

BMoCA



Fall Exhibition 2021

***INCREDIBLE LIGHTNESS:
A Retrospective of the Work of
Jerry Wingren***

October 14 – February 20, 2022

Guest Curated by Karla Dakin

INCREDIBLE LIGHTNESS: A Retrospective of the Work of Jerry Wingren

For more years than I can remember, my wife Polly and I watched Jerry Wingren's steel *Cut and Fold* sculpture on our deck vary with the light and the seasons. The seemingly simple geometry of the work changed as shadows added even more patterns with the passing hours. Winter snows created another, softer look to the sculpture's many angles. Wingren's *Cut and Fold* was the same but always different. Very few artworks can shapeshift with changing weather.

Wingren grew up in the southeastern Alaska town of Ketchikan. It is an ancestral place of the Tlingit people who make elaborate wood carvings of masks, boxes, and certainly totem poles. These would later play a part in Wingren's art. Early on he studied languages and taught at the University of Colorado Boulder (CU) for a few years. He received a Fulbright grant to study in Bremen, Germany. His life changed there.

In Bremen, Wingren met and learned from a group of sculptors, including Otto Almstadt and Moritz Bohrmann. He worked with wood, stone, and then metal, becoming proficient in each. Soon enough he was showing with the Kontakt Kunst and Gruppe Kilo in Bremerhaven and Bremen, where a large early sculpture is on display in a park.

I first saw Wingren's work at an exhibit of outdoor sculpture in Boulder's Central Park, right across the street from BMOCA. By then he was a member of FORM, a group of local sculptors. That's where I came across his *Cut and Fold* work. The idea started with a paper rectangle with squares cut out of the interior then folded at an angle – a form of origami Wingren learned in Japan. He translated the origami paper cut-outs to aluminum and later to steel – our *Cut and Fold* #16 was painted glossy white to enhance the play of light and shadow that we enjoyed so much.

Along the way, Wingren wondered if he could make art that floated in the sky. He could. The sculptures were most often smooth abstract shapes of sanded cedar mounted on tree-top high poles that moved with the wind. So a series of totems rose at Wingren's Logan Mill Road studio, then around the west, and overseas in Spain and Germany. Better yet, the totem sculptures could be reversed and suspended from ceilings, floating over our heads.

Wingren became fascinated by dense Swedish black granite and kept returning to it when in Europe. He had big blocks shipped to Seattle. Two became *Standing Stones* at the National Nordic Museum. One of these large black granite works has an aperture oriented north/south and is situated on the south side of Norlin Library on the CU campus, where thousands of students pass by. Another is in a private collection west of Gold Hill.

Black granite, steatite, and alabaster took on a new life as *Resting Stones* in a beautifully raked Zen garden at Wingren's mountain studio. These smaller carved and polished works can be aesthetically placed in different environments.

Resting Stones came later in our lives. They hid in corners, next to a chair, or under the piano. From time to time, our stones found new resting places in our home. They were our friends.

-Mark Addison



Above Image: Jerry Wingren, *Swedish Black Granite Resting Stones* (detail of installation), 2006-2008, black granite. Courtesy of the artist.

Artist and Curator Biographies

About the Artist

Raised in a small port town in Alaska, Jerry Wingren creates sculptures that incorporate his northwest and Scandinavian heritage with Japanese aesthetics. He balances opposing elements, such as lightness and weight, curving and severe lines, and finished and raw surfaces, in intimate and monumental works. In the 1970s, Wingren apprenticed with master sculptors Otto Almstadt and Moritz Bohrmann while at the University of Bremen in Germany on a Fulbright Scholarship. He has been inspired by his study of origami, the aesthetic philosophies of Japanese gardens, the mathematics in nature, and the Tlingit totems from his Alaskan childhood. Wingren has exhibited internationally in galleries and museums, including the Atlanta Sculptural Arts Museum, the Denver Art Museum, and the Kleine Orangerie in Berlin. His works are in private and public collections in the US, Europe, and Asia. Wingren lives and works in the mountains outside of Boulder.

About Karla Dakin, Guest Curator

Karla Dakin specializes in artful, environmentally bold landscape architecture with an array of national and international projects. Shaped by a career in the national art world, she continually creates work that references art. Plant-obsessed, Dakin uses vegetation in forward-thinking ways, as exemplified by her roof garden for the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver.

Dakin combines her landscape architecture expertise with 15 years of experience in the art worlds of New York City, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, giving her insights into the creativity of art and design. She holds a master's degree in landscape architecture from the University of Colorado Denver. In recent years she has continued her landscape education by completing classes in green walls and green roofs, biodynamic gardening, and master gardening. Dakin has also taught garden design and architectural theory and has volunteered for Permaculture Projects in Brazil and Ethiopia.



Image: Jerry Wingren, *Steatite Void #15 and Steatite Void #8 (detail)*, 2018, steatite. Courtesy of the artist.

In Appreciation.

Apprentices, assistants, coworkers, teachers.

Lasse Anderson, Sten Åke Andersson, John Andrade, Mark Beran, Michael Berenc, Sue Bicknell, R. W. Bloomer, Moritz Bohrmann, Ted Bosler, Cathy Bradner, Curt Brandner, Lawrence "Bear" Carlson, Brittany Christie, Carlo Ciampoli, Linda Robey Ciampoli, Tom Conway, Adam Coyne, Dave Crawford, Michael Friedrich-Frideländer, Ethan Jackson, Jerimiah Jensen, Lyra Kilston, Sparrow King, Caitlyn Eunyong Ko, Hiroshi Koyama, Donna Loomans, Josephine Mackay, Marion Mackay, Adam Marshall, Dillon McNamara, Nicole Meyer, Christian Neukirch, Kazu Oba, Masa Ohno, Duane Pasco, Anael Resino, Jake Romero, Harald Stahl, Frank Swanson, Lowell Thompson, Bernd Uiberall, Bill Vielehr, Brady Wedman, Doug Wilson, Yuka Yosihida.

-Jerry Wingren



Image: Jerry Wingren, *Marble Torso* (detail), 1979, marble. Courtesy of the artist.



Image: Jerry Wingren, *Bronze Torso* (detail), 2016, bronze. Courtesy of the artist.

Exhibition-related Programs

On-Site Opening Reception

Thursday, October 14

5pm member preview

6-8pm free public reception

Virtual Studio Tour: Melinda Rosenberg

October 14

12-12:30pm

Rosenberg takes viewers behind the scenes of her studio practice with insights into her processes, inspirations, and artwork.

Filmed Artist/Curator Talk

October 28

5:30pm

Watch Exhibiting Artist Jerry Wingren & Guest Curator Karla Dakin discuss the exhibition *INCREDIBLE LIGHTNESS*.

Virtual Artist/Curator Talk

December 3

5-6pm

Join Exhibiting Artist Melinda Rosenberg & Curator Pamela Meadows in a conversation via Zoom about Rosenberg's exhibition *Two-Fold*.

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

Melinda Rosenberg: Two-Fold

October 14, 2021 – February 20, 2022

InsideOut

El movimiento sigue (The movement continues)

March 23, 2021 – March 14, 2022

BMoCA at Macky

Trevor Seymour: Interpretations

August 30 – November 14, 2021

BMoCA at Anythink Fall Artist Showcase

Alejandra Abad

Juan Fuentes

Armando Silva

September 1 – November 30, 2021

Thank you to our generous sponsors:

Sue Schweppe, Nicky Wolman & David Fulker, Lovedy Barbatelli, Brenda & Arno Niemand, Stephanie & R. Alan Rudy, Linda Haertling & Mark Meyer, City of Boulder, Boulder Arts Commission, Scientific & Cultural Facilities District, Colorado Creative Industries, and National Endowment for the Arts.

Please Do Not Touch Works of Art

Flash Photography Not Permitted

BMoCA

Boulder Museum of
Contemporary Art

1750 13th Street
Boulder, Colorado 80302
303.443.2122
BMoCA.org