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Published on [March 11, 2016](#)

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Interview: Dana Lundmark | Sculptor

written by [whodhavethought](#)



From befriending the daughter of Picasso's surgeon to studying with a Polish icon restorer in Krakow, sculptor Dana Lundmark has had some fascinating experiences to make most artists and travellers truly envious. I discovered Dana when I purchased one of her ceramic seagulls at a small gallery in Mosman which now resides, eating its chip, in a planter on my balcony!

Curious to find out about its maker, I got in touch with [Dana](#) and here's what I found out about her travels and creative life ...



Dana Lundmark at her kiln

Please introduce yourself and tell us a bit about your background and how you've ended up where you are today.

My name is Dana Lundmark. I live on the Northern beaches in Sydney. I have always been interested in art and can remember being very envious of my brother who was and probably still is a better draftsman than I was, but I never gave up the pursuit of art. I knew that I would follow that path eventually. I have gone from being passionate about painting to being obsessed with clay.



'The Longest Journey' by Dana Lundmark



'Saltwater Voyage' by Dana Lundmark

It sounds like you've had some fascinating experiences from a post-grad scholarship to Russia, studying at the Arte Sotto un Tetto in Florence and icon restoration in Poland. How have these experiences shaped your work?

To please my parents I went to university rather than art school and it was this that led me to Russia. I studied the Russian language and Russian literature. I spent an amazing life-changing year in Russia at a time when it was still The Soviet Union. It took a few years before I had the opportunity to go to art school and fulfil my dreams. After art school I went to Paris, which was a very important time for me. I spent most of my days in the galleries, and as I was alone I was able to fully embrace the art scene.



'Keeper of the Book' by Dana Lundmark

You've gone from iconography to painting to sculpture. Tell us about your creative process.

My path has taken me through painting, jewellery, icons and now sculpture. I came into sculpture by chance. I am now obsessed with working with clay and hand-building. I cannot describe the feeling of satisfaction when I am working with three-dimensional objects. To me it feels as if all my creative paths were leading to this point in my artistic life: working in clay and creating interesting and unusual pieces. I work almost daily and spend a lot of time sketching or thinking about different works.



'The Flight of Ecstasy' by Dana Lundmark

Tell us about your sculptures, in particular your recent ceramic figures.

My recent pieces which were exhibited at the Mu Gallery in Sydney were based on the refugee issue. I hand-built all my figures, which are very different and show different emotions. I then placed the figures in palm pods which resembled boats. I used palm pods to show the fragility of the vessels and the perilous journey.



"Please Don't Feed the Birds" which won first prize in the outdoor sculpture section at Harbour Sculpture, Woolwich and winner of the People's Choice Awards. By Studio D: Dana Lundmark, Rozanna Carbon, Lily Lim, Lesley Murray, Liz Oomens, Bridget Sheehan.

