

HANNEKE BEAUMONT (Dutch, Contemporary)

Hanneke Beaumont was born in Maastricht, the Netherlands. She undertook the majority of her artistic studies in Belgium, first at the Académie de Braine l'Alleud. She then focused predominantly on sculpture at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de La Cambre and at the Hogere Rijkschool voor Beeldende Kunsten in Anderlecht.



Although she held her first solo exhibition in 1983 in Brussels, her defining career moment came in 1994, when she received the major award of the Centre International d'Art Contemporain Château Beychevelle for her sculpture group entitled *Le Courage*. She followed this by participating in the second Exposición Internacional de Esculturas en la Calle, organised by the Colegio de Arquitectos de Canarias in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, where her work was permanently installed.

Since then, Beaumont has steadily established a renowned international reputation, exhibiting in the US, UK, Canada and numerous European countries. She is particularly well-known for her monumental installations in Brussels, such as *Stepping Forward* in front of the European Council building, *Le Départ* at Brussels Airport and *Le Courage* at the entrance to Erasmus Hospital. In 2011, Beaumont was also presented with the 'Pietrasanta e la Versilia Nel Mondo' award in Italy, joining a select group of prestigious contemporary artists, including Botero, Pomodoro and Marc Quinn.

BOWMAN SCULPTURE



Hanneke Beaumont, *Stepping Forward*, Bronze

At first glance, Hanneke Beaumont's sculptures are eye-catching, monumental human figures crafted from terracotta clay or cast in bronze or iron. However, as the sculptor would attest, their true meaning and inspiration is found far deeper beneath these raw and natural surfaces.

The inner workings of Beaumont's sculptures extend beyond the perceived importance of easily digestible features and themes. Her work allows for a universal approach to humanity's psychological condition of a constant battle between self-doubt and confidence, contentment and yearning, strength and fragility, and contemplation and detachment.

"The inner dimension of the sculpture is essential to my work. I represent the human being, regardless of where he's from, who he is or what he does. I believe some feelings are universal to mankind and wish to express these," says Beaumont.

BOWMAN SCULPTURE



Hanneke Beaumont, *Bronze 130*

Gender and age have little importance in Beaumont's work, who states that her sculptures are not constrained by masculinity or femininity, but rather focus on "*universal human feelings, like courage or melancholy*".

BOWMAN SCULPTURE

The sculptor creates her figures out of earth and fire, patient in her meticulous process that brings these seemingly expressionless figures to life. They do not inhabit our lives through distinct features or anatomical correctness, but rather the human feelings they express through their postures and understated facial expressions, which have been carefully thought out by the sculptor.

"I always made them that way before even thinking about it," Beaumont said of her figures' androgynous natures. "It just came that way, and then it became fashionable or trendy. But for me it came automatically. They are universal human beings. Sometimes they are more male or more female, but it's not about that."

Beaumont once worked with live models, but found she had more freedom of expression working solely from her own raw, uninfluenced thoughts and emotions.



"I stepped away from working with a model because I wanted to put into the work what I feel. I wanted to express what happens within humans," she said in an interview with John Kappes of The Plain Dealer.

She has also always preferred working with clay. She believes it is the perfect medium for expressing her candid statements about humanity.

BOWMAN SCULPTURE

"I am a clay person; it is my preferred medium. It is strong and fragile at the same time and therefore expresses best what I am trying to say. It also never stops surprising me."



Hanneke Beaumont, *Bronze 127*, Clay

Beaumont has always believed in letting the material speak for her. By removing gender, age and time (her figures are dressed in timeless cloth), she allows viewers to create a deeper connection with each piece and

BOWMAN SCULPTURE

better relate to their intricate strings of thought. She invites us to create our own unique impressions, filling the gaps with our own inner turbulence wrought from individual life experiences.

Bowman Sculpture has showcased Beaumont's work for three decades and has sold two of her works to The Frederik Meijer Museum. The gallery also co-curated the sculptor's first major museum exhibition in the United States, entitled *Connected and Disconnected*, with The Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. This exhibition later travelled to The Baker Museum in Florida. Notable acquisitions include *Le L'Ennui* by the Baker Museum in Florida, *Installation 56* by the Boca Raton Museum in Florida, *Melancholia 11* by the Copelouzos Museum in Athens and *No. 130 (Observing)* by the Snite Museum of Art at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana. The latter now welcomes visitors at the entrance to the newly inaugurated Raclin Murphy Museum of Art, where its quiet presence stands as a powerful symbol of reflection and shared humanity.

Her work has been exhibited at the Frederik Meijer Sculpture Gardens in the U.S., the Museum Beelden aan Zee in The Hague, the Fondation Bénédictine in Fécamp in France, and The Baker Museum in Florida U.S, among others. Beaumont now divides her time between her studios in Brussels and Pietra Santa, Italy.



Hanneke Beaumont, *Bronze 91 and Bronze 93*, The Frederik Meijer Museum