

off the wall gallery

paintings · sculpture · original prints



DAVID GERSTEIN

Israeli, b. 1944.

About the Artist

“My philosophy is that art should resonate with life. It shouldn’t be something you experience only once a year during a visit to a museum.”

David (Dudu) Gerstein is an Israeli artist whose diverse body of work expresses movement, color, sound, and emotion, while capturing unique moments in time. Born in Jerusalem in 1944 to immigrant parents and an identical twin, Yoni, Gerstein belongs to a generation filled with hope, freedom, and renewal. Despite coming from modest means, Gerstein grew up immersed in crafts, as both his father and grandfather were leather makers. Even decades later, he credits his fascination with cutting shapes and figures from wood and metal to his childhood experiences of helping his father with leather cutting.

In 1965, Gerstein moved to Jerusalem to study at the Bezalel Academy for a year. Seeking further growth, he felt that the Israeli art scene was less vibrant than its European counterpart at the time. Consequently, he relocated to Paris to study at the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts.

After two years of mastering classical and traditional painting techniques, Gerstein felt drawn to New York City, a hub of the modern art world. In 1968, he left Paris for the vibrant pop art and abstract expressionism of New York. There, he studied at the Art Students League while continuing to refine his skills and artistic vision. While many contemporary artists around him focused on conceptual art, Gerstein sought to create art that would “speak to the audience at eye level”—art that is approachable, relatable, universal, diverse, and, above all, accessible to the public.

In 1971, Gerstein returned to Israel with fresh ideas and inspiration. He quickly began teaching at Bezalel Academy while continuing to develop his artistic concepts. Rejecting the increasingly popular minimalist style, Gerstein took a risk by creating art in his own way. This was also the year of his first solo exhibition at the Engel Gallery in Jerusalem.

Gerstein still wanted to create relatable and engaging art. Many of his subjects appear to depict stories of people living their lives, biking to work, watering their flowers, and watching birds from their windowsills. This had been his perspective since childhood and the central theme of his life. Despite the criticism, Gerstein maintained his integrity as an artist and continued to paint subjects deemed 'mundane.'

By 1981, Gerstein had his first international solo exhibition at the Albert White Gallery in Toronto, and he continued to exhibit as an international solo artist every year thereafter.

By the 1990s, Gerstein was creating bold and radiant works that he is now recognized worldwide. This period also marked a significant transformation in his artistic process. Laser-cut technology became widely available in the '90s as more powerful lasers entered the market, allowing Gerstein to create sculptures in larger series. With the shift to laser cutting, he was able to focus on developing and pioneering contemporary art techniques, passionately drawing and painting while dedicating all his energies to the creative process.

Initially, he began working with single-layer cutouts, painting them with bright, glossy industrial paints, mostly in primary colors. This marked the true start of Gerstein's iconic style. His art distinguished itself during this period by radiating vibrant colors and conveying a sense