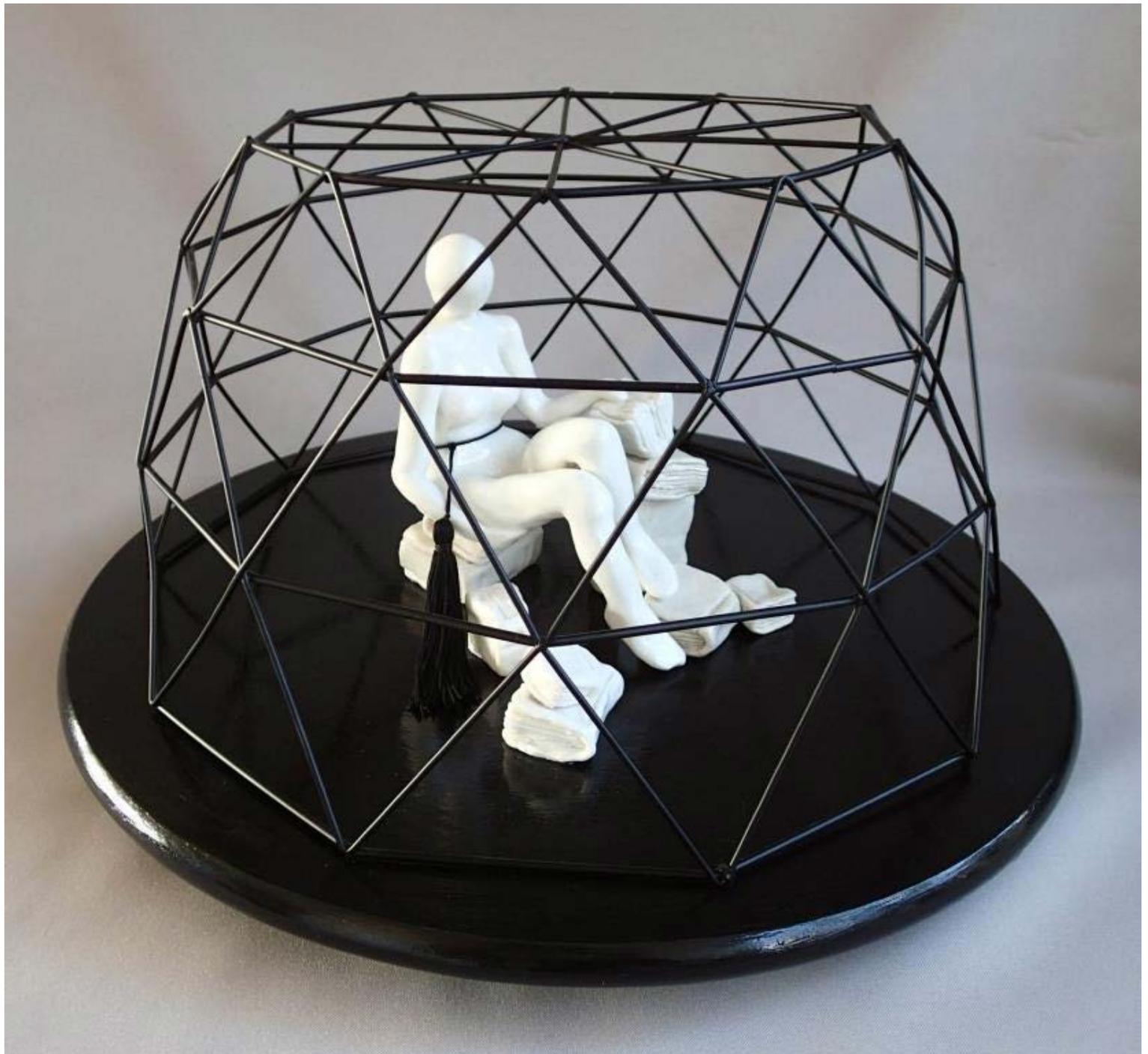
Last year you and your sculpture group won the outdoor sculpture section at Sculpture at Woolwich (2015) for an amazing flock of ceramic seagulls. Tell us how this work came about?

Please Don't Feed the Birds is a sculpture incorporating dozens of seagulls, flocking around a central figure, stealing hot chips. It came about when I first started working with clay. I joined a sculpture group and I thought it would be nice to work on something large, which would involve all the members.



'Seagull Spread Wings' by Dana Lundmark

I came up with the concept and the result was a sculpture which we entered in the Harbour Sculpture at Woolwich (2015). We won First Prize (outside sculpture) and the People's Choice award. *Whodhavethought!* It was very gratifying as it made a lot of people smile. I have now used some of my birds in my other pieces and some of the birds have found happy homes in gardens and on balconies.



'Dome of Wisdom and Knowledge' by Dana Lundmark

You say you love visiting 'unusual destinations' such as Borneo, Lapland and the Faroe Islands. Tell us about your love of travel and whether it influences your art?

I love to travel and have been fortunate to travel a great deal and I always carry pencils and paper. Travel gives me the opportunity to not only see new things, but to see ordinary things in a different way. For instance, I did a series of Paris rooftops that resulted in an exhibition in Sydney. My art is very much influenced by the places I visit and the people I meet.



'Mantle' by Dana Lundmark

I'm currently working on ...

A series of ceramic figures called *Mantle*. I am using different clays and trying to achieve unusual effects. These

pieces vary in size and are hand built. They do have a figurative aspect to them as I was and still am a figurative artist. I love painting portraits.



Sculpture in the 'Mantle' series by Dana Lundmark

It's not very cool, but I really like ... The Original Smith's crisps.

Have you ever had a 'who'd have thought' moment?

I have had lots and lots of 'who'd have thought moments'. Being on a train in Europe and meeting the daughter of Picasso's surgeon and then being invited to visit their home which was covered in Picasso's artworks and other great art. Studying with a Polish icon restorer in Krakow and being surrounded by original 12th and 13th century icons. I was allowed to touch them. But the one that tops all of these is 'who'd have thought' I would go to Russia and meet the love of my life, my Swedish husband who followed me to Australia.

Thanks so much, Dana!

You can find Dana [here](#) and she is exhibiting a piece called *Mantle 1* at the Mosman Art Gallery until 20 March, 2016.



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Your art is wonderful!... I love it!
Good work

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I mean your art, The little white men are so funny and enigmatic.

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Absolutely love your work! The figurines are simply amazing!
Sue

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Thanks for the comments and glad you love Dana's work!

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