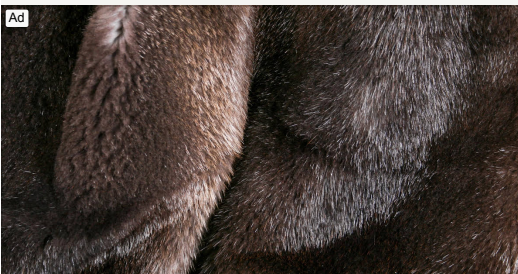


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Lorenzo Quinn brings 'Now and Forever' and Together to Dubai

Italian sculptor is best known for expressive recreations of human hands

Published: February 21, 2023 21:51
Khemena Ahmad



Known for bringing people together through his art, which highlights what unites us rather than what divides us, Italian artist Lorenzo Quinn is a leading figure in contemporary figurative sculpture. Behind his artwork lies the philosophy that everything we say and do in life has a ripple effect and forever alters the course of events, which is profoundly expressed in his collection 'Now and Forever' featuring Quinn's unique new art pieces, never seen before by the public, exhibited at Leila Heller Gallery in Dubai along with some of his past work. In another location, the city embraces the vast and expressive Together by Lorenzo Quinn, previously installed in Giza, Egypt, which is currently being displayed in front of the DIFC Gate Building. The Kurator caught up with the Italian sculptor during his visit to Dubai and discussed his philosophy of time in

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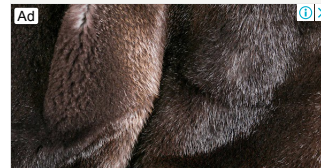
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art and the significance of the artwork he exhibits in the region along with other topics.

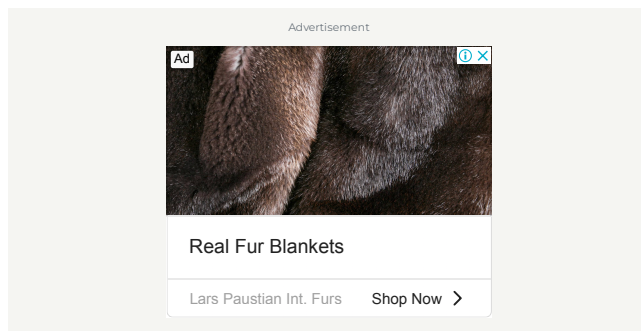
How do you describe your art?

“My art is materialized dialogue. I like to make sculptures that transmit messages. The underlying message of the sculpture is of even greater importance to me than the aesthetic of the piece.”



Image Credit:

What makes a piece of art timeless in your opinion?



“A piece of art that connects with people, that connects with the viewer, so that the viewer can somehow see themselves reflected in the sculpture, stirring their innermost feelings and emotions.”

The time element has a significant impact on your work, how has this transformed over the years?

“I am 56 years old, I have 3 children, and I am constantly thinking about the past, present, and future. Time has always been important to me because my father was 51 years older than me and therefore, I knew I wasn't going to have him around for a very long time. And therefore, I tried to be present through every moment with him. Also, I lost my brother when he was only 48 years old, I still miss him dearly and that heightened my awareness of time even further. And now of course at 56 in the middle of my voyage of life, I think about time a lot. So, I try as

much as possible, to follow my dreams and live each day to the fullest, taking advantage of every moment that I can.”

You said that you create the art piece in your head before you manifest it into reality, have you always achieved the result you wanted?

“Absolutely not. I wish that was the case, but I don’t think any artist has been happy with every single sculpture or painting that they have created, and I most definitely have not. Many times, I see the piece clearly in my mind but when it materializes, it turns out to be not a very successful piece for one reason or another, perhaps something within the art piece does not work but that’s okay. Not every piece has to be a great sculpture, it’s a learning curve, and we are learning every day. I grow every day and I expect myself to keep on growing. The day I think I’ve made it or achieved greatness will probably be the day the artist inside me dies. An artist is never truly satisfied, he can’t be. It’s something innate, a curiosity to keep growing and to search for the next piece. And then after that, move on to the next one. The moment I make a somewhat successful sculpture, in a way I almost get depressed because I wonder “will I be able to do something equally as important?” but that’s the nature of our work.”

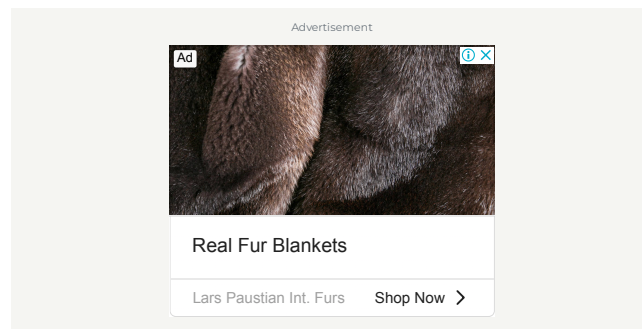


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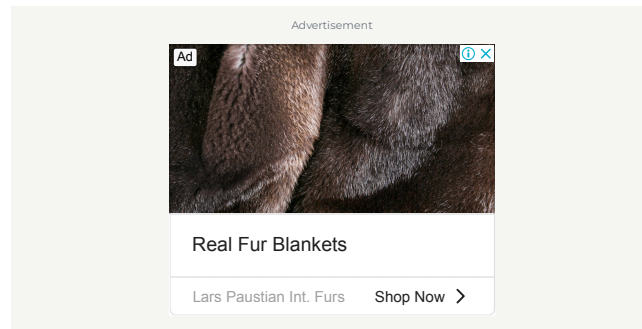
Tell us about your choices of materials in creating your artwork.

“Most of my sculptures, the large ones at least, are site-specific, so it depends of course on where the piece is, the purpose of the sculpture, and the natural elements. I’ve had sculptures coming out of the water, sweet water and salted water, in cold regions and hot regions, and even sculptures in roundabouts. Therefore, you can’t have reflective material; the materials I deal with are dependent on where they are going. As far as the other sculptures it depends on the aesthetics of the piece. Because with some sculptures, I cannot make them with certain materials because they would break, for example, marble only works with quite solid pieces. I can’t do sculptures that are like the ones in my

Force of Nature series, with the woman holding the globe, that would not work in marble as it would be too fragile. So, it depends on what I'm creating, I must use one material or the other."

What is the significance of choosing the Together sculpture for Dubai? What do you think it will add to the place?

"This sculpture is very important to me. People often ask me what is my favourite piece that I've created, which is difficult to say because each of my sculptures is like a child, you don't have a favourite child, but you might get along with one child more than another. So, each sculpture was important at the time that I made them. They represent important moments in my life but 'Together' is especially important to me.



Firstly, because of where I had placed the first version, in front of the pyramids. I had never been to Egypt and had always wanted to go there but I hadn't ever had the chance to visit. Then I was offered this incredible opportunity to place my 'Together' sculpture on the Giza Plateau in Cairo, in front of the pyramids; what an amazing gift to be given. I chose to make them in wire mesh because I wanted them to be transparent during the day and not block the view of the pyramids. The pyramids are untouchable you know, I don't expect to turn up 4,500 years later to place a sculpture in front of them and overshadow them, I mean it's just crazy.



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The pieces in DIFC were important to me because I haven't had a show in Dubai in 22 years and I wanted to make sure that I came back as the artist I am today, which is totally different to the artist I was 22 years ago. The underlying message is still the same, uniting the world through love, hope and empathy, and these hands represent that very well. It's a grand-scale art piece which is very different from what I was doing 22 years ago, it's definitely a statement piece. DIFC is an incredible place, it's an incredible archway to Dubai, in front of the Emirate's Towers, where the ruler's office is, it's an incredibly important and diplomatic

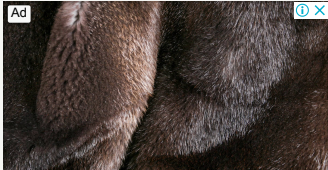
place for me to start my new presence in the gulf region. It is an incredible honour to be there, and I have the best place right in the centre, I am so excited.”

You are exhibiting a beautiful collection at Leila Heller’s gallery in Dubai, how did you make the selection?

“We made the selection as best we could with Leila’s help to try and create an exhibition, but we were under a time constraint as we decided quite late into the summer. We didn’t do the final selection until late August, and it takes at least 6 months to a year to properly curate the show but luckily, I was working on some pieces that Leila liked very much and that we felt would fit very well in with the gallery and with the current message. It’s basically a mashup of my work because I have some figurative work, not the full naked bodies of course, but I have hands and I have some wire mesh, bronze, and aluminium pieces, and I also brought something completely new which are the morphing words. The morphing words to me are important because they are an evolution in my art, I have always worked from titles, so I needed a title to start working on the sculptures and now it’s the title itself that becomes the protagonist. But there is always an element of duality, two words, that I have in my other sculptures because we make choices daily, both good and bad. And I want to show people and portray the message that in the end, it’s our choice how we live our lives, but each choice has a consequence to it.”

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Is there a hidden message inside you that you haven’t yet expressed through your art?

“No, I don’t think so. I am an open book and I think that I am very true to the art and to myself. I am quite coherent; my art is me. I’ve been very lucky that I haven’t had to adapt my art to people in the sense that I have always been able to make the art that I like and thank God people appreciate it. It’s the communication and the message behind it that for me is incredibly important.”

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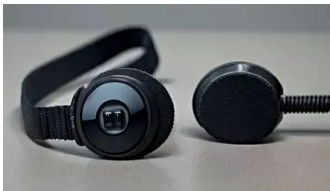


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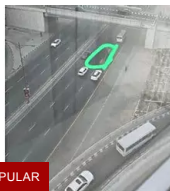
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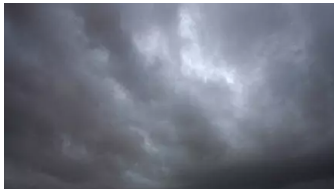


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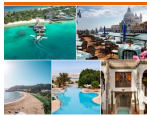
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