

**Anthony Caro**

**Ian Dawson**

**John Gibbons**

**Guy Martin**

**John Wallbank**

# Artist Boss

Anthony Caro's studio assistants  
and issues of legacy in British sculpture

curated by Jenny Dunseath & Mark Wilsher

19 November 2016 - 29 January 2017

From the early stages of his career **Sir Anthony Caro** (1924-2013) employed young artists as studio assistants and sounding boards in his Camden studio. This exhibition, and the recently published book of interviews of the same title, highlights the role of the artist's assistant in the story of twentieth-century British sculpture. It asks questions about originality, authenticity, and authorship. It underlines the crucial importance of relationships and a sense of community within a creative workplace.

*Artist Boss* provides a unique opportunity to see how artists unified by the forefather of British sculpture explore the language of sculpture today. Four assistants from five successive decades of employment are represented here with recent works, alongside pieces by Caro that were made during their respective eras in the studio. The variety of the works illustrates the different ways in which the evolution of sculptural language has been negotiated. They reflect a fundamental shift from hands-on, process-based sculpture towards the expanded field. The works demonstrate a kind of learning that is rooted deeply in the processes of the studio and in spending time with someone committed to medium-specificity.

**Guy Martin** operates on the boundaries of design and art, his sculpture is informed by and in turn feeds into his unique furniture and architectural projects. His craftsmanship is also evidenced in small works that are shown in the Orangery. His long period of employment is reflected by Caro's 'Purling', 1969.

**John Gibbons** propels us from the welded metal tradition of St Martins sculpture department. Using surface to bind us to a suggestion of the body,

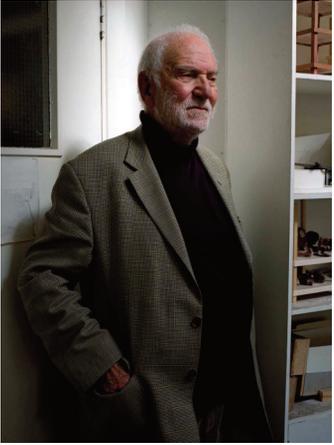


Image: Anthony Caro in his studio, 2008  
© Gautier Deblonde

his sculpture blends into a postmodern aesthetic. The critic Karen Wilkin describes his work as 're-examining a sense of place by being both inviting and impenetrable.' His period as an assistant is represented by 'Thunder', 1976.

**Ian Dawson** is head of sculpture at Winchester School of Art, and his work makes use of hi-tech processes including 3D scanning, fused filament deposition and rotational moulding as well as welding and the incorporation of found objects. His employment is represented by Caro's 'Equator', 1993/94.

**John Wallbank's** work is perhaps furthest removed from the canon of mid-twentieth century British sculpture. He is concerned with that which is temporary, compact, or reproducible, and invites us to deal with the act of making as the thing itself. His time with Caro is signified by the monumental 'Magnolia Passage', 2005/06.

This exhibition is part of a wider research project focused on Caro, investigating the role of the 'studio assistant', its impact on learning and artistic careers through exhibitions, seminars, workshops and publications.

Visit [www.artistboss.org.uk](http://www.artistboss.org.uk) for more details.

### Publication

The lavishly illustrated *Artist Boss* book (published by Wunderkammer Press) presents a series of interviews with studio assistants, critical essays and interviews with Anthony Caro conducted before he died, and with his Studio Director Patrick Cunningham. The assistants' responses provide immediate access to artists' thought processes and an insight into the complexity of their changing roles.

Roche Court  
East Winterslow  
Salisbury, Wiltshire  
SP5 1BG

T +44 (0)1980 862244  
F +44 (0)1980 862447  
nac@sculpture.uk.com  
www.sculpture.uk.com

NewArtCentre.