

## DAVID ILES

### ARTIST STATEMENT

It's often the small things in life that affect the way I see the world, and my sculpture reflects this. Two major influences in my work are an interest in storytelling, and nature (mother and human). Having grown up on the edge of the Big Thicket in Southeast Texas I was able to live in and observe nature intimately and grew to appreciate it. Countless wild pets and daily trips through the woods became important elements of my life. Being raised in a culture that lived to tell stories, jokes, and anecdotes, instilled a desire to communicate my ideas and experiences. The inspiration for my sculpture was developed along the bayou, on the side of a tree, in someone's backyard, or through a story of some misadventure told at a family gathering.

I started using natural objects for my work in the late eighties, but it was after completing a commission of native Texas animals in 1997 that I started working with animals in my sculpture on a regular basis. Some animals such as squirrels and crows lend themselves to certain roles due to their mischievous nature and also represent people with similar traits. Frogs, pigs, birds, and bears are all fair game when they work their way into a story or event.

The combination of objects and imagery in my work allows a viewer to step into an event or occurrence that has universal recognition, but individual interpretation. The title of the work may hint at the story behind the piece, but can leave you with a sense of hearing only the punch line of a joke, or just the moral of a completed fable. By presenting the work in this manner the viewer will build a personal narrative in the same way a poem provokes the reader to create images and meaning.

I started casting bronze on a regular basis in 1987 while working at the University of North Texas, and built a foundry in 1996 to facilitate the completion of a large commission that year. Being able to cast my own work is extremely important to me because it lets me be intimately involved in the total life of the sculpture, and it allows me the freedom to alter and make changes at any stage of process. I use bronze as my primary medium because I like its strength, the flexibility of the process, and it's sense of history, which adds irony to the whimsical nature of the work. The images of small slices of life, captured in bronze, create permanent reminders of fleeting thoughts or events.

### SHORT BIO

David Iles has an M.F.A. in sculpture from the University of North Texas. A native Texan now living in Denton, he divides his time between casting for himself and other artists in the foundry he built in 2007. Mr. Iles has received public and private commissions from numerous sources including Trammell Crow, Frito Lay, the City of Denton, and the Irving Art Association. The Dallas Arboretum, Hall Office Park, and the University of North Texas have collections of wildlife sculpture on display. His sculpture has been shown in numerous regional and national exhibitions.