



# Of Sirens and Centaurs: Medieval Sculpture at Exeter Cathedral

*Alex Woodcock*

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Of Sirens and Centaurs provides a superb introduction to the fascinating world of medieval sculpture through examples in Exeter Cathedral which, for a Gothic building, contains a surprisingly rich repertoire of such classically-derived monsters. Glacial faces, secretive and obtuse, stare out from corbels and roof bosses; geometrically arranged creatures tessellate into kaleidoscopic patterns; figures are frozen, often in extremes of emotion; mythical monsters lurk. And yet within this otherness there is often a sense of play, of character, of unstable identities, of a world beyond the mask. In this guise the architectural carvings make visible the unseen life-force of the building. Carved into crucial architectural elements these sculptures are the building. The energy they carry is also the energy of the life of their creators and their material and spiritual worlds.



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