

DAVID GILL GALLERY

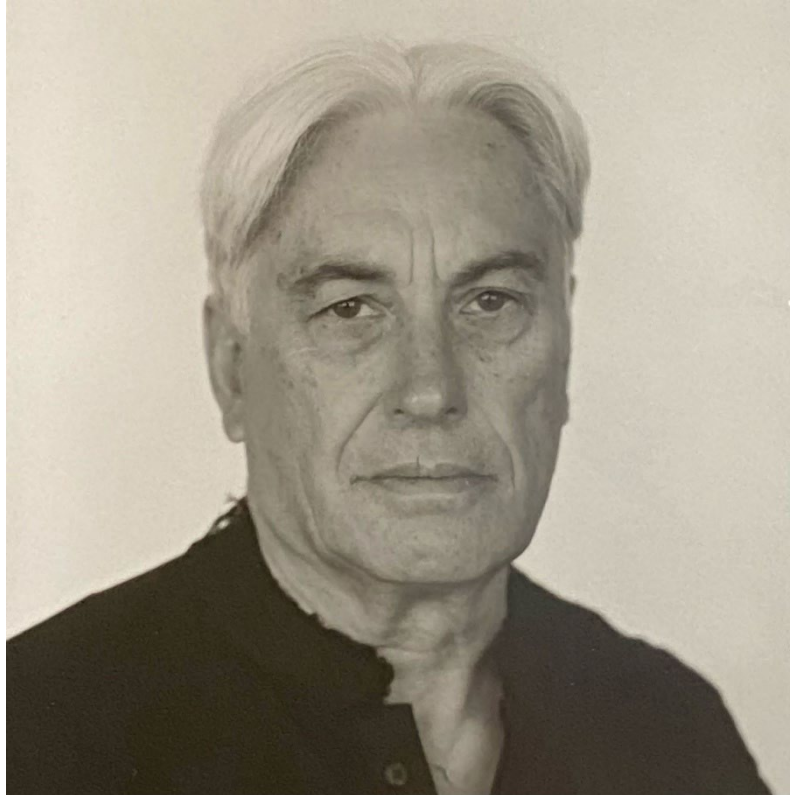
PRESS RELEASE

David Gill Gallery announces 'Tosca', the debut design exhibition from Saint Clair Cemin

11 September–4 October 2025

David Gill Gallery is pleased to announce the inaugural design exhibition by internationally acclaimed sculptor Saint Clair Cemin. Retaining the artist's postmodern spirit whilst being inspired by nature, the collection marks nearly two decades of experimentation.

The new collection of bronze works includes five candle holders, seating, tables, and a chandelier. The series revolves around a sense of warmth that arises through storytelling, with whales dozing in the branches of trees, monkeys swinging through the air clutching books, and a chandelier stretches out like a spider's web of bronze. "I decided to do something a little more fun," says Cemin. "Animal comes from the word *anima*. It's what gives soul to something, makes it animated. If it's not animals that animate the work, the form has to do it."



Cemin began his design career 18 years ago with a commission to renovate the Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature in Paris. Tasked with creating pieces that would complement the museum's collections, he focused on hunting and nature in the 16th to 19th centuries, whilst retaining a contemporary feel this led him to develop a style, he calls *rococo sauvage*, featuring bronze decorative objects and fittings inspired by forms found in nature, such as warping vine-like banisters and handles. He later evolved the style in projects for private clients, most notably a series of tables based on the four seasons for Diane Von Furstenberg's palazzo in Venice.

Catalonian architect Antoni Gaudí, a key influence on Saint Clair Cemin's work, is evident in this collection through its rough qualities and forms that evoke both natural forms and an otherworldly feel. Among the pieces is a bowl resembling a fusion of coral and an animal skull, while a chandelier takes on a sinewy, spider-like appearance.

