

DAVID MACH

September 21, 1968 - January 8, 1989

David Mach at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

David Mach is well known for his spectacular installations and the ingenious use he makes of familiar objects as materials for his sculptures. In this presentation at the Musée, he is offering visitors a piece entitled *The Art That Came Apart*, a new work in the same spirit as his celebrated sculptures *Fuel for the Fire* and *Adding Fuel to the Fire*, presented in London in 1986 and Barcelona in 1987, respectively.

In keeping with the artistic commitment he has made, David Mach is creating this work in front of the public, assisted by a team of visual-arts students from Montréal. Like his other works, Mach's latest sculpture — made up of some 20 tons of magazines and newspapers and a variety of other objects, including a car, furniture and picture frames — comments on a society in which overproduction and overconsumption are the norm.

Mach was born in 1956 in Methil,



Scotland, and studied at the Royal College of Arts in London. Since 1981, he has exhibited his work extensively on both sides of the Atlantic. Hailed as one of the outstanding British sculptors of the eighties, Mach defies conventional art-market wisdom by creating temporary sculptural installations. The impact of these monu-

mental pieces stems from the way he organizes and presents familiar, often coveted items, and the actual process of his artistic endeavour, which he carries out with a team in the presence of the public.

Beyond its originality and effectiveness, Mach's work fits in with traditional sculptural concerns. The definition of space using volume and mass, multiple points of view and the handling of the materials combine to make the sculpture highly readable.

Surprising, rigorous and ironic, David Mach's sculpture never fails to stimulate and excite.

Lucette Bouchard

Selected Individual Exhibitions

- 1982 Lisson Gallery, London
New 57 Gallery, Edinburgh
- 1983 *Mack Shop*, Kingston Polytechnic,
Knights Park
Les Ateliers Contemporains d'Arts
Plastiques, Saint-Brieuc
- 1985 *Towards a Landscape*, Museum of
Modern Art, Oxford
Stoke City Museum, Stoke-on-Trent
- 1986 *David Mach Roadshow*,
Barbara Toll Fine Arts, New York
Mercer Union Gallery, Toronto
Fuel for the Fire, Riverside Studios,
London
- 1987 *Si avui t'endinses en els boscos*,
Fundacio Joan Miro, Barcelona
Adding Fuel to the Fire, Metronom
Gallery, Barcelona
Natural Causes, Wiener Secession,
Vienna
- 1988 *A Million Miles Away*, Barbara Toll
Fine Arts, New York

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1982 *London/New York*, Lisson Gallery,
London
- 1983 *British Sculpture 83*, Hayward
Gallery, London
- 1984 *Plux Value*, Galerie Éric Fabre, Paris
Festival à la Bastion, Geneva

- 1985 *Still Life*, Barbara Toll Fine Arts, New
York
Beelden op de Berg, Wageningen,
Holland
- 1986 *Spring Fling*, Edinburgh
International Contemporary Art Fair,
London
- 1987 *The British Edge*, ICA, Boston
The Vigorous Imagination, Scottish
National Gallery
of Modern Art, Edinburgh
The Vessel, Serpentine Gallery,
London
19th Biennale, São Paulo, Brazil
- 1988 *New British Art*, Tate Gallery,
Liverpool

Catalogues of Individual Exhibitions

- David Mach, Master Builder*
Galerie t'Venster, Rotterdam, December
1982-January 1983. Essay by Tom Bendham
- David Mach: sculptures – dessins*
Les Ateliers Contemporains d'Arts Plas-
tiques, Saint-Brieuc, novembre-décembre
1983. Essai de Béatrice Salmon, photo-
graphies de David Boeno, «4 Journées de
David Mach au travail»
- David Mach: Towards a Landscape*
Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, February-
April 1985. Essay by Marco Livingstone
- David Mach: Fuel for the Fire*
Riverside Studios, London, August-September
1986. Essay by Mel Gooding «Eternal Objects»



photo: Antony Crichtfield

David Mach ADDING FUEL TO THE FIRE, 1987, realized at the Metronom Gallery – Barcelona

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THE ART THAT CAME APART

The Art That Came Apart is a continuation of the *Fuel for the Fire* series I have been working on over the last two years. It involves a kind of art gallery scenario. It would appear at first to be a regular show, frames on the wall enclosing stacked magazines, each of these bulging slightly. The frames are ornate and might at one time have enclosed still-lives or landscapes. One frame can hold no more and magazines burst out of this and spill out on to the floor, perhaps bursting from still life to real life. Objects from a landscape are carried away in a frenzy of energy, the piece is meant to be this frantic, perhaps about control or the lack of control we experience as we "get through the day." It is, of course, also about control of materials. I am particularly interested in working like this. I consider this kind of work, given its temporary nature, not as an "installation" at all but more a kind of "live" performance of the piece, making it a bit like a piece of music performed by an orchestra or band.

There are many ingredients to be considered in such a piece then, not just the theme of the show, but the physical space, the image of that space (is it an art venue, a gallery or museum, or is it a shopping centre, bank, etc.), the audience (will the piece be made behind closed doors or open to the public while it is made), the materials, the image, so many ingredients that I would find it impossible to say which is more important than the other. So, by giving pride of place to the image of an idea in your head, for instance, it instantly places restrictions on the process, in just the same way that allowing the process to dominate interferes with the idea. It is in these situations that I find myself wondering exactly what is my role – am I the sculptor, the catalyst or what?

Working to a time scale is another essential ingredient. It increases the performance element in the work and enhances a speed of action. This speed is essential to finding the energy of the material. That energy source is an abstract idea rather like dealing with the grain in a piece of wood or stone or when stone carvers talk about releasing the energy inside. The materials and objects I use have a similar kind of energy. Working fast with assistants means I can get closer to that energy because it is impossible for me to have total control.



MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTRÉAL