

MY SPACE : RACHITA SAREEN

ART FORM : JOZEF SUMICHRAST

UNCOVERED : BRIC DESIGN GROUP

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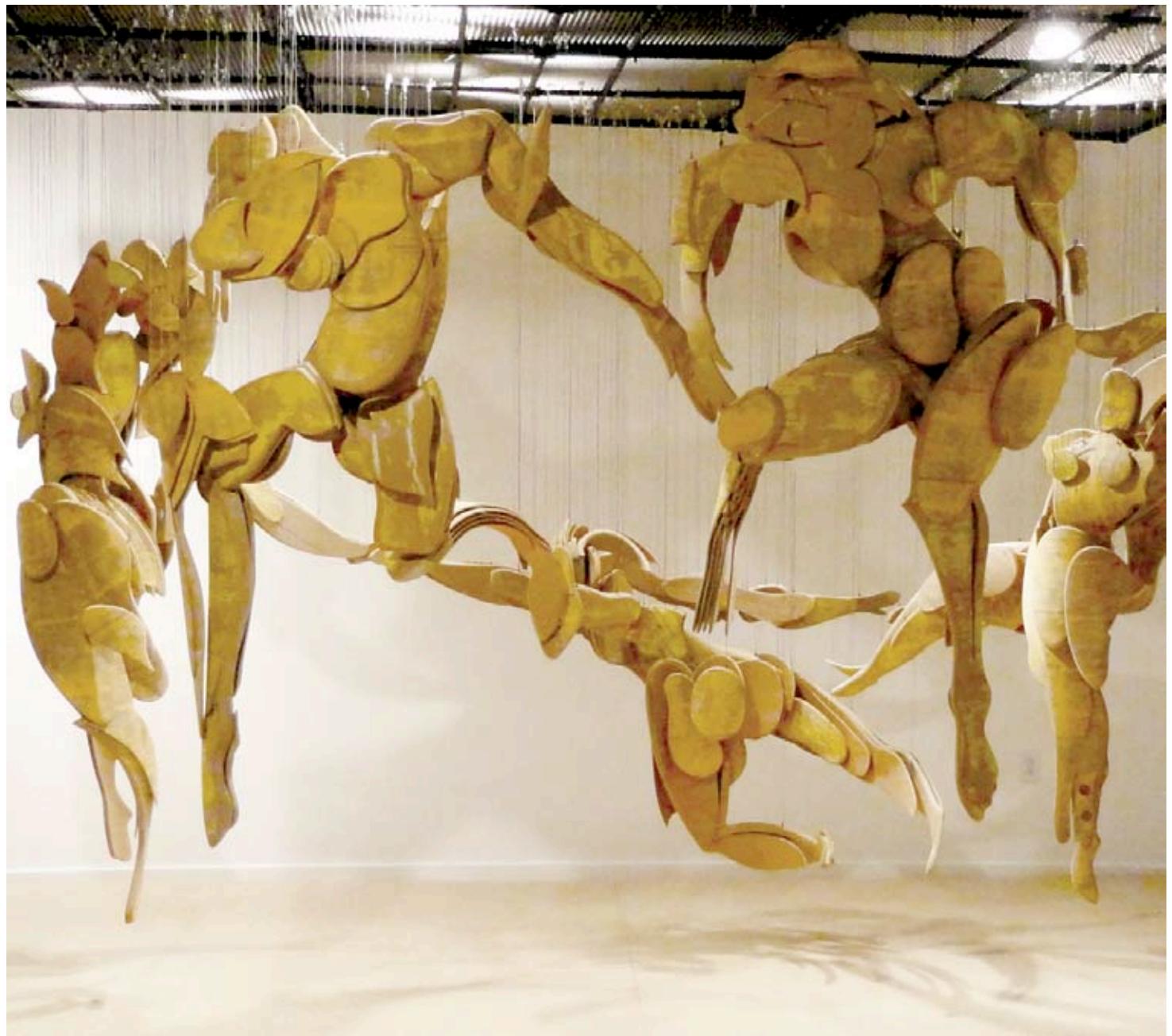
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The yearning to explore something 'more' has resulted in the creation of this tangible and spectacular art form.

AKT FOKA

Cardboard Wonders

Artist Jozef Sumichrast plays with unique materials like compressed cardboard, bronze and hardware materials to create one-of-a-kind, spectacular sculptures.

Exotic and lustrous horses have always been Josef Sumichrast's favourite muse since times immemorial. From metal sculptures to oil paintings and every conceivable form of art in between, Josef has presented varied renditions of horses and stallions.

If you think you have seen it all, turn to the unorthodox works of Jozef Sumichrast, who creates multi-layered sculptures with cardboard. Having experimented with figures inspired by people, objects and animals in the past, Jozef turned to his all-time classic muse, the horse, for the first time in the year 1995 and has since used his unique calling to create sculptures that are a manifestation of his distinct perspective of the animal.



A chemical patina like silver nitrate has been used here to add a metallic finish to the sculpture.

Text By Arushi Chaudhary
Photographs Courtesy Jozef Sumichrast



"Because a horse has four legs, I take its leg movement as an inspiration. When a horse moves, it is shifting its weight from one side of its body to the other. This simple act of walking changes the horse's entire anatomy."

Explaining his motivation to create horse figurines, Jozef says, "Because a horse has four legs, I take its leg movement as an inspiration. When a horse moves it is shifting its weight from one side of its body to the other. This simple act of walking changes the horse's entire anatomy. I also like man's interaction with a horse. When riding, for example you use your body to control the horse's body. I have sculptures like 'S Horse II' and 'C Horse' which do not have legs. This is because horses can swim like big dogs. Their legs are under water, and at that moment you do not see their legs."

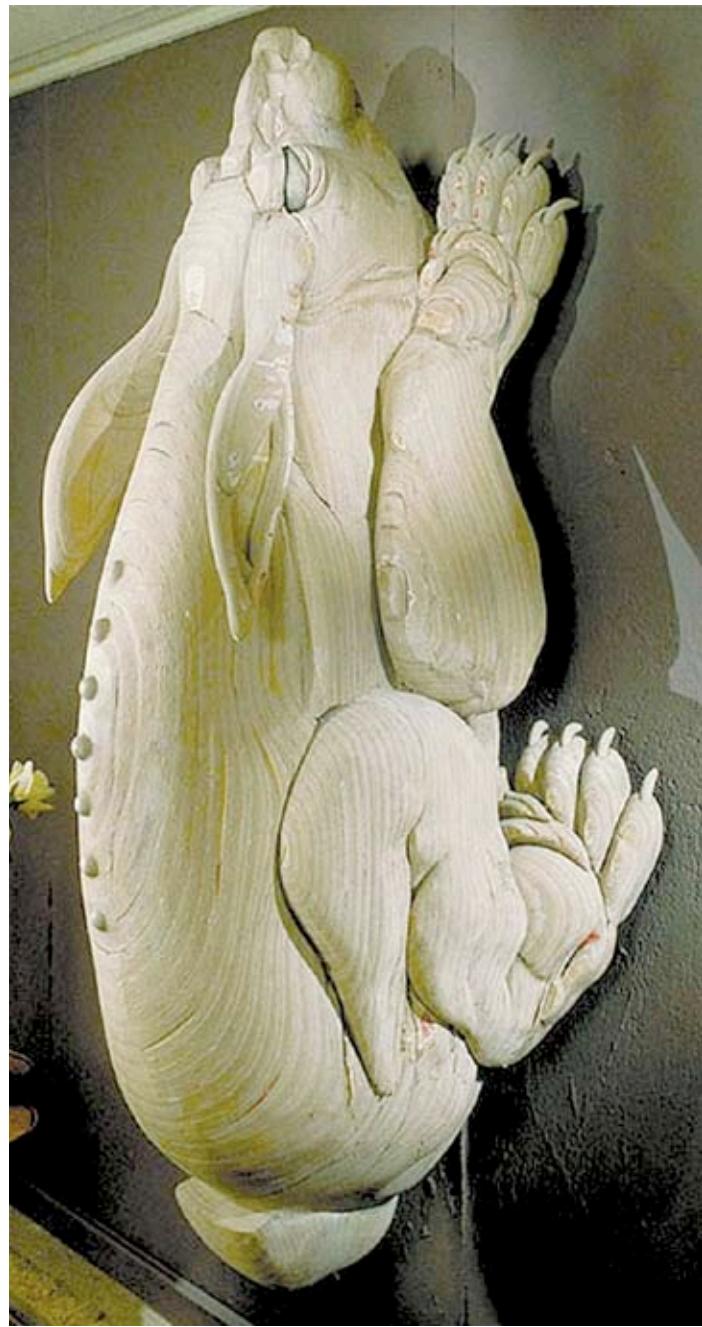
Drawing from this inspiration, Jozef presents the Horse series as a representation of the perfect symphony between different elements of nature. When asked about the techniques used to blend such intricate details and asymmetrical patterns in the same art form, Jozef explains, "**The form comes first. Then, the material the form has to be created from and finally, the patina.**"