Saint Clair Cemin, who was born in Brazil and now resides between Greece and the USA, matured as an artist in the heavily conceptual and exhilaratingly innovative 1980s New York art scene. His path to sculpture began in 1983, when a self-imposed experiment led him to lock himself in a room for a week with raw clay. "Once I started touching and making things in clay, I could not stop. Two days later when the clay ran out, I broke my

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own rules and bought another 50 kilos of clay," he says. "I discovered sculpture, and I became completely fascinated by it. It's a way of thinking, a way of living through the material with your hands."

Cemin's work often plays with a sense of elusive temporality, and as an artist he revels in the sense that we might not know what era his sculpture or design has come from. His work 'Mercury Fountain' in Virginia was installed in 1990 but is adorned with a mythological figure. "I like the idea of the lack of synchronicity. That you cannot know what time you're living in," says Cemin.

This is a spirit that has continued into the *rococo sauvage* collection. "They could be antiques," he adds. In these objets décoratifs there is also a sense of the artisanal or handmade. Cemin starts each design with many sketches and drawings, and for this collection each object was made at the same scale of its maquette. Despite their disparities in scale, Cemin is well known for his large-scale works, many of which animate public spaces, he does not create a sense of



distinction between his sculptural and design work. "There is continuity. For me to make a sculpture or make a table, it's the same thing," he notes. "Da Vinci said that art lives off constraints and dies of excessive freedom. I find design difficult because of the challenge, but I like the challenge."

The exhibition will be on view from 11 September to 4 October 2025.



FOR FURTHER PRESS INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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ABOUT SAINT CLAIR CEMIN

Saint Clair Cemin (b. Cruz Alta, Brazil, 1951) is a postmodern sculptor living and working between the United States and Greece. From the naturalistic to the abstract surreal, Saint Clair Cemin's broad sculptural vocabulary presents a bold panoply of work that is both striking and immediate. Cannibalising the history of sculpture itself, as well as its many styles and techniques, Cemin's inventive forms span the vast expanse of the visual universe. Cemin has been very influential on the younger generation of the '90s and 2000s, mostly in Brazil, his native country, where he became well-known after his participation in the 1992 Documenta IX in Kassel, curated by Jan Hoet. He defends a holistic approach to art where all of art's parameters are to be explored and exploited. This is shown in his use of different artistic languages, which are sometimes presented in anarchic combination, in order to produce what he calls "interference patterns" in the mind of the viewer.

Cemin began drawing at an early age, contributing to illustrations for magazines such as *Planeta* in the mid-1960s. In 1975, he enrolled at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France, where he specialised in etching. Shortly after graduating, he moved to New York City where he worked primarily in printmaking. He began experimenting with sculpture after seeing the 1979 retrospective of Joseph Beuys at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Cemin exhibited his sculpture for the first time at the Red Bar in 1982, and soon after became a key figure in New York's East Village art scene.

The work of Cemin is included in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; Fonds National d'Art Contemporain in Paris; Emily Fisher Landau Collection in Long Island City; Rooseum in Stockholm; Eli Broad Family Foundation in Los Angeles; the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles; and Inhotim, Minas Gerais in Brazil.

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Founded in 1987, David Gill Gallery has been a pioneer in the world of Collectable 20th and 21st-century decorative art, design, sculpture and painting. From historic masters such as Jean-Michel Frank, Armand Rateau and Line Vautrin to those who emerged in the later twentieth century, including Grayson Perry, Paul McCarthy, the Campana Brothers, Mattia Bonetti and Dame Zaha Hadid, David Gill has been foremost in presenting their work. The gallery has also been instrumental in establishing and enhancing the careers of an impressive roster of contemporary artists who include Chris Schanck, Valentin Loellmann and Barnaby Barford. Now based in St James's, London, for over 35 years, David Gill Gallery has supported artists, designers and architects who work at the cutting edge of imagination and materiality, continuing to develop the important relationship between contemporary art and design on which the gallery was first founded.

