



AREAS OF RESEARCH AND COLLABORATION

With very many thanks to:
David Cooper
Independent Shellfisherman's Cooperative & Nev Jo Emmerson
John White and the Crazy Cat crew
Mike Cansfield
Mike & Anita Emmerson (and Mum)
Russ Conlon
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust - Kat & Ant



A potting trip out aboard the *Crazy Cat* gave me first hand experience of watching fleets of pots being worked: hauling in, the crabs & lobsters measured prior to keeping or returning, v-notching, sustainability, pot re-baiting & the considerations in re-siting the fleet of pots.



Talks with the traditional fishing coble owners at North Landing informed me of the long local history of shellfishing and their current practices. A trip to the 'potting shed' opened my eyes to the nitty gritty of making creels, the efforts of their construction and the material considerations.



These are a small selection of the titles I have waded through in the preparation for this project - they have actually been delightful and informative reads. Along with research papers and reports, the literature has informed the varying contents and narrative of the resin crustacean casts.



Photo credit: Independent Shellfisherman's Cooperative

I visited the storage tanks at a shellfishery cooperative and had an intriguing chat about the state of the industry and its possible future. I learned that crabs blow bubbles (honest!) & about the importance of the East Riding as an international exporter of crabs and lobsters.



MOULDING, CASTING AND RESIN PROCESSES

With very many thanks to:
Desmond Brett ('casting guru')
Hull School of Art & Design
Notcutt Ltd
Phil Ratcliffe
Steve Moore



The locally-sourced crabs and lobsters are initially varnished to seal the carapace pores and even out the surface to create a smooth moulding finish.



The crustacean is embedded on a clay support so a structurally sound mould can be taken. All areas of undercut & unnecessary spaces are filled with clay.



A mould is made using layers of a specialist high-strength rubber solution with catalyst and a then strengthened with a thixotropic thickening agent.



The mould is then reinforced by the addition of a plaster & scrim jacket. The removable 'chimneys' allow you to press through the jacket and release the mould.



The plaster supports are painted with a shellac (resin) varnish solution which seals the surface & assists the ease of the mould release after casting.



Practice casts are taken from the mould using Jesmonite resin plaster. The casts highlight areas to be corrected & re-modelled before the final mould is made



The finished mould is prepared, capable of producing multiple casts. However it will deteriorate over time necessitating repeats of the process from the start.



I tested materials in Polyoptic resin to ensure the heat process & chemicals did not distort or melt plastics, bleed inks, affect colours, or an array of media.



The contents of the casts were conceived, made or drawn in the studio, found, or specifically sourced. I tried to think of novel ways to interpret themes.



In order to fix the pieces on the wall, 2 lengths of steel threaded rod with nuts and washers for strength are embedded into the resin mould during casting.



The resin cast is then filed and hand-finished. There are 50 individual designs. It is a long process with many variables and material challenges.



Through this project I will communicate the importance & impact that *C. pagurus* & *H. gammarus* play in our history, culture, livelihoods & tastes.