

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

Wallpaper*

Heavy metal: John Chamberlain's first UK exhibition takes Edinburgh

Ali Morris



Showcased inside and within the grounds of Inverleith House, the new exhibition documents six decades of Chamberlain's work. John Chamberlain, installation view, Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. © 2015 Fairweather & Fairweather Ltd/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photography: Michael Wolchover. Courtesy Dia Art Foundation, New York

Unexpectedly offset by their formal landscaped surroundings, four of John Chamberlain's towering, twisted aluminium sculptures in glittering shades of pink, bronze and green are currently dotted around the grounds of Inverleith House at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh as part of the late American artist's first show in the UK.

A key figure in the New York art scene during the 1950s and 60s, Chamberlain (1927 - 2011) was often overshadowed by his American abstract expressionist contemporaries yet his work continues to exert a powerful influence on artists working today. Although renowned for his welded sculptures of discarded car parts, Chamberlain was a self-described collagist who worked with a broad range of media including urethane foam, paper bags, plexiglas, galvanised or stainless steel.

It is this breadth and diversity of his oeuvre that the exhibition at Inverleith House seeks to highlight. While the ground floor is given over to his colourful crushed car sculptures - displayed on plinths, casually leant against or elevated on the walls- upstairs, the artist's Stuffed Dog sculptures - squidgy pieces of urethane foam tied together with cord and spattered with painted marks - are part of a set of 19 sculptures on loan from the Dia Art Foundation in New York which have never before been exhibited outside of North America.

In the darkly lit basement, Chamberlain's 1969 experimental film 'The Secret Life of Hernando Cortez', featuring Chamberlain himself alongside a number of Warhol superstars such as Ultra Violet and Taylor Mead, also makes its UK debut.