

The Drumheller Albertosaurus Donald Lawrence, July 2005



The fossilized femur of an Albertosaurus is an artifact that my family has always had – since my oldest brother Hamish excavated it near Drumheller when he was ten or so years old. It has been moved back and forth across the country several times and is still encased in the bed of plaster and crating that it was originally set into.

My sister Alysoun has identified the bone as the primary artifact of our family, something evidenced by the numerous other artifacts and documents that circulate around it: newspaper columns written by my brother Iain; a map of the site drawn by my father; photographs; the bone's appearance on a quilt created by all of us for my parents' fiftieth wedding anniversary two years ago; and boxes of other, lesser bones.

Likewise, the bone has a presence in my interest in skin-on-frame kayaks and in much of my artistic production – perhaps as a latent impulse behind the many skeletal and rough-hewn constructions that make up such works as *Rock* (1991), *Storm Kit* (1992), *Kayak* (1992), *The Sled* (1995); and my current sculptural diorama based upon the Torhamvan, a ship wrecked in Newfoundland in 1926. A further reminder of the physical presence of the bone is present in weighty cameras that I have fabricated for underwater pinhole photography and, as my partner Darlene has observed, I am drawn to aspects of technology that, like the dinosaur bone, are extinct — whether my own cameras or the rusted hulks of the Torhamvan's boilers.



Baidarka Frame, Kamloops, 1996



Torhamvan Boiler Framing, in progress, 2005