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Deborah Butterfield Calls Horse a Spiritual Expression

Posted by [Editor](#) on Wednesday, February 8, 2012 ·



WASHINGTON, DC—Is that petrified wood? The contemporary gallery of the [American Art Museum](#) features an amazing abstract representation of a horse. “[Monekana](#)” by Deborah Betterfield looks like it is composed of decayed wood, but the sculpture is actually bronze.

The museum describes the work thus: “...cast from fragments of Hawaiian Ohea wood, the sculpture is a tour-de-force example of Butterfield’s ability to capture the texture and color of the original materials in bronze, the medium she has preferred since the early 1990s. According to Butterfield, this monumental work is her most spiritual expression of the horse as a metaphor of human experience.”

Recognized for her horse sculptures, Butterfield splits her time between a ranch in Montana and a studio space in Hawaii. (“Monekana,” is Hawaiian for Montana and a part of the museum’s permanent collection.)

All photos by Art Observer

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"Monekana," 2001 (bronze).



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