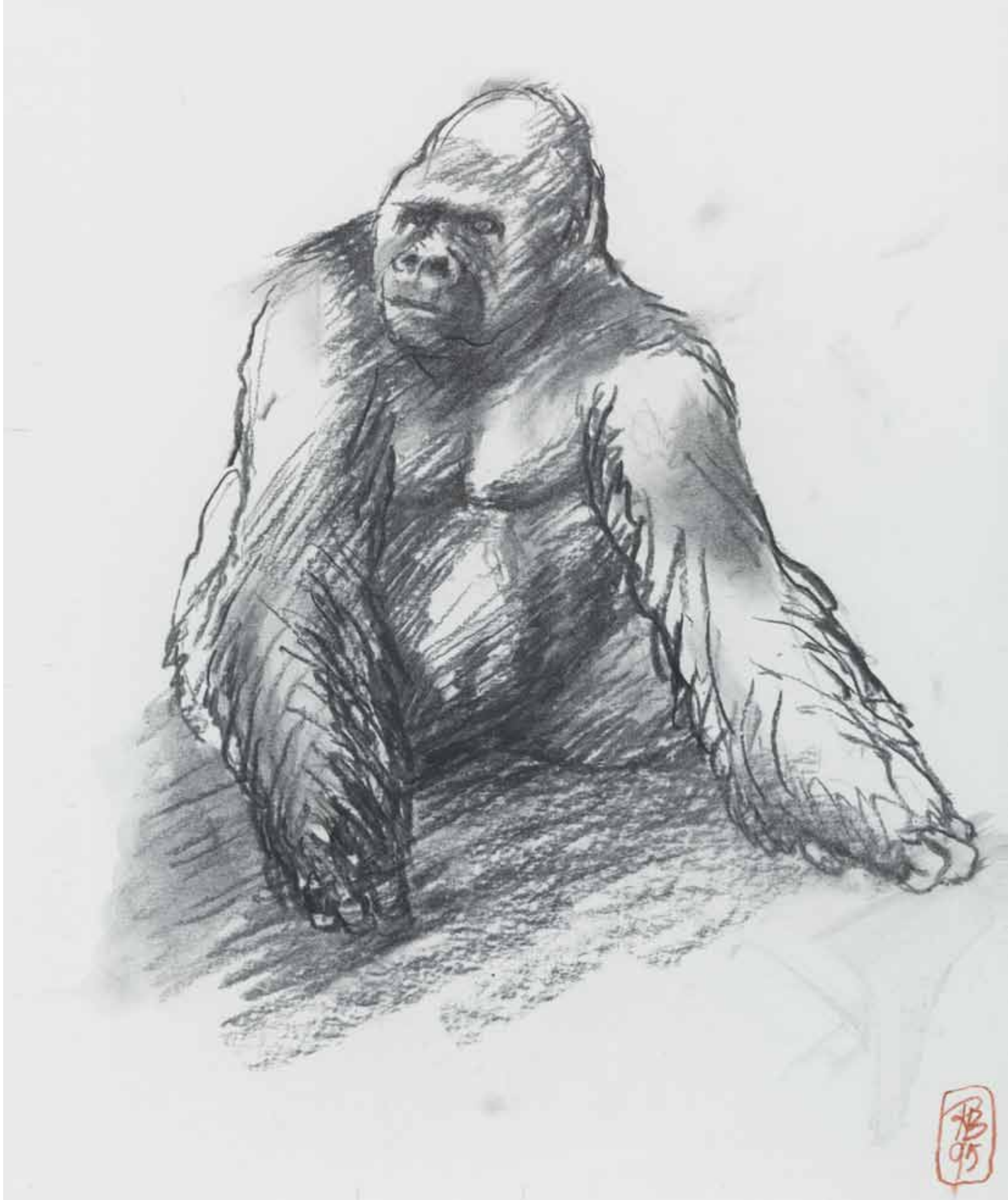
Entre Chien et Loup: Jackal
Christie Brown
Bronze
Edition of 5
142 cm high





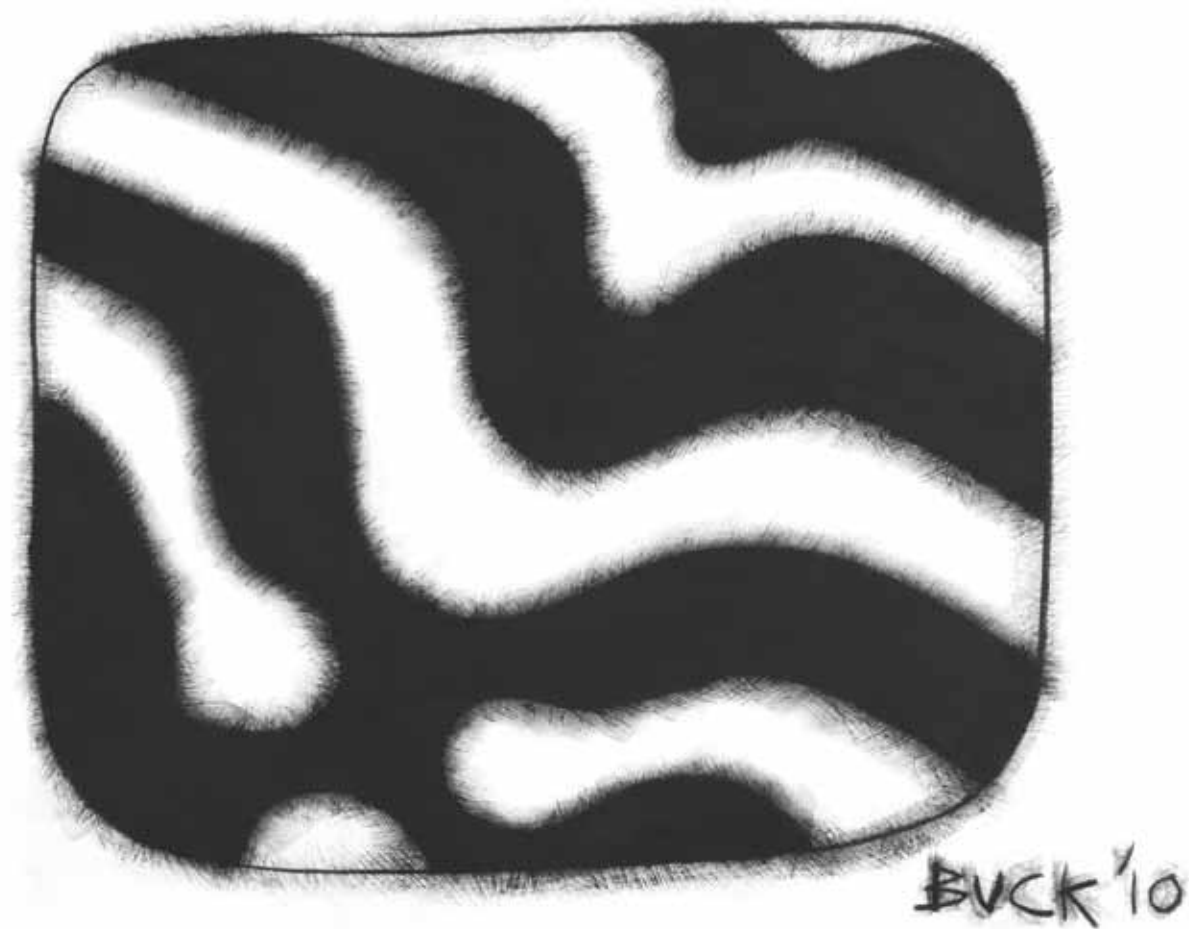
Old Jambo 1995 *detail*
Ralph Brown
Charcoal

right
Jambo Squatting 1995
Ralph Brown
Charcoal





Marked Cat
Jon Buck
Bronze
Edition of 10
28 cm high



Patterns of Process:
The Order of Chaos I 2010
Jon Buck
Charcoal



Heptile
Jon Buck
Bronze
Edition of 10
12.5 cm high



Beast 1958
Lynn Chadwick
Ink, Wash & Wax Resist



Beast X 1956
Lynn Chadwick
Bronze
Edition of 9
65 cm long



Lying Beast 1960
Lynn Chadwick
Bronze
Edition of 4
110 cm long



Mandrill
Michael Cooper
Bronze
Edition of 9
38 cm high





Anteater
Michael Cooper
Bronze
Edition of 7
26 cm high

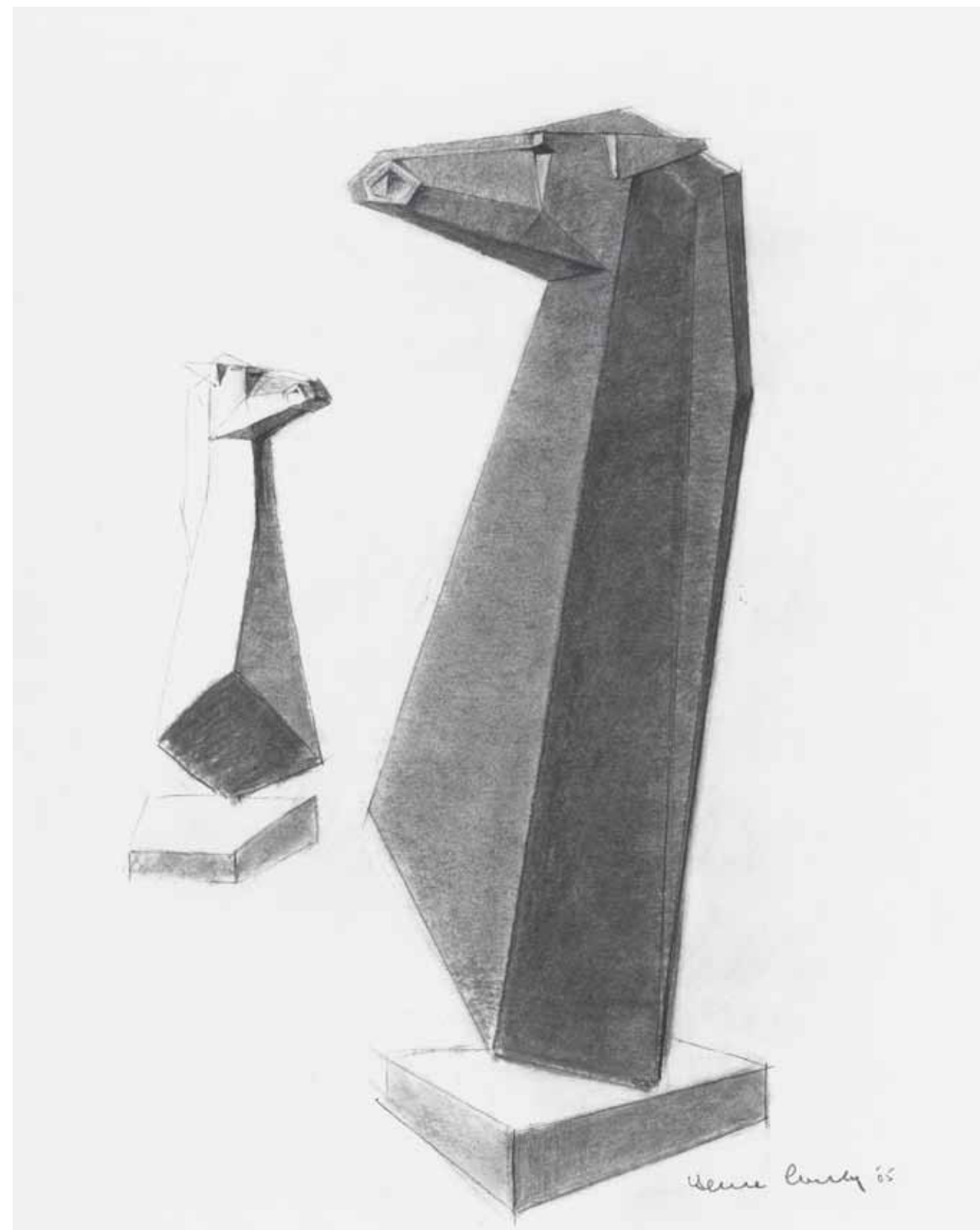


Boar I
Terence Coventry
Bronze
Edition of 9
