

PRESS RELEASE

Beyond Seven Mountains

Kenny Hunter, Robin Rimbaud - Scanner, Holly Slingsby

Temporary artist interventions in Corby's woodlands that evoke a sense of narrative

Dates: 1 August – 31 October, Open Everyday during daylight hours

Location: Thoroughsale Wood (Rockingham Forest), Corby, NN17 2UN

Beyond Seven Mountains builds on Sophie Herxheimer's residency and artist book, *The Listening Forest*, which combined personal experience with poetry and drawing. Sophie interviewed the public in the Rockingham forest area, including Corby, and made poems and drawings from the stories they told her. This exhibition's title comes from the way Central European fairy tales begin; "A long time ago, beyond seven mountains, beyond seven forests" and refers to the way contemporary artists continue the tradition of storytellers, reinventing myths and legends, to create new folklore for our time.

Kenny Hunter makes sculptures of animals which are anthropomorphic- they have traits in common with human beings, whether that's their appearance or the stories surrounding them. As animals, swans have lots of symbolic meanings, for instance: before the discovery of Australia in 1697, Europeans thought that all Swans were white, and the phrase 'Black Swan' was a statement of something impossible. In 2007, N.N. Taleb coined the phrase 'Black Swan Theory' to describe any event that is unexpected and makes a strong impact. In this sense, Hunter's *Black Swan* sculpture appearing suddenly in Corby is a statement of surprise at the impossible.

Robin Rimbaud makes artworks with sound that tell stories about language and place, during his research Rimbaud became interested in stories about Corby's history. The name of the town Corby means *Dark as a Raven*, which suggests a cinematic soundscape.

In mythology, the raven is an oracle- it brings messages and bad omens: for instance the raven is a messenger between the Greek god Apollo and human kind. Robin's artwork uses the sound of raven's mimicking human voices, these soundbites have been spliced into strange, abstract phrases. Rimbaud's sound installation also reflects on Corby's links to outer space; the grandmother who wrote a prayer of peace dedicated to the lost crew of the Apollo 11, and a large crater on Mars which is named after the town.

Holly Slingsby looks at cultural traditions and different meanings of "divinity". She explores ways that images and ideas overlap, particularly in classical symbols. In the past, religious icons represented invisible or unknowable ideas, Holly looks at how these symbols change from ancient mythology into the present day. Slingsby's three installations hanging from the trees throughout the Woods form a *Cloud of Witnesses*- a set of prayer tokens that are tied to trees around a sacred space. They are made up of the props and objects from stories about saints and mythical gods, as if they had been left behind after the stories were told. The objects belonging to the Greek god Hephaestus, a blacksmith who made weapons for the other gods, is a reference to Corby's steel history.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The nearest Car Parks: off Westcott Way (NN17 1QB) or Cottingham Road (NN17 2UN)

Fermynwoods Contemporary Art is an educational charity that commissions innovative and meaningful ways for artists to engage with audiences, in public spaces across Northamptonshire and online.

For further information please contact Yasmin Canvin on 01832 731257 or yasmin@fermywoods.co.uk.

The project has been funded by Arts Council England and Northamptonshire County Council (managed by NCF) and is organised in partnership with Corby Borough Council.

