

UDAETA

*A glimpse into the work
of sculptor Alberto de Udaeta*

ALBERTO DE UDAETA

Barcelona, Spain

Alberto de Udaeta is a contemporary sculptor from Barcelona who uses traditional techniques when working with cast iron, Corten steel and bronze.

A master of shape and form, he transforms metals into sculptures infused with a poetic soul - expressions of strength, intensity and integrity.

His work is understandable because of the conceptual clarity from which he approaches the creative process. The sculpture of Udaeta is based partly on experience and partly on history, and the relationship between peoples, cultures and nature.

Here, Udaeta shares his sources of inspiration and how he connects them with the raw material.



I originally started out with figurative, organic and fanciful sculptures, before naturally diving into constructivist expression some years later.

A trip to Petra took me back in time, to a lost city which inspired me immensely. It clearly showed me the versatility of assembly, which means that the different pieces in a sculpture can be moved and interchanged. This came to life in my workshop where I created **Domus, Walls, Lost Cities** and **Fortress** - phenomenal pieces that express the hermeticism, force and tenacity of survival.

The Ksars collection reveals magical, fortified buildings in the deserts of Northern Africa. They were a refuge for caravans and a resting place for weary travelers; now they are proud shadows standing still in hostile territories, in the twilight of oblivion.



WALLS OF MOGADOR.
2010. Cast Iron. Unique piece.
39 x 39 x 9cm. 74kg.

Magli is the synthesis of this sculptural vision, representing the pure intuition of destroyed architectural volumes: stairs that lead nowhere, and windows that look out ad infinitum, waiting for the keepers of the stronghold to return, although they never will. This piece pays homage to silence and solitude.

MAGLI.
2010. Corten Steel. Unique piece.
306 x 238 x 258cm.



As I live by the sea and frequently walk through shipyards, I started to notice the propellers and hulls of ships. They inspired me to create the Nautilus collection - smooth pieces made of bronze, cast iron and stainless steel, in the shape of a submarine. In my craft, there are concepts that go unnoticed; amongst them, the concept of total freedom that the submarine has despite its base, enabling it to turn autonomously.

NAUTILUS.
2005. Bronze. Ed.
3/3. 59 x diam. 21,5 cm. 60kg.



Some time ago, walking the streets of Italy and talking with locals, I drew inspiration from a small anvil that I saw in the hands of a jeweler. I asked the woman how much she would sell me the tool for, and she told me that this little anvil had been in her family for centuries, and that it was absolutely not for sale. Impressed by her words, I decided to create the **Anvils** collection, a homage to craftsmanship and tenacity.

ANVIL
2014. Unique Piece. Cast Iron.
17,5 x 36,0 x 22,0cm. 30Kg.



My work has been labeled as intense, essential and comprehensible. For these pieces, we should add solidity and aesthetic singularity - characteristics linked to the ancient anvils used in the forging of steel and iron.

Sometimes, just one conversation can drive me towards the unknown. For this next collection, the conversation was about creativity itself.

Passageways is a collection of sculptures with a common denominator: an opening, a passage, a symbol of our universe's space-time continuum that allows the continuous transition between the physical world and the world of ideas. Both worlds are foundations for human progress in a creative context, grounded in the observation of the present reality and taking us to future possibilities.



PASSAGEWAY IV.
2013. Unique Piece. Cast Iron.
18 x 63 x 25cm. 36Kg.

A new challenge in my artistic life was to interweave just the opposite into my work. I explored the nonsensical nature of war by creating the **Helmets** collection. My aim with these pieces is to convey essential emotions such as the strength and rigor of the geometrical structure of a soldier's armor. And in turn, through asymmetries, evoke a sense of drama, desolation and abandonment.

These pieces are inspired by the helmets of warriors of the past, and are just one homage to the fallen, nameless men who, in exchange for their lives, enabled the names of their warlords and battles to reach us.

GAUGAMELA.
2016. Unique piece. Cast Iron.
34,0 x 40,0 x 40,2 cm. 87 Kg.



In parallel, I was turning another lifelong ambition into reality: **Shadows of Iron.**

This collection took me to another level of aesthetic achievement and immense satisfaction. I experienced such euphoria that I ended up making over 100 pieces, all similar in size but different in shape.

SHADOW OF IRON.
2018. Unique piece. Cast Iron.
20,0 x 22,3 x 24,5cm. 20Kg.



Other times, quite the opposite can happen. The assembly of **Trilogy of Evolution** was a slow process. It was inspired by the four different evolutions of our universe: Space, Matter, Life and Intelligence.

TRILOGY OF EVOLUTION.
1998. Bronze. 250 x 30 x 50cm.
Ed. 2/3. Fundación Vila Casas.
Palafrugell, Girona.

With the exception of Space (which at that time I did not know how to portray through sculpture), I expressed the physical evolutions through three bronze steles composed of seven fragments, each fragment representing one element that chronologically explains the progress of planet Earth's evolution.

The stele of Matter shows us a tortured vision of matter during the formation process: the internal form of a deep cave, the heart of a volcano, melted promises of valued minerals, and extreme mountain ridges.



The stele that represents the evolution of Life is a spectacular piece; it shows us the progress of life on our planet, from sea urchins to mankind. The upper fragment features a hunter's footprints along with the print of his spear. Indeed, weapons and tools would eventually become the determinant for the future of mankind.

Lastly, the stele of Intelligence appears. I thought that an effective way to portray intelligence was by using different examples of writing that physically show our abstract way of thinking.

I met a man in Germany who belongs to the Swabian community - the same tribe that invaded Spain in 409 at the time of King Hermeric. Following our fascinating conversation, I created **The Horde**, using a geometrical and constructivist approach. This time, my ideas came from the design of ancient armors.

For a long period of time, I devoted myself entirely to creating these iron and bronze sculptures measuring more than two meters in height. In homage to this Germanic tribe, each of the twelve totems in this collection bears the name of one of their kings.

THE HORDE. REKHIARIO.
2010. Unique piece. Cast Iron.
257 x 94 x 60cm. 1.400kg.



Public sculptures are among the most interesting challenges for sculptors and, without a doubt, bring the greatest personal satisfaction. The piece is not displayed in the rooms of a museum or a foundation; instead, it is permanently present for everyone to behold, day or night.

If the sculpture encompasses one of the infinite expressions of beauty, only then will it be instantly cherished, and only then will locals make it their own. This is why, when I am on site building a public sculpture, I always take time to speak with the local inhabitants about the raw materials, theme, name and value of the piece. I love sharing details about the piece with them...After all, they do own a part of it!

CARDINAL EXPANSION.
1995. Corten Steel. 11 x 9 x 6
m. Viladecans. Barcelona.

ATRIUM LIBERTATIS.
1996. Corten Steel. 7,62 x 6,2 x 6,7 m.
Esplugues de Llobregat. Barcelona



Yet to be built, **Genesis** is my dream.
It is a group of 28 sculptures symbolizing
an abstract vision of the evolution of our
universe.

Trilogy of Evolution was the preliminary
work that showed me the path to the
Genesis project, inspired by the book
"Aus dem Nichts" (which translates literally
as "from nothingness") by *Dr. Gerd Binnig*
(1986 *Nobel Prize in Physics*). Above
anything else, it was his analysis of the
universal evolutionary process based on
four evolutions: Space, Matter, Life and
Intelligence, that brought me to create this
sculpture set. His personal commentary,
as well as his generous participation in
writing the prologue of my book about
the **Genesis** project, were greatly
appreciated.

My desire is to create a space with these
sculptures where we may all reflect on the
eternal questions:

Where did we come from?

Who are we?

Where are we going?

These questions led me to create this
sculpture set based on the Four Evolutions
of our Universe: Space, Matter, Life and
Intelligence.

First, there was nothing. Space did not
exist, and neither did time nor structures.
Then suddenly, in less than the blink of an
eye, nothingness became an immense
universe of Space and Matter, of billions
of galaxies rapidly expanding towards the
unknown.

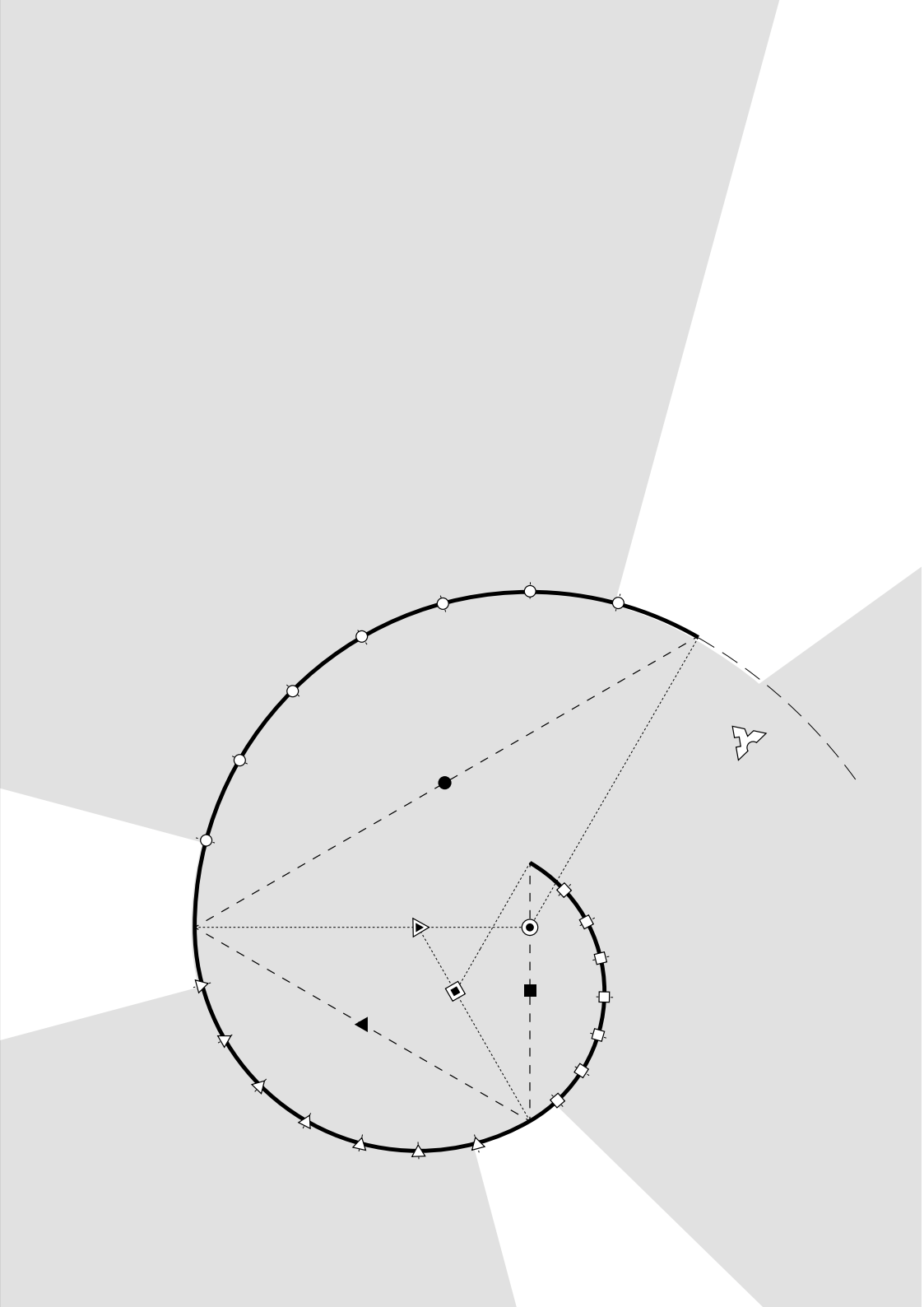
Now, if we look around, we see that
millions of years from the Big Bang until
now, part of that Matter has evolved and
transformed into Life. And then, the fourth
and final evolution appears - Intelligence
- which mankind holds above any other
species.

I opted for three basic geometrical shapes
to represent the evolutions: the square
represents Matter, the triangle, Life, and
the circle, Intelligence.

As for Space, given its unique nature that
cannot be measured, I have represented it
using a geometric mathematical concept:
the Spiral. The spiral is the symbol of the
eternal movement of the universe and its
evolution. It is a geometrical form that,
when it grows, is capable of going on
ad infinitum. On the contrary, turning in
the other direction, it can end up being
infinitesimally small, opening us up to the
mystery of an impossible beginning. This
mystery drives us to **The Nucleus**, the
focal piece, representing primal energy,
and the beginning and end of everything.

Graphic representation
of the pieces

-  Nucleus
-  Space/time
-  Harmony of matter
-  Harmony of life
-  Harmony of intelligence
-  Creative force of matter
-  Creative force of life
-  Creative force of intelligence
-  7 Days of matter
-  7 Days of life
-  7 Days of intelligence

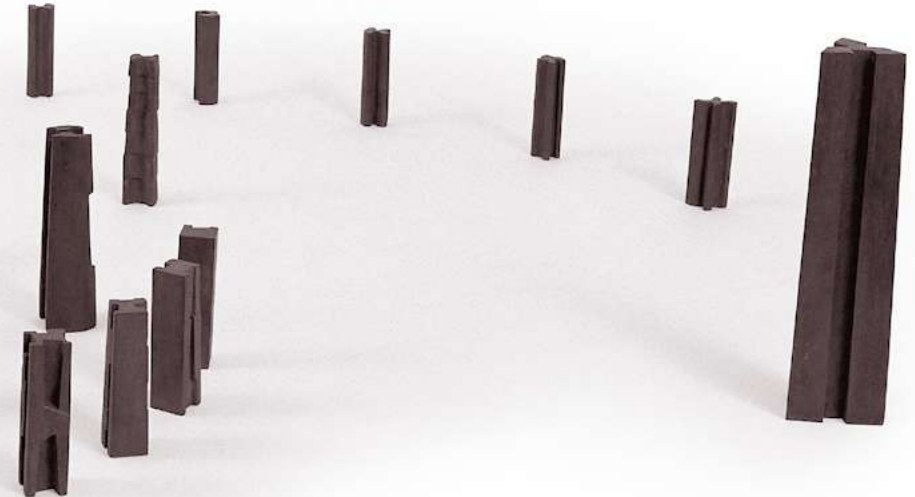
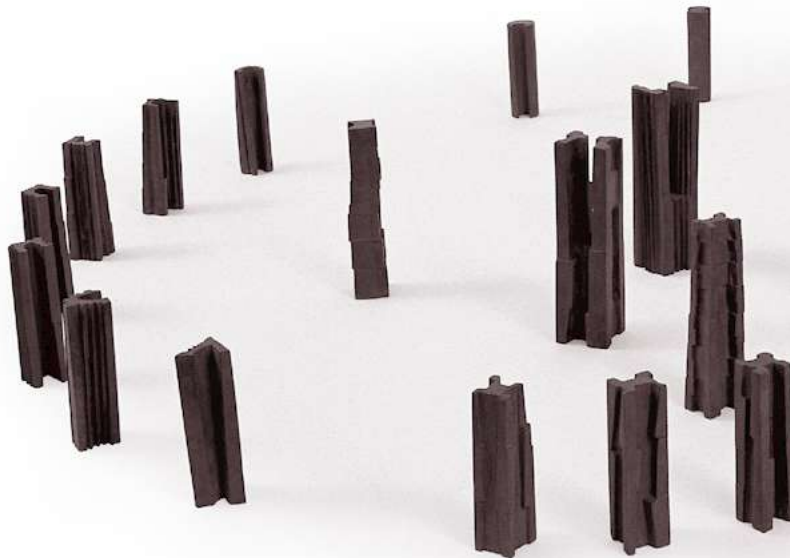


The **Three Creative Forces of Evolution** are the pieces that symbolize the intangible creative energy forces that explosively brought into being the evolutions of our universe: Matter, Life and Intelligence.

The purpose of the **Three Harmonies** is to harmonize within the space-time continuum the colossal, instantaneous, chaotic and intangible creations of the three creative forces of evolution.

Twenty-One Days are pieces that represent the physical reality of the universe. Matter, Life and Intelligence gallop over the invisible line of Space, in groups of seven.

The universe is expanding...



To quote Antoine de Saint-Exupéry:
what is essential is invisible to the eye.



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