Owen Bullet’s sculptures appear to burst their bonds; they spring through walls and mirrors and balance effortlessly but dynamically in space. When William Tucker and Tim Scott discussed sculpture in 1967 they suggested that:

Sculpture is a proposition about the physical world, about a finite order (completeness), and by implication about our existence in the world; the direction of the activity itself being toward the general, away from the personal. (WT)

Sculpture acts by displacement; it is the state of being, the state of feeling, the state of experience, the state of physical awareness and sensation, the state of confrontation by physical phenomena; not these things themselves or an interpretation of them. (TS)

These observations could refer to the series of experiential incidents that mark Bullet’s work. His emphasis on formal composition and balance, weight and gravity, careful selection of materials - in this exhibition, wood and steel - and his pre-occupation with the animation and occupation of space force the viewer to engage. The sculptures demonstrate the individuality of his approach; his use of mirrors is a kinetic device that completes the work only as the viewer moves around as in the case of the large wall piece The Space between the Bars and the small wenge wood sculpture Proposition I.

Wood is the most ubiquitous yet mysterious of materials, as it wears its inexorable growth and history in the rings that make each tree individual. Owen Bullet has carved and curved the massive presence of an oak tree and spiralled it into the basement space at Marsden Woo. The result is an installation that challenges perceptions of internal and external space and remakes the relationship between man and nature in a heroic vein. The site specific work, titled Portal, hewn from English oak and contained by steel bracelets, allows us to witness this struggle by proxy.

Yet his work is subtle and characterized by a lightness and sureness of instinct; he has rightly been compared to a choreographer and his gestural, dancing lines, his fascination with the physical laws of nature and his ability to transcend these laws in his drawings and in his sculpture bring to mind T.S. Eliot’s lines from Burnt Norton:

    Except for the point, the still point, There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.

After a Foundation course at Central Saint Martin’s College of Art and Design and a degree at Camberwell, Bullet completed his MA at the Royal College of Art in 2005. He has exhibited internationally and has been Artist in Residence at Pustinia Land Art Park, Belize (2006) and Snape Maltings, Aldeburgh (2008).


The Project Space curators are Tessa Peters and Janice West.

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