

ART

TOP NOTCH

How Annie Morris channelled personal tragedy into her towering sculptures

Stepping into Annie Morris' studio is like entering the imaginative world of a children's picture book. It has sketches scattered across the floor, abstract tapestries adorning the walls, shelves brimming with jars of powdered pigments, and a forest of multicoloured columns, made of spheres teetering impossibly atop one another. The handcrafted orbs appear full of life, their bold hues instantly uplifting. Yet Morris' impetus to create them first originated from a period of grief. In 2010, Morris suffered a stillbirth, and she and her partner Idris Khan were told it was unlikely they would be able to conceive another child. 'It was a horrible place to be,' she reflects, 'to lose something and be told you may never have it again.'

Her focus instinctively turned to drawing



Clockwise from right: Annie Morris. Two of her 'Stacked 8' sculptures (2021), 'Untitled' (2021), 'Long Tapestry 1' (2020)

large egg outlines - 'the circular shape that I'd lost' - which then evolved into 3-D plaster-and-sand balls. But, when she started painting the sculptures in ultramarine, viridian and ochre, they began to symbolise more than sadness. 'I wanted them to be strong, powerful towers of hope,' she says, 'like a kind of monument that represented this little person I didn't get to meet.'

Over the years, during which the couple have since had two healthy children, the artist's *Stacks* have grown taller, with more exaggerated tilts and contrasting sizes. Morris has also started casting the works in bronze, layered with nitrates and paint, so they can be shown outside and made to even more daring scales. 'You suddenly start to think bigger, asking, "What if it was 50 metres tall?"'

One such piece (measuring an imposing three and a half metres) will be installed this month in the Weston Gallery at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, as part of Morris' solo exhibition. The space will be transformed to reflect the energy of the artist's studio, filled with a cache of her sculptures, tapestries and drawings spanning her career. Simultaneously, a series of her most recent creations will go on display at Timothy Taylor gallery, bringing their compelling optimism to London. For, in pushing the limits of form, Morris reveals a new host of possibilities both to her viewers and to herself. BROOKE THES

Annie Morris: When a Happy Thing Falls' is at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park from 18 September to 6 February 2022. Annie Morris' is at Timothy Taylor from 10 September to 23 October.



www.karjyachandor.com/uk

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNE MORRIS. STYLING: COLLEEN O'NEILL. HAIR: JANE HARRIS. MAKEUP: STEPHEN WHITE. PHOTOGRAPHY: ANNE MORRIS. STYLING: COLLEEN O'NEILL. HAIR: JANE HARRIS. MAKEUP: STEPHEN WHITE.



Harper's Bazaar, 2 September 2021

Stepping into Annie Morris' studio is like entering the imaginative world of a children's picture book. It has sketches scattered across the floor, abstract tapestries adorning the walls, shelves brimming with jars of powdered pigments, and a forest of multicolored columns, made of spheres teetering impossibly atop one another. The handcrafted orbs appear full of life, their bold hues instantly uplifting. Yet Morris' impetus to create them first originated from a period of grief. In 2010, Morris suffered a stillbirth, and she and her partner Idris Khan were told it was unlikely they would be able to conceive another child. 'It was a horrible place to be,' she reflects, 'to lose something and be told you may never have it again.'

Her focus turned instinctively to drawing large egg outlines — 'the circular shape that I'd lost' — which then evolved into 3-D plaster-and-sand balls. But, when she started painting the sculptures in ultramarine, viridian and ochre, they began to symbolize more than sadness. 'I wanted them to be strong, powerful towers of hope,' she says, 'like a kind of monument that represented this little person I didn't get to meet.'

Over the years, during which the couple have since had two healthy children, the artist's Stacks have grown taller, with more exaggerated tilts and contrasting sizes. Morris has also started casting the works in bronze, layered with nitrates and paints, so they can be shown outside and made to even more daring scales. 'You suddenly start to think bigger, asking, "What if it was 50 metres tall?"'

One such piece, measuring an imposing three and a half metres, will be installed this month in the Weston Gallery at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, as part of Morris' solo exhibition. The space will be transformed to reflect the energy of the artist's studio, filled with a cache of her sculptures, tapestries and drawings spanning her career. Simultaneously, a series of her most recent creations will go on display at Timothy Taylor, birnging their compelling optimism to London. For, in pushing the limits of form, Morris reveals a new host of possibilities both to her viewers and to herself.