"The patina could be merely sanding the cardboard and leaving it in its raw state, as seen in my work 'Narrow Horses II'; or finishing it with a chemical patina like silver nitrate as seen on 'Elevation 5#' and 'Elevation Triptych'. I use cardboard to construct my original forms. The forms are then moulded. Following which, I either follow the traditional lost wax process or my unique urethane process."

Jozef, who compares his art to the technique of mechanical drawing that is completely flat and bereft of a vanishing point, started out with two-dimensional creations and gradually, moved on to three-dimensional sculptures. Speaking of the aesthetics that propelled this transition, he says, "**Sculpting is like jazz for me, there is a never ending supply of variations on a theme.** You change your original idea to a new one and then maybe even change that one. As your mind moves further away from your original thought a completely unique form is created."



Jozef uses his art form to create sculptures that are a manifestation of his distinct perspective of the animal.



"Sculpting is like Jazz for me as there is a never ending supply of variations on any single theme," explains Josef Sumichrast.



The patina is built from sanding the cardboard and then finishing it using the unique urethane process.

This state of transition from one form of art to another seems to be a constant in Jozef's journey as an artist. Before venturing in to the unexplored realm of creating art with the use of compressed cardboard, bronze and other hardware-like materials, Jozef has tried his hands at graphic designing and painting, besides a brief stint as a draftsman.

So what kept him moving and why did he pause at sculpting? "More. I was looking for something more than two dimensions, something more than three dimensions. It could be the sense of touch, which I found in sculpting. You can touch a sculpture but not a painting. It could also be shadows, which change as you move around the sculpture, or gravity, as in the case of my suspended sculptures such as 'String Theory' and 'Susan's Dance'. It could even be looking through the sculpture like 'M Theory' or 'Expanding Gravity'."

The yearning to explore something 'more' has resulted in the creation of his tangible and spectacular art form. The journey of transforming compressed cardboard, drywall screws and shellac into exceptional pieces of art, however, isn't an easy one. His most recent collection, based on horses, for instance, took more than three years to complete.

Talking about the various stages these sculptures go through before getting their final form and shape, Jozef says, "**The process and stages vary from sculpture to sculpture. Sometimes, I do a drawing and use it like a pattern. Tracing it onto a piece of thin cardboard, then bending the cardboard and laminating more cardboard on the form.** At others, I might find a material such as PVC drain pipe fittings in a hardware store, and make them an integral part of the design. For instance, pipe fittings became the arteries for my sculpture called 'Heart'."

For Jozef, the journey to the creation of sculptures brings a sense of release and he earnestly hopes his audiences will be able to experience it too.

✉ www.jozef.com



The Horse series is a representation of that perfect symphony between different elements of nature.