

Agatha Christie, Artwork Proposal

Elisabeth Hadley_____



Introduction

I am a figurative sculptor based in Brixham, Torbay and I am really interested and enthused by the opportunity to create a sculpture of Agatha Christie for our towns, which can celebrate her life and amazing achievements as undoubtedly the most famous crime writer in the World, to be enjoyed by residents and visitors.

I have thought it only fitting that Torquay should erect a statue in her honour as it was here where she was born and raised and lived an amazingly happy and idyllic childhood in her family home.

I also enjoy my life here in Torbay, I have a great love of the sea and when I am not sculpting in my studio, I can be usually found out kayaking or swimming down at Fishcombe cove. It is such a special place, and you can really feel close to nature.

I have been a great fan of Agatha Christie's novel's, I particularly enjoy her Miss Marple and Poirot crime stories.



Experience

I have been working professionally as a figurative sculptor for over thirty years and exhibit in galleries across the Southwest as well producing commissions for private and public works of art. Producing work such as this, particularly at this scale, is an involved process and requires a comprehensive knowledge not just of the design, sculpting and mould making, but also of the casting and foundry processes that are carried out by other partners. I bring this extensive, critical experience of working with foundries delivering similar works, to this application.



Man and Boy

As I mentioned earlier, I live locally, and I imagine many of you will be aware of the “Man and Boy” sculpture which is Sited in Brixham on Kings Quay which I sculpted.

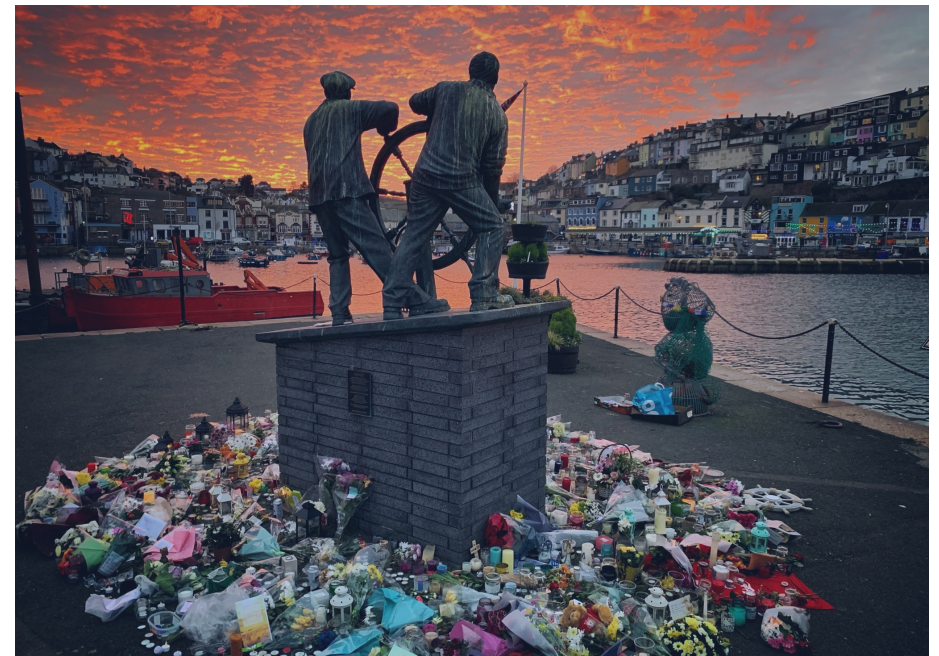
This was very much a community project and the details of this commission should demonstrate my ability to work in an engaged way with local stakeholders. It was noted by many Brixham families that Brixham though considered to be the Mother Port of the Fishing industry had no commemorative sculpture to celebrate its fishing industry nor a memorial to those lost at sea.

I worked closely with the committee from the very beginning, providing them with the concept and design.

As a member of the committee, I was present and engaged throughout the delivery of the project. As well as sculpting and moulding “Man and Boy”, I sourced all the materials for this and where possible used local firms. I was actively involved with fund raising events, as well as the practical considerations for delivery concerning the height, materials and positioning of the plinth which the sculpture was to be mounted on.

I liaised with the foundry throughout the casting of Man and Boy and made several journey's up to Castle fine Arts to work on the wax and keep track of its progress.

“Man and Boy” has become an iconic image for Brixham and a real focus for those fisherman who have been lost.

