Jim Dine

**Autobiographical Elements**
It is an autobiographical piece. Most of my work is, but this one is particularly a glossary of terms. I mean it’s got tools, it’s got the faces of my then-wife, it’s all sorts of things like that. Yeah, it’s definitely an autobiographical piece.

**Hand Tools**
I didn’t choose the tools, they chose me—the objects that I grew up with since I was a kid working the family hardware store. They are a very primary source of inspiration to me, hand tools. These anonymous objects that developed, they are designed, developed through use, not through good design.

**Working with Bronze**
I had the good luck to work in a bronze foundry that was not very busy at the time. It was very small, and I was able to develop this thing in clay, and putting the objects into the clay when it was wet. And it was very, very tense to do because it was very hot out here in the summertime and dry and the clay kept drying, and objects would fall off. It was a challenge to do the whole thing. It was my usual technique of using collage. It’s extremely expensive to cast, and also you have to work with a lot of people, and collaborate with a lot of people. I’ve been lucky to work with very talented metal workers. Because these hearts are not cast in one piece. They’re
Nick Capasso, curator

Objects and Symbols
The heart was an ongoing symbol in Jim Dine’s work. Jim Dine reached prominence in the early 1960’s as a Pop artist. He was in the same generation as Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein, and Dine’s work was about objects. His work has always been about, not only objects, but objects that he holds dear. And then as he matured as an artist, some of these objects transformed into symbols. The symbol of the heart became very important to him. He has made hearts in many different materials. Two Big Black Hearts in a way was a culmination of his work to date where he has this overriding great big symbol of the heart, the soft materials where you can see evidence of the sculptor’s hand, and then there are all these objects of things that he loves. There are lots of tools, there are shoes, there’s an espresso pot, there’s the face of his ex-wife, hands, and feet. You know, he’s basically saying in a very overt way, “This is what I love. Here are the things, here they are. You can come and see them, come and touch them!”

Nick Capasso, curator

Scale of Two Big Black Hearts
Another thing that the outdoor environment affords to a sculptor is the ability to have an object seen from far away, and then have the visitor’s experience of the object change as one approaches the sculpture. Jim Dine’s Black Hearts were placed at the far end of the field quite intentionally. We could have put them right up by the road, but that gives everything away. When you start walking towards them, in your field of vision, they are very small, and because they are kind of unknown objects, it’s hard to get a sense of exactly how big they are. And as one approaches these objects and they become more distinct, you can see that something is going on with the surface. And as you get closer, and closer you can start discerning what these things are, and then when you get right up to the sculpture you can see exactly what they are, and at the same time, now the sculpture is no longer small. Now the sculpture is huge, and the sculpture dwarfs you. The sheer size, and its very dark, looming presence. You can’t get that same kind of gradual experiential build-up indoors, unless you’ve got a gargantuan indoor facility.

Mystery Family Tour
You are looking at a sculpture by Jim Dine called Two Big Black Hearts. Listen and look carefully to solve the mystery of why there are so many different objects in the hearts. Walk around both hearts and look at the objects in the sculpture. What can you find? I see a soda can, do you see it? Oh, there’s a rope and a shoe! Can you find those? What else can you find? How strange to have so many different objects in a work of art. Why do you think the artists put these objects in the hearts? Jim created this piece about himself. He included objects in the hearts that had personal meaning to him, such as tools from his studio, objects from his life, faces of people
that he cares about, and past artworks. Based on the objects in this sculpture, what can you tell about the artist? Wait a minute. As I walk around both hearts I notice that each heart seems to have the same objects in them. Are the hearts the same? What do you think?