



Lauren Grossman

Artist Statement

"Talk Show" continues my studio practice of rummaging about in Judeo-Christian texts, but with a new focus on the conversational elements in the ancient storytelling. My notion was to manifest the "talk" in sculptural form, reducing the figuration and allowing the text itself to do more of the visual heavy lifting.

Some of the speeches are monologues directed at a specific person, some are direct conversations between the divine and human characters, some are between family members, and "Hedge", for example, deploys a little chit-chat between God and Satan. Tone-wise, they involve declaration, bargaining, supplication, bewilderment, deceit, tenderness, and, of course, plenty of braggadocio.

I have no particular interest in the legibility of these texts in the finished work. I am, however, deeply invested in the process of hand-forming the text structures. This labor imparts a haptic quality to the work that cannot be achieved more efficiently. Editing to just the spoken bits of text gave me snarly clusters to organize in space—exercising my love of scaffolding. "Genesis Object", for example, uses a linear scheme to model the series of eleven declarations with which the lord detailed creation. (Exactly whom he is addressing before there is anyone or anything to speak to is a bit puzzling.) "After the Manner of Women" employs a vertical hierarchy and "She-ass" is more of a pass-through. In other work, I incised lumpy forms and removed the interstitial spaces of the texts, leaving a more vestigial sense of the original speeches.

A couple of the works in the show, "Susanna Revisited" and "Io Revisited" are newer treatments of pieces I made nearly 40 years ago. My interest in the stories abides, but my perspective and art-making tactics have shifted over the years. Now that the dominance of Western visual culture is eroding, I look at canonical texts and art historical precedents for imagery that might be ripe for re-examination.