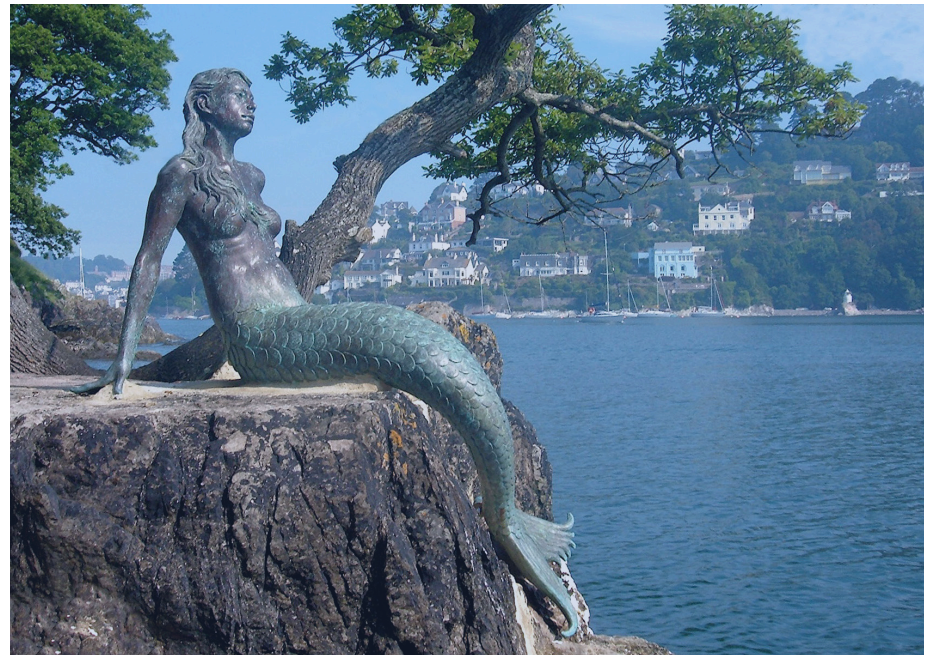


The Little Mermaid

Separately, “The Little Mermaid Miranda” which is sited at the entrance to the river Dart which I also sculpted has become a well-known tourist attraction.

This was a private commission and I worked very closely with Mrs Robinson on this project.

Starting off with various designs on paper to making a couple of small maquettes, this particular commission had to take into account considerations for the location, where she would be pounded by regular large waves, requiring secure fixings and consideration for the impact of the elements.



Proposal

Concerning a sculpture of Agatha Christie, I feel it would be lovely to have her sitting on a bench, thoughtfully contemplating her next great work, or otherwise admiring the surroundings she was so passionate about.

One of her favourite places was to be sat down at the boat house at Greenway with her husband watching the wildlife out on the river, so it would be lovely to have her sited outside enjoying nature.

I feel having her sat on a bench allows a degree of engagement, her many fans who visit the area would be able to take a seat next to her and really feel they had a close connection with their literary idol. This also adds to the “shareability” of the piece, encouraging people to capture a moment with the great crime writer.

I have considered it might be slightly different to portray her as a younger Agatha, rather than the older lady we usually see in tweeds. The proposal though offers the flexibility to portray Agatha in a distinct way dependent on the feeling of the committee. Through provision of appropriate source material, she could be shown at any stage in her life or career, her appearance tailored to a specific aspect of her character, or the most recognisable likeness of herself for audiences.

The bench itself would then be a canvas on which to incorporate in relief some of her other interests and inspirations for her great novels. This might be done with an element of mystery, allowing audiences to discover and reveal narratives and stories through a mixture of subtle and direct allusions to the novels and her life.

As a final addition, Agatha Christie loved her dogs and throughout her life she usually had one at her feet. I would like to include one of her many dogs with the sculpture of her on the bench as I think it would be really nice for people to see this love she had for her canine friends.



Suitability and Approach

Suitability

The sculpture of Agatha Christie would be cast into bronze as this is the most suitable and also the most traditional material for large outdoor sculptures as it is very tough and hard wearing.

I would consider a lovely warm brown patina, which would age nicely with being close to the sea.

Both Man and Boy and particularly Miranda are standing up well to the coastal weather.

Approach

As a local sculptor I have an understanding, interest and awareness of Torbay, so consequently I have a great desire in creating a lovely sensitive and thoughtful sculpture of Agatha Christie which would celebrate her life, creativity and literary genius here in Torquay.

I would also wherever possible use and source local materials here in Torbay so supporting the local economy.

