

SOMERSET HOUSE PRESS RELEASE



Marc Quinn: Frozen Waves, Broken Sublimes

17 September – 21 October 2015

Edmond J. Safra Fountain Court, Somerset House, London

Five monumental sculptures by Marc Quinn will be presented in Somerset House's historic Edmond J. Safra Fountain Court this September and October. Forming two bodies of work entitled *Frozen Wave* and *Broken Sublime* (2015), the sculptures originate from the remnants of shells. This installation is the first time the works will be presented outdoors and the sculptures will be amidst the courtyard's fountains, underlining the works' connection to water.

The *Frozen Wave* sculptures are minimal arcs in stainless steel, including one measuring 7.5 metres long. The works' primal, gestural shapes originate from shells eroded by the endless action of the waves. Before they disappear and become sand, all conch shells end up in a similar form – an arch that looks like a wave, suggesting a self-portrait by nature. The *Broken Sublime* sculptures are modelled from shells which have been broken into by humans in order to eat the flesh inside and highlight how our relationship to nature is shaped by needs of the moment. Earlier this summer the sculptures were featured in Marc Quinn's exhibition at White Cube, Bermondsey – *'The Toxic Sublime'* – which explored the ecological impact of man on nature.

As Marc Quinn explains 'Somerset House is a kind of urban beach of the Thames. Built on land which articulates the transition between the urban Strand and the water of the river, it is the littoral zone of the city. By placing the cast stainless steel sculptures in the courtyard surrounded by the fountains, the water of the ocean which formed the sculptures' shapes is linked to the tamed water of pipes, conduits and drains of the city'.

Jonathan Reekie, Director of Somerset House Trust, said 'When I saw Marc's new sculptures at his recent White Cube show I immediately wanted to bring them here to Somerset House, so they could sit in the "surf" of the magical fountains in our courtyard, reflecting the beautiful surroundings. We're thrilled that it is possible for them to be here this autumn and during Frieze Art Fair. Marc joins an illustrious line of artists to have shown work in the courtyard including Ai Weiwei's *'Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads in 2011'*.

***Frozen Waves* in the press, as part of *The Toxic Sublime* exhibition:**

'Captivating...magnificent, [Quinn is] threading ideas together in an elegant, fluid way' Lucy Davies, Telegraph Review

'The largest, a seven-metre-long shiny steel replica of the wave-like shape of a battered fragment of shell, is a genuinely powerful sculpture. Microcosm and macrocosm reflect one another: a tiny bit of ancient sea shell that looks like a wave is given, by art, the scale and weight of a huge wave crashing towards the shore.' Jonathan Jones, The Guardian

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