24 cm high



Horse Head Maquette I
Terence Coventry
Bronze
Edition of 10
49 cm high

right
Horse Head 2005
Terence Coventry
Charcoal



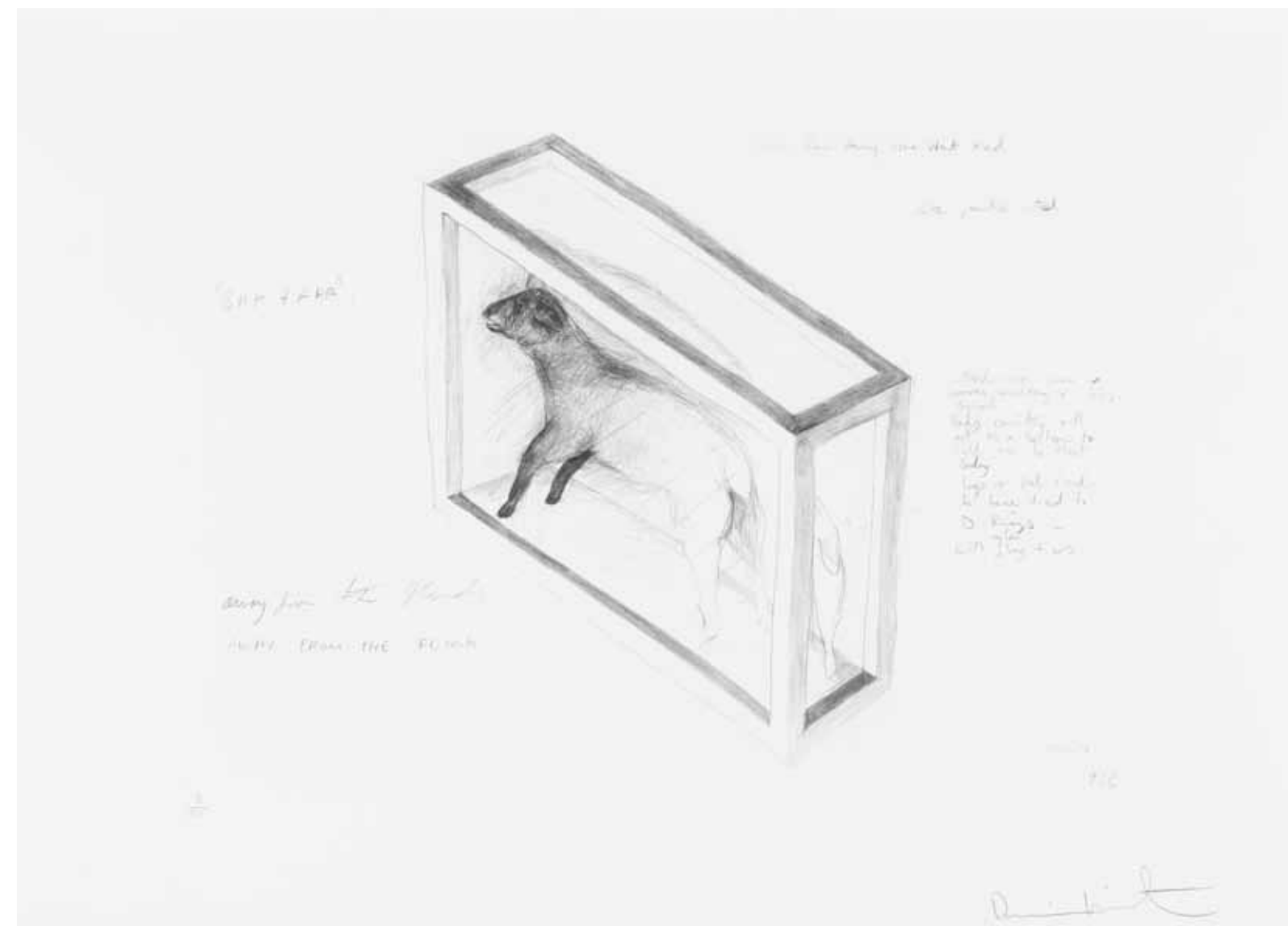


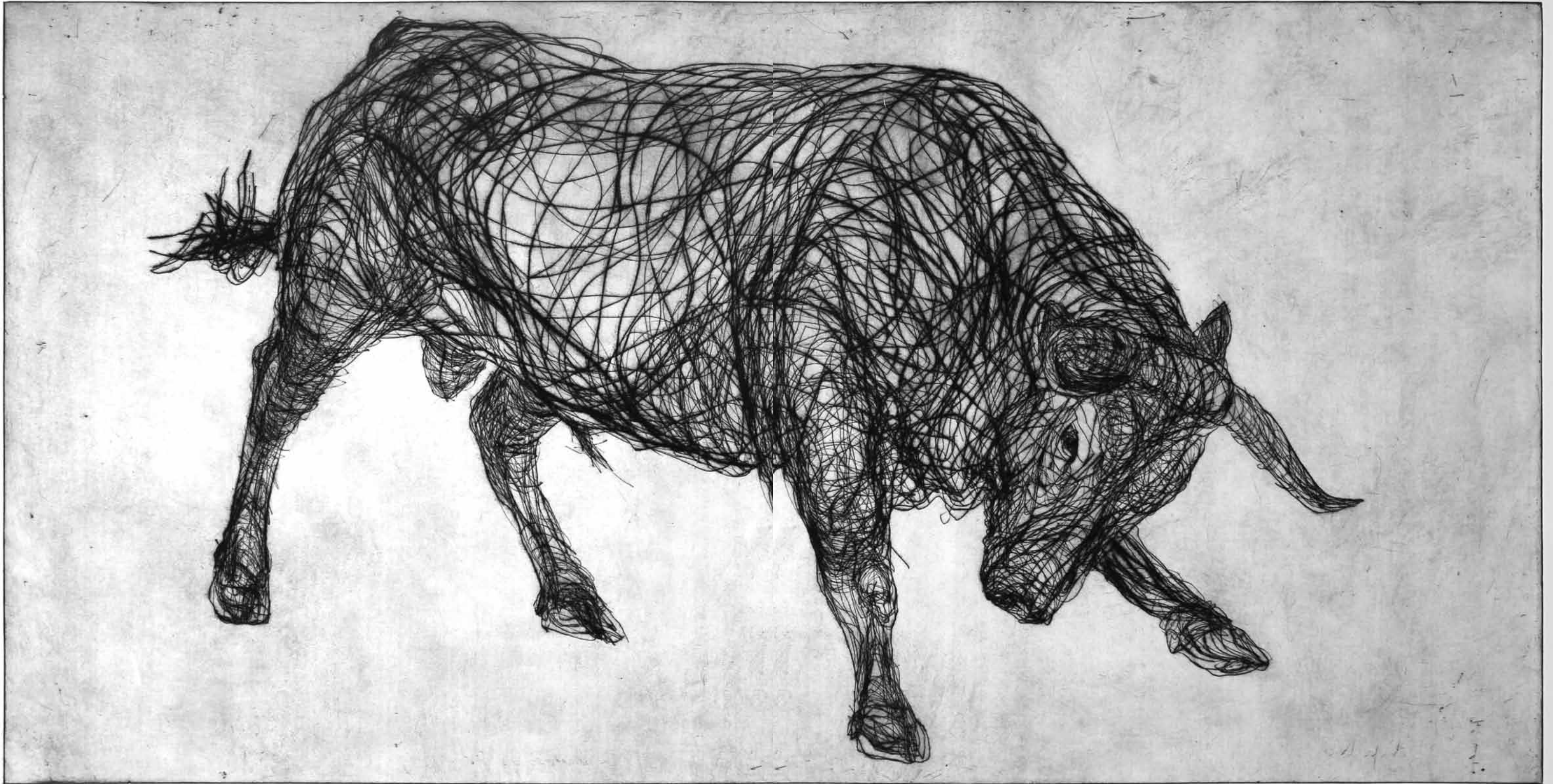
Evolution III (Porpoise)
Steve Dilworth
Bronze & Sterling Silver
Edition of 5
53 cm high



Away From the Flock
Damien Hirst
Etching
Edition of 50

next page
Lunero 2
Marcus James
Drypoint Etching
Edition of 5
Image: Artist





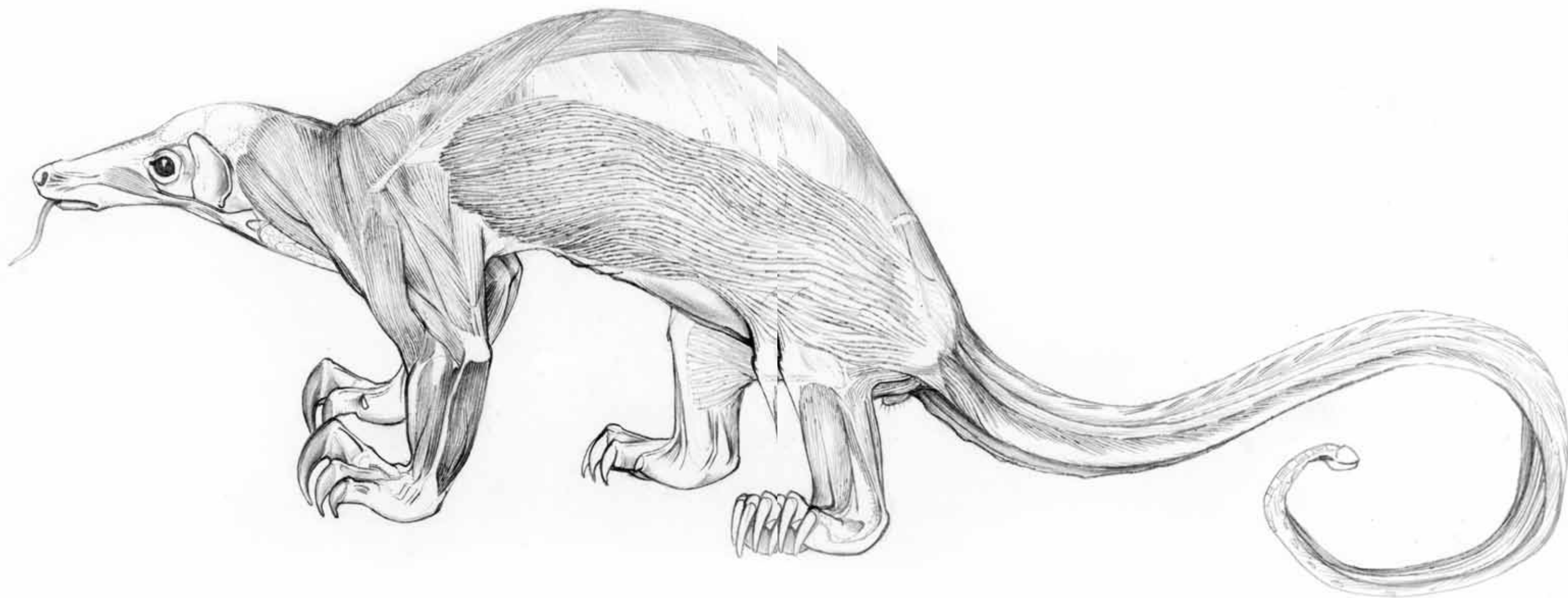
Marcus Jones '85



Mountain Zebra
Jonathan Kingdon
Giclee Print
Edition of 100



Hartmann's Mountain Zebra
Jonathan Kingdon
Bronze
Edition of 10
65 cm high



Giant Pangolin Dissection
Jonathan Kingdon
Pencil

Sea Lion 1986
Bryan Kneale
Chalk





Genet Cat
Anita Mandl
Bronze
Edition of 6
28.5 cm high



Fat Little Gorilla
Anita Mandl
Bronze
Edition of 8
17.5 cm high





Crocodile
Eduardo Paolozzi
Plaster
Edition Unknown
8 cm high

right
Baboon
Eduardo Paolozzi
Plaster
Edition Unknown
33.5 cm high



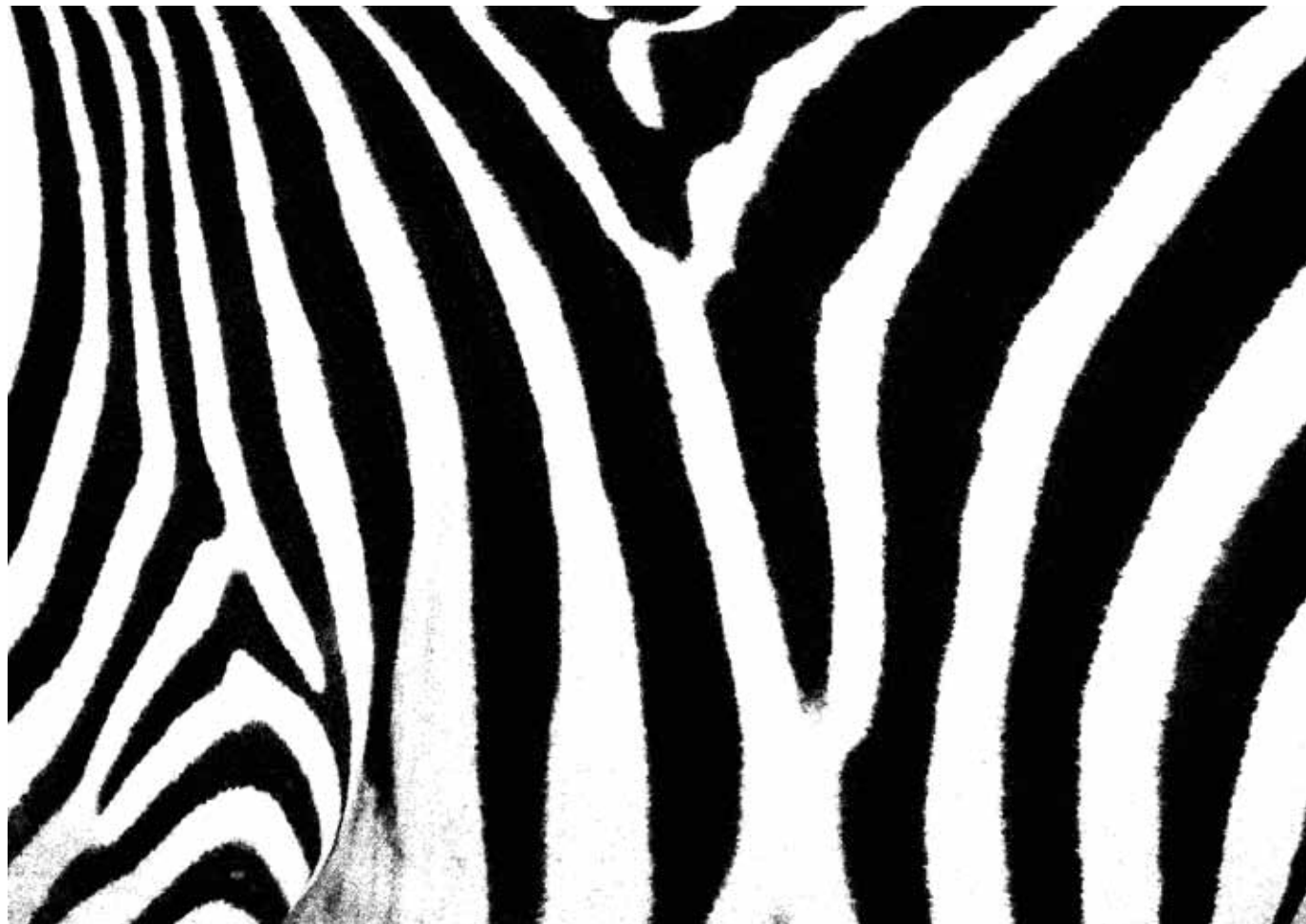
Death by Sofa
Lorraine Robbins
Bronze
Edition of 5
15 cm high





Tiger in a Tropical Storm
After Rousseau
Lorraine Robbins
Mixed Media
Unique
33 cm high





Zebra Skin
(Fabric of Africa)
Steve Russell
C-Type Metallic Print
Mounted on Aluminium
Edition of 10



Spotted Bush Snake
(Fabric of Africa)
Steve Russell
C-Type Metallic Print
Mounted on Aluminium
Edition of 10



Johnstone's Three Horned
Chameleon Tail (Red)
(Fabric of Africa)
Steve Russell
C-Type Metallic Print
Mounted on Aluminium
Edition of 10



Giraffe Skin
(Fabric of Africa)
Steve Russell
C-Type Metallic Print
Mounted on Aluminium
Edition of 10



Tyger
Deborah van der Beek
Bronze
Edition of 9
21 cm high



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