

WALK ON BY.

Looking at this body of work I'd have to confess to an interest in surfaces – bright, scuffed, polished, scumbled, textured, applied and so on. I'd like to think that the surfaces not only fit the works, but are the works. As they say, what you see is what you get. It's ended up that way, but I didn't really start with the surface and build backwards. However, it is that relationship to volume that interests me at this moment – that the surface is a beginning point rather than an ending, a cause rather than an effect.

There are other, more formal concerns, seriality for instance in the *Alphabet*, *Custom* and wooden works, each of which is composed of similar (either made or bought) units differently organized and the pieces thus individuated. The *Custom* works are made from stainless-steel tube and spinings. The title *Custom* comes from an idea about modifications to standard products – customizing – and the particularities of each title – *Charmed* / *Foreign* / *Fivestar* – refers to something like style.

The *Alphabet* works have a consistent vocabulary in terms of the width of the line but vary both in configuration and materiality – aluminium, stainless steel and particular powder-coated colouring. The series as a whole originates in a group of twenty-six drawings (an alphabet), the use of international letter-identification names *I(ndigo)*, *H(otel)* etc. is in recognition of this particular sub-set.

The wood works are all made up by selection from a group of bent and twisted wooden forms – a pre-prepared stock – each composed with the idea of creating a single line. Paul Klee's "taking a line for a walk" is a reasonable description. They are further individuated by having their surfaces impregnated with metal powders – *Brass*, *Iron*, *Aluminium* and *Copper*.

Siamese Metal #7 continues a series made by combining two forms together and making them share features at their interface. *Siamese* refers to this twinning process, as in a Siamese junction in pipework, and harks back to the now-discredited term for conjoined twins, a naming that remembers a pair of conjoined Thai acrobats in the nineteenth-century court of the king of Siam.

The two folded metal pieces, *Four By Four* and *Foolish Pride* find their origins in the hollowing-out of abutted, polygonal solids, with just the vertices being left as skeletal structures. The surface of *Four By Four* is powder-coated (textured like black leatherette inside and out) over the entire surface. The title refers to the number and configuration of the elements, and to an idea of high-end upholstery such as you might find in a slightly menacing ATV. *Foolish Pride* is, literally, inside-out. The checker-plate surfaces are on the inside of the sculpture's three elements; the outside, the back of the aluminium plate, is finished with swirling abrasions that make the light dance across them as you walk past – which indeed is the source of the title – “Walk on by / Foolish pride, that's all that I have left”, as Dionne Warwick sang.

RICHARD DEACON 30 OCTOBER 2012