

# MICHAEL W. MAGUIRE

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## Artist Statement

### **The Reason:**

In my artwork, I have been challenged to apply certain ancient world methodologies, designs and surface treatments to realize a contemporary idea/image. I have been exploring contemporary "mythic creatures:" large-scale, figurative sculptures visually rooted in the prehistoric and medieval imagery of Ireland for over ten years. The rough and often crude, weathered imagery strikes me as true: basic and powerful archetypal forms and patterns emanating from the gut or the unconscious, rather than from a "focus group" or marketing survey. I am also impressed with the ability of artisans from earlier times to make incredible artwork without elaborate mechanisms and systems. The resourcefulness of its makers and the expedient immediacy of the work challenge me to seek the more direct, simple route to produce my own work. I explore different fabrication methods and combinations of materials to find the most appropriate approach to convey my ideas based upon the mythic creatures of Irish folklore and legendary gods.

I also enjoy playing with the boundary in perception between the abstract and the figurative. The personification of objects is a common thread of investigation in my artwork. Like my most recent abstract figures, these larger "mythic creatures" combine visual references to the prehistoric and medieval folklore of Ireland with contemporary influences. The essentials of understanding sculpture: weight, volume, scale, texture, placement and setting, are only as interesting as the journey it took into being. Like the Celtic artist, my intention is to make these figurative sculptures more expressive than descriptive. As the forms become larger and more streamlined, they will become fresh, lively interpretations of archetypal imagery.