

# EXHIBITION TITLE

The exhibition title:  
'Canticle of Creatures' is drawn from a poem by Franciscan monk St. Francis of Assisi, known for his love of animals and nature. Deborah makes a link with the museum site on Henry Street, which was formerly a Franciscan Friary.



# INSPIRATION

The inspiration for this work is a tiny bronze spigot dating from the 15th - 16th century. Its most striking feature is a cast bronze figurehead in the shape of a stylised hen. It was used as a tap to dispense liquid such as oil or vinegar from a container. The spigot was found in the town land of Monabraher near Limerick city and donated to the museum collection in 1989.



# WHY?

‘I loved this artefact as soon as I saw it. Its characterful hen design sparked a feeling of joy that seems to have reverberated through the centuries. I think about how many people have experienced a moment of recognition and wonder when interacting with it as I have. I think about how we experience joy in small ways and how it is the accumulation of these experiences and an openness to them that makes life interesting.’



# HOW?

'I began this project by examining the elements of the hen design closely. The outsized eye is made from two imperfect circles. Its sweeping curves have a fluency that brings to mind a doodle or sketch. I brought this information into my early drawings which I made on the design app 'Procreate.' Next the forms were built in cardboard which allowed me to work out the construction. I used these cardboard templates to cut out shapes from evenly rolled slabs of clay. Once the basic structure is set, I like to work without too much of a plan to allow the pieces to unfold.'



# ‘WONDER IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM’

## Socrates

It is my intention to charge these ceramic forms with the playful spirit of the little hen spigot. I bring my own stories to the work as well, so imaginary creatures and habitats are thrown into the mix. Nature is always close by and necessary. You might be invited to gaze into a pool - Is it a mirror or a doorway? Can you allow yourself to go there? I invite you to take a look.



# DEBORAH WATKINS

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