

Walter Matia

CURLEW CASTINGS

Summer 2012



Bobwhite & California Quail

One of the great pleasures of sculpture is that it is tactile. Last year, partly for fun, but mostly because I thought my wife would enjoy it, I started sculpting a table centerpiece with coveyed up quail. As with so many ideas, what started as a casual thought took on a larger life. The devil truly was and remains in the details.

The concept was sound; sculpt a number of pieces which could be composed into custom arrangements, model the pieces to be used individually or in groups and let the client build their own compositions. I did a few pieces; some pine boughs, quail and candle holders.

Some very smart women looked over the pieces, arranged them in about twenty different patterns that I would never have thought. They confirmed the real beauty of the piece was the flexibility to design their own solutions.

There are two pine bough sculptures; a double candle pine branch and a single candle pinecone with removable brass candle cups; a trio of maple leaves; four Bobwhite quail and three California quail.

Available as centerpiece or individually.

From the Heaven of Pines & Grass
Bobwhite Quail and Pine Centerpiece
34”L x 6”H x 15”D



California Quail Centerpiece
18”L x 6”H x13”D



The Golden Rule

American Golden Eagle

29”H x 29”L x 15”D

Edition 20

The Golden Eagle is found throughout the Northern hemisphere. The various subspecies and races of the bird range from the North American bird, about the size of a Bald eagle, to the “Berkut” Eagle of the Kirghiz steppes with a nine foot wing span, eleven inch claw spread and the power and ferocity to hunt wolves.

No matter the race or the size, the birds are regal. In their baring and gestures they command your attention. Even at rest there is a penetrating quality to their gaze. They fill the space around them with impending energy.

My two eagle sculptures “Seeing Things Whole” and “The Golden Rule” were not conceived as a pair, but the contrast of the birds natural behavior gave rise to my sculptural investigations of how to model the essence of these two marvelous species.

Seeing Things Whole

American Bald Eagle

35”H x 23”L x 15”D

Edition 20

John Wesley Powell is one of my personal heroes. Popularly known for his descent of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River, his real genius was the insight he gained from his explorations. His recommendations and predictions about the promise and limitations of the American West are clairvoyant almost 136 years after his initial publications. His 1878 *“Report on the Lands of the Arid Region”* is still one of the great reads. He was the first American holistic ecologic thinker. Naturalist, ethnologist, archeologist, geologist, leader of men, and builder of lasting institutions, Powell founded the US Geologic Survey, The Department of Ethnology in the Smithsonian Institution and he attempted a national survey of irrigable lands of the arid West. This last effort got in the way of the dreams of too many speculators and their political minions. The survey was killed by Congress in 1890. Many of the West’s ongoing political and ecological battles can be laid at the feet of this shortsighted decision.

“Seeing Things Whole” is my portrait of Powell. I have “borrowed” the title from a book of Powell’s writings edited by my friend Bill deBuys. “Seeing Things Whole, the essential John Wesley Powell” another great read.



The Romance of Turkeys

I suppose if I were a child of the West, Elk and Bison would turn my crank. If the White Tail Deer had not become the bane of my botanical treasures and the biological equivalent of an auto body shop full employment act, I might make a career of modeling the delicate forms of the yearling doe. Nope, the wild turkey will do.

With the help of Ben and Will Bailey, Bubba Wood and my neighbor Tammy Hardy, my spring freezer was packed with an Osceola, Rio Grande and Eastern Wild Turkey. Feather deep in various states of defrosted turkeys, the summer has been devoted to modeling four wild turkey sculptures. Don't ask which variety served as the final model-they all did, and I dare any of you to tell the difference-actually there are some real differences and many turkey hunting fanatics could regale you for long hours with that ornithological trivia.

Turkey Single Maquette Wax Model 8”L x 11”H x 5”D

Turkey Pair Maquette Wax Model 17”L x 11”H x 5”D



Life Size Single Turkey Wax Model 45”H x 42”L x 15”D

Life Size Turkey Pair Design Stage Approximately 60”H x 48”L





A Point of Honor
20”L x 14”H x 12”D

Dog Days “Dies caniculares”

My dog days happened in the winter and late spring with three new sculptures and a decision to remodel two existing sculptures of an English Setter and an English Pointer into a pair, titled “A Point of Honor.” Those of you in the hunting world will know this as a mark of great training for one dog to automatically freeze at the sight of a brace mate on point. For non bird hunters, well I’m sorry for you but, I hope you like the composition and tension of the pair anyway.

The English Setter has been bred into so many forms that one would be hard pressed to recognize a big silky haired show dog as a relative of the wire coated prairie runners of the modern field stock. But, in the beginning, the setter was a close working, medium sized dog which instinctively dropped to the ground (set) when birds were close. The hunter then threw a net over the coveyed birds and the dog to make the capture. Today the fashion in bird dogs is for staunch points with upright stiff tails. Several of the best setters I have had the honor to hunt over have had a bit of the drop to the ground gene in their genetic woodpiles. The Old Guard is a tribute to that marvelous tradition.



The Old Guards 21”L x 13”H x 7”D



The Old Guard & The Sorcerers Apprentice 9”L x 6”H x 3”D Each

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