

Sculptures
Armen Agop

Exhibition Dates | 10.11 to 29.01.14

SELMA FERIANI GALLERY presents *Sculptures*, Armen Agop first solo exhibition in Tunis. Through his new body of work Armen continues to explore his interest in black granite that has come to characterise his oeuvre and will also be introducing his latest bronze sculptures using brown and black patina.

Armen's sculptures emulate a quiet, stillness that seems to float in the space. Even with their sheer volume he seems to avoid their true nature and transform them into constellations that coordinate a cosmic area. Forms vary from discs with subtle indentations to larger cone-like structures; smooth surfaces produced through a timeless skill are juxtaposed with harsher angles. Brought together by ancient techniques from masonry skills long forgotten, Agop seeks to revive the lost in the production of the found. Hints of movements such as a drop of water in a pool or catch of a wave signify to the viewer apathy for, and depictions of, a moment, caught in an obscure fragment of time, an act not often seen to the naked eye. Possible questions of origins are posed; the balance of action and deed coupled with notions of understanding and reasoning. Unlike John Crary, who states in *Techniques of the Observer*, that on comprehending the observer as one who sees, they are more importantly "one who sees within a prescribed set of possibilities, one is embedded in a system of conventions and limitations". The artist denies access to such beliefs in order to revive the mind.

Agop begins with the circle since, —even in his youth— he saw the circle as a sphere. The process of shaping constitutes a circular motion, in cutting, sanding and smoothing. The task in itself becomes a repetitive act; monotonic steps of rhythm through making, creating a steady pulsating meditative force which reverberates in each sculpture and corresponds to one another in sync, in coalition with a Sufi-like relationship to the outside world. Like Serra's great toruses, they involve a motoric exploration through walking around them, providing new and open force fields.

Armen Agop (b.1969, Cairo, Egypt) graduated from the Sculpture department at the faculty of fine arts, Helwan University in Cairo. Agop first came to Italy in 2000 after winning the Rome Prize. In 2008 he was awarded "The Sculpture Grant" given once a year to a prominent international sculptor by the Swedish organization KKV-B. In 2010, he received the international Umberto Mastroianni award and in 2013 Agop was awarded the *Presidential Medal of the Italian Republic*.

His works are represented in the Egyptian Modern Art Museum, Egypt, Aswan Open Air Museum, Egypt, Mathaf Arab Museum of Modern Art, Qatar, Villa Empain/Boghossian Foundation in Belgium, Giardino di Piazza Stazione in Barge, Italy, Coral Springs Museum of Art in Florida, USA and the Bozzetti Museum in Pietrasanta, Italy.