

## DOMOBAAL

### BACKYARD SCULPTURE

21.06.19 – 20.07.19



Domo Baal is delighted to present Backyard Sculpture: a collection assembled by David Gates & Neil Gall inside and outside the gallery, opening on the first day of Summer. Gall & Gates present an exhibition that looks at sculpture that was not sent to the fabricators ... probably. Sculpture that might have a junk/backyard aesthetic, sculpture that might actually be junk alongside sculpture that is well made but looks like junk. Sculpture that might refer to the garden in a literal way. Some sculpture will be placed in the front yard and some in the backyard and some in the gallery.

Gall writes:

A 'proper' curatorial team might run with the idea of 'Backyard Sculpture' along a historical timeline starting with Picasso's early cubist/guitar cardboard sculptures (circa 1912) moving up the 20th Century with Julio Gonzales through to Jean Tinguely, David Smith maybe onto Richard Stankiewicz perhaps taking a detour onto early Cy Twombly and Rauschenberg finding time to spend some time in England looking up Paolozzi ... and what about this guy, George Fullard? ... I mean there is a lot out there that might be termed 'Backyard' in the world of sculpture ... ok, here we go, what do I mean by 'Backyard Sculpture'? Does it mean sculpture that is made from junk/scrap metal, anything other than marble or bronze, well partly but not really.

David Gates and Neil Gall (me), as you probably know are not curators and it's an idiosyncratic/ artists approach that has resulted in this 'assemblage'. All artists have other artist friends or have at least relationships with other like-minded types ... so friendship and chance encounters have largely been the guiding principles in bringing this bunch of stuff together.

The idea for the show started through musings on the humble beginnings, back garden sculpting really of 20th Century SculptGods Henry Moore and Anthony Caro. There is a great photo of Caro standing proudly next to 'Woman in Pregnancy' in his garden in Hampstead in 1955 but what's really great is that Shelia (Girling, painter and also Mrs Caro) can be seen in the kitchen window

## DOMOBAAL

doing the dishes ..or maybe filling the kettle to make a cuppa for the thirsty 'man' sculptor. And as you probably know, Moore cast his early lead works (mid to late 1930's) in the garden of his Kentish cottage, 'Burcroft' assisted by Bernard Meadows (amusingly described as the 'boy' in a letter to friends at the time), using a saucepan on a Primus stove to liquify the raw material before pouring into a mould. By the time I'd read a John Berger essay on Peter László Péri, with Berger spying odd sculptures in another Hampstead garden, sometime in the late 1940's before he'd made the acquaintance of their maker, there was more than a germ of a show 'idea'.

Something about sculpture that was a little less than heroic, perhaps suburban even, sculpture that was certainly not sent to the fabricators, art that might be epitomised as an art of 'make-do' with a 'can-do' kind of attitude.

David Gates spent a year working on the Ray Johnson archive (Johnson of course being a kind of junk poet himself) he recalls seeing signs for 'Backyard Wrestling' on his journeys to and from Manhattan. So here you have the origins of the show title ... and also another geographic point of reference, somewhere beyond North London.

I always imagine that NY artists let it all hang loose as the city heats up during the summer and head upstate where they unleash their creative energy to make strange, probably hippyish junk sculptures, away from the pressures of the commercial artworld and making stuff that is, if not unsellable then at least probably pretty difficult to.

We have brought together art that has a largely D.I.Y feel, much of it might have a junk aesthetic but not necessarily. Some works such as Gavin Turk's simply 'refer' to the garden part of our show title, Clare Mitten's sculpture is both junky and plant-like, Derek Jarman is in the mix for similar reasons.

Picasso is not in the show but I like to think of him as a Junk-King-Overlord, he was the guy you did not want moving in next door. The Picassos (apart from a brief bourgeois period with Olga) always brought the neighbourhood down ... all those animals, goats, dogs and junk, all that crap he needed to feed off ... he was a terrible hoarder, ultimate neighbour from Hell.

Both myself (sorry neighbours) and David Gates do our own Backyard casting, we had hoped to collaborate on some works, next time I guess, Backyard Sculpture the sequel.

(Neil Gall, North London, June 2019)

Artists:

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, Alice Wilson, Alison Wilding, Andrew Curtis, Andrew Logan, Aubrey Haskard, Benjamin Houlihan, Brendan Reid, Carl D'Alvia, Carol Robertson, Cathy De Monchaux, Chantal Powell, Clare Mitten, Dan Knight, David Gates, Derek Jarman, Derrick Guild, Drew Edwards, Eduardo Paolozzi, Edward Chell, Eric Bainbridge, Finn Thomson, Gavin Turk, Ian Dawson, International Lawns, Jack Lavender, James Rielly, Jen Binnie, Jock McFadyen, Joel Tomlin, John Chilver, Lothar Götz, Mark Francis, Matt Calderwood, Matt Hale, Maud Cotter, Mel Kendrick, Mhairi Vari, Michelle Segre, MillsPower, Neil Gall, Neil Zakiewicz, Nicky Hirst, Peter László Péri, Phyllida Barlow, Rachel Adams, Richard Woods, Roger Ackling, Rosa Nguyen, Rupert Ackroyd, Simon English, Stefan Löffelhardt, Stephen Nelson, Tash Kahn, The Rural College of Art, Trevor Sutton.

### #backyardsculpture

David Gates, Domo Baal and Neil Gall wish to thank all artists and their studios, Andy Keate and the following galleries: Alan Cristea, Albion Barn, Amanda Wilkinson, Annelly Juda, Anthony Wilkinson, Aurel Scheibler, Belmacz, David Nolan, Derek Eller, JGM, Hereto De Tejada, Karsten Schubert, Kerlin, The Approach, Thomas Rehbein, Workplace Foundation, as well as private lenders Garry Clayton, Peter Fillingham and Peter Peri among many others.

*(image: 'Backyard Sculpture' paper/collage/ink/fold/stamp by David Gates posted by Royal Mail to Neil Gall, 23.5x16.8cm 2019)*