

DAVID UMEMOTO
MONUMENTS
15.03 - 08.04.2018
MODERN SHAPES GALLERY, ANTWERP



Modern Shapes gallery in Antwerp presents a solo exhibition by the Canadian architect and sculptor David Umemoto (°Hamilton, CA, 1975).

The work of Umemoto could be placed somewhere in between architecture, arts and design. Inspired by the ancient arts and architecture from the Americas, Polynesia and Africa, Umemoto's work is characterized by very basic geometry, symmetry and repetitive patterns.

The concrete works of David Umemoto stand as studies about volume. At the juncture of sculpture and architecture, these miniature pieces evoke temporary buildings or monuments standing on far-away lands. The images conveyed in the mind by these works are numerous. They refer to the archaic and the ephemeral, despite the solidity and the modernity of the medium. Appearing before our eyes are pre-Columbian rock dwellings, god statues from the Andes or Easter Island, steles deteriorated by rain, remnants of modern cities having survived a

cataclysm, fragments of Babylonian cities, colonial settlements brought down to their foundations, cenotaphs abandoned in the jungle...When one sees Umemoto's architecture sculptures, one thinks of the modernist complex of Brasilia by Niemeyer, lost in the Amazonian jungle, or of the complex of Chandigarh by Le Corbusier, in the heart of India. The walls rising towards nowhere, the curves running into ceilings, and the staircases leading into the void are reminiscent of the mysterious Prisons of Piranesi. One way or another, these are always works where imagination joins forces with a contemplative discipline.

All of Umemoto's pieces are handmade, in order to respect an economy of means. The pressure of modernity imposes on man the obligation to evolve constantly, which leads him into an endless race towards technological improvement. As an artist, Umemoto chooses to react by taking a step backwards. His manual activities result from a desire to simplify artistic practice. Aesthetics and formalism are thus combined with a commitment to plainness. Opting for a low-tech stance, the artist wants to resist the demands of progress. He creates structured and modular pieces but these never perfectly fit together, a result of their willingly imperfect mode of production.

David Umemoto



After graduating in Architecture, David works for several years in established firms gaining solid practical experience. Thereafter, he opens his own consulting studio where for ten years he participates in numerous architectural competitions and collaborates on various artistic projects. He develops an interest in object creation and furniture design while refining his expertise in 3D computer graphics. In 2010, he spends a year in Indonesia, where he studies printmaking, sculpture and foundry. Upon his return, he launches the DXU collective that specializes in creating murals in aluminum and bronze. His current work stands between architecture and sculpture.

Modern Shapes Gallery

Modern Shapes Gallery in Antwerp was founded in 2012 by Michaël Francken out of passion for ceramics. Over the years, Francken has built an extensive collection of ceramic art. At Modern Shapes Gallery he presents a very personal and balanced selection of ceramics and regular exhibitions of high quality ceramic art, and more abstract, sculptural and architectural work. The aim is to present a combination of 20th century masters with new contemporary works and artists, such as David Umemoto.

Modern Shapes Gallery

Kloosterstraat 16

2000 Antwerp

Open from Thursday to Sunday

from 13:00 to 18:00

And on appointment

Info@modernshapes.com

+32 (0)475 606 391

Modern Shapes Gallery with David Umemoto on the first edition of Brussels' design fair Collectible

March 8-11, 2018

COLLECTIBLE

Vanderborcht building

Rue de l'Ecuyer 50,

1000 Brussels

www.collectible.design

Press requests:

Micha Pycke

Club Paradis

micha@clubparadis.be

+32 (0)486 680 070

