

The Flying Tales of Folklore and Fairy Tale Nature Trail project:

The Sculptor Luke Perry

The works were commissioned from Industrial Heritage Stronghold, which is a non profit company that builds monuments specifically celebrating the wide and rich cultures of the working peoples on the UK. The pieces were made by Luke Perry director of IHS and Black Country Sculptor.

Luke say's of the work the young women have done:

"I am really proud of the work and drawing inspiration from the girls was a joy, they are all full of ideas and energy and I am sure that they will grow up to be strong and valuable personalities. Working with North Smethwick Development Trust was a smooth process that allowed the maximum to be gained from the work due to a freedom given to the kid's ideas and enable me to express their ideas in sculpture".

Sculptures

Malala sculpture was inspired by her being a local legend and young people's pride at having her associated with Birmingham. The sculpture speaks for itself!

The Bangladesh Rickshaw with wings is symbolic of the thriving Bangladeshi Culture in Smethwick and it is a specific replica of the ones used in Bangladesh which are unique in style to that area. It is mounted on the page representing the Shaheed Minar, The Shaheed Minar is a national monument in Dhaka, Bangladesh, established to commemorate those killed during the Bengali Language Movement.

The Aladdin Genie is a simple representation of Aladdin, popular folklore which is a story that the group remember stories from as a child. This is a story of triumph over evil.

The Kitsune mask is a popular Japanese mask representing the fox. Stories depict them as intelligent beings and as possessing magical abilities that increase with their age and wisdom. According to Yōkai folklore, all foxes have the ability to shape shift into human form. While some folktales speak of kitsune employing this ability to trick others—as foxes in folklore often do—other stories portray them as faithful guardians, friends, lovers, and wives.

The Cinderella one is simple fairy tale that all our children love. Cinderella is a young woman living in unfortunate circumstances that are suddenly changed to remarkable fortune. The oldest documented version comes from China, and the oldest European version from Italy.

The Dragon Piece is representative of the many dragons in mythology across the ages and cultures, it is almost universal as a symbol of the feared, powerful and unknown. This is why the group did not select one particular dragon from any one folk tale of fairy tale but wanted to present a universal dragon to portray them all.

The Wolf and Boy are representative of The tale from Aesop's Fables, it concerns a shepherd boy who repeatedly tricks nearby villagers into thinking a wolf is attacking his flock. When one actually does appear and the boy again calls for help, the villagers believe that it is another false alarm and the sheep are eaten by the wolf. The moral stated at the end

of the Greek version is, "this shows how liars are rewarded: even if they tell the truth, no one believes them".

The Witch is a symbol of witchcraft in the general term crossing all cultural boundaries. Witches captivate the minds of everyone: from angry villagers wondering why the women of the town were gaining a sense of independence to the average Joe wondering whether that herbal tea last night was a potion or just really bad tea. Witches have been seen as objects of wisdom and evil in folklore for many generations.

The 10 Headed demon is from the Story of Rama and Sita a Hindu Tale. Once upon a time there was a great warrior, Prince Rama, who had a beautiful wife named Sita. There was also a terrible demon king, Ravana. He had twenty arms and ten heads, and was feared throughout the land. He wanted to make Sita his wife, and one day he kidnapped her and took her away in his chariot. Clever Sita left a trail of her jewellery for Rama to follow.

The Spider is a sculpture of Anansi he is an African folktale character. He often takes the shape of a spider and is considered to be the spirit of all knowledge of stories. He is also one of the most important characters of West African and Caribbean folklore.

The Lion is from a legend which has a swan in it too, is from Lion and the Mouse from Aesops Fables. This is the fable: A lion lay asleep in the forest, his great head resting on his paws. A timid little mouse came upon him unexpectedly, and in her fright and haste to get away, ran across the lion's nose. Woken from his nap, the lion laid his huge paw angrily on the tiny creature to kill her. "Spare me!" begged the poor mouse. "Please let me go and someday I will surely repay you." The lion was so amused at the idea of the little mouse being able to help the King of Beasts, that he lifted up his paw and let her go.

Some weeks later, the lion was caught in a net. The hunters, who desired to carry the lion alive to their King, tied him to a tree while they went in search of a wagon to carry him. Just then the little mouse happened to pass by, and seeing the lion's sad plight, went up to him and soon gnawed away the ropes of the net, freeing the lion.

"You have helped me and now I have returned the favor. Was I not right - even a mouse can help a lion!" said the little mouse.

The Fire Bird is from the Russian/ Slavic tales, The Firebird and the Gray Wolf, where the Firebird was said to have stolen the king's golden apples and his knights were sent on a quest to restore them to him, this is a really long and complex story but is generally about human nature.