

Mario Almaguer
Born: 1955, Cuba
Home: Miami, Florida

Las nuevas formas de Almaguer

La historia de Mario Almaguer resulta curiosa y poco corriente. Nada de estudios académicos ni siquiera alternativos, solo el tesón y la práctica hicieron de este hombre un artista. Fue alrededor de 1990 que vi por primera vez sus esculturas, unas en hierro y otras en madera, no parecía inclinarse entonces -ni ahora- por ningún medio en particular. Sus maderas reciben la saludable influencia de la talla tradicional que en Cuba ha tenido importantes cultores como Cardenas, Estopinan, Lozano, Cobas, Drake... pero él, mirando hacia todas partes logra insuflar a sus piezas de algo indefinible que las diferenciaba. Sin embargo, donde pienso ha encontrado una expresión más auténtica y personal es en sus trabajos ejecutados en metal, en estas alcanza una libertad expresiva que la madera no entrega fácilmente. Conocí y tuve en mis manos su primer ensayo en metal; aun en mi jardín permanecen muchas de las piezas que expuso en su primera muestra personal "Formas del hierro", y ahora a la distancia y, gracias a los medios digitales, reencuentro sus esculturas crecidas en dimensiones y calidad; si las primeras apenas rebasaban los tres pies de altura ahora sobrepasan los diez, además de lograr una estilización que las hace ligeras, casi etéreas. El hecho de que Mario Almaguer haya continuado trabajando tras su salida de Cuba, resulta notable, pero que haya desarrollado su arte en estas circunstancias, me parece admirable.

-Jose Veigas, La Habana, mayo 4, 2009

Mario Almaguer's story is curious and unusual. There was no academic or even alternative studies; only tenacity and practice made this man an artist. It was around 1990 that I first saw his sculptures, some in iron and others in wood. He didn't seem inclined then—or now—to any particular medium. His wood sculptures are healthily influenced by traditional carving, which in Cuba has had important practitioners such as Cardenas, Estopinan, Lozano, Cobas, Drake... but, by looking everywhere, he manages to infuse his pieces with something indefinable that differentiates them. However, where I think he has found a more authentic and personal expression is in his works executed in metal, in which he achieves an expressive freedom that wood doesn't easily provide. I knew and held his first metal work; Even in my garden, many of the pieces he exhibited in his first solo exhibition, "Formas del Hierro," remain. Now, from a distance, and thanks to digital media, I rediscover his sculptures, grown in size and quality. If the first ones barely exceeded three feet in height, they now exceed ten, and they have achieved a stylization that makes them light, almost ethereal. The fact that Mario Almaguer continued working after leaving Cuba is remarkable, but that he developed his art under these circumstances is admirable to me.

-Jose Veigas, Havana, May 4, 2009

BIOGRAPHY

Mario Almaguer Cuban artist Mario Almaguer was born in Marianao, Cuba, 1955. He moved to the U.S. in 1994 to Miami where since has been living and working. Essentially self-taught, he embraced sculpture as his means for expression. Without any kind of formal academic education or training in the arts, perseverance and praxis made him an artist. His work has been influenced by Cuban master Agustin Cardenas and British Henry Moore. In his early years until 1994 he produced a large number of small and medium scale wooden sculptures. From 1994 to the present, Almaguer creates and produces steel sculptures. It's with his works on steel where he encounters a strong expression with a striking liberty hard to deliver in wood. His monumental sculptures were recently exhibited at Miami Dade College, where his colossal pieces are adjoined to the campus buildings. Almaguer's work is in collections in the U.S. and abroad. He has exhibited in the U.S. and Latin America and is the subject of several articles.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2004-Monumental Sculpture, Miami Dade College, FL.
2003-Wood Carvings, Miami Dade College, FL.
1994-Punto de Partida, Centro Provincial de Artes Plásticas y Diseño, Havana .
1993-Tallas de Madera, Galeria Servando Cabrera Moreno, Havana .
1992-Tiempos de Cambio, Librería La Moderna Poesía, Havana .
1991-Tallas de Madera , Centro de Arte 23 & 12, Havana .
1991-Formas de Hierro, Galeria Enrique J. Varona, Havana .
1991-Formas de Hierro, Galeria Wifredo Lam, Havana .
1991-Formas de Hierro, Gran Teatro de La Habana.

GROUP SHOWS

2012-Artopia Art Center, Miami, FL.
2011-Miami Art Basel, Miami Beach, FL.
2009-31 Escultores Cubanos, MDC West, Doral, FL.
2002-37 of *Miami's most Creative Artists*, University of Miami , School of Continuing Studies .
2002-Homage to the Virgen de la Caridad, Fraga Fine Arts, Miami .
2001-Art of Cuba, Maxoly Gallery, Miami .
2000-Association of Sculptors of South Florida .
1999-Cuba, The Florida Museum of Hispanic and Latin Art, Miami .
1998-The Florida Museum of Hispanic and Latin Art, Miami .
1997-General Consulate of Mexico , Miami , FL.
1997-Bird Road Art Connection, Miami, FL.
1995-Universidad Cartagena de Indias , Colombia .
1993-Salon 13 de Marzo, Universidad de La Habana.
1992-ACCA *Group Show*, Calle Obispo head office, Havana .
1992-Salon Nacional de Cultura, Centro de Desarrollo de las Artes Visuales.
1991-IV Salon "Mirta Cerra", Bejucal, Havana.
1991-Jornada de la Cultura Cubana, Galeria Wifredo Lam, Havana .

PUBLICATIONS - ARTICLES

Cartagena de Indias Internacional Ibero Americana and Miami Exclusive acknowledgement.
Articles and reviews by art critic Jose Veigas, Manuel Lopez Oliva; Guillermina Ramos Cruz, Nelson Yanez; sculptors Ramon Cobas, Florencio Gelabert and Ramon Haiti; art critics Jorge de la Fuente, Carlos M. Luis, Alejandro Anreus, Gustavo Orta y Pedro de Oraa.

RECOGNITIONS

Diploma Miami Dade County ; Contribution to the Arts in South Florida.

COLLECTIONS

International Sculpture Park , Miami Dade College North Campus, Miami.
Miami Dade College West, Doral Fl.
Private Collections.



Artist Mario Almaguer with sculpture of interest “Tornado”

Sculpture “Tornado”

Dimension \cong 115 in. height, 43 in. width, 30 in. length

Material: Steel

Weight \cong 187,033 Newtons or Mass = 41,987 lbs

Rendering of Sculpture in Space of Interest



This is the “ideal” space for the sculpture of interest



This is another possibility for the sculpture to be in front of the gallery

We do hope the City of Coral Gables will consider such a grand statement as this, of course if it is feasible, to adorn their city as well as the front of our gallery. We want not only to attract our community and passerbys to our gallery space, this sculpture will attract individuals to Miracle Mile as well as consider the City a supporter and promotional force of art and culture as well as a small business. Our aim is to have the sculpture display for Mario Almaguer's solo exhibition this October, “Alma de Guerrero”, as well as a statement piece for the busy months to come, specifically big events such as Art Basel and Art Miami in December.