

The Figures in the Cross

~ In my experience, there is a yearning in human beings to understand or acknowledge the resonance between the human soul and the poetry of a given landscape. Created to mark that yearning and to celebrate what is small, what is found, what is underfoot, these figures are my poems without words - my poem as earth. As such, they connect me to what is greatly small and redefine my definition of the beautiful each and every day. Strange to say, they hold both me, and my very soul in place. I experience pleasure in the making of the figures because it is as if I am learning a new alphabet by remembering an old one. For me, it is a privilege to imagine the elegant language that exists in the natural world just as it is a privilege to explore and then respond to the language *behind* the one that I know. The figures stand apart from any other creative effort of mine because I do not struggle in their creation and I never doubt. Rather, the elements that go into their making seem to wait for me to open my eyes to what is already there; and they are simply what happens whenever I touch what is small with the desire to hold what is great. It seems that they have become a means for me to *practice* compassion for the astounding creatures we are, and that everything living is. As I practice, I know that were my house to burn I would most likely try to save what is ordinary and underfoot most of the time - figures that enshrine a bone, berry, or leaf - and never once have failed to give proof to me of the splendid fact that we belong to this world, and *more*. Were the figures to speak, they would say that we belong to what we cannot imagine, are incapable of imagining, even as we touch, see, feel, and assume we know what it is that we hold in our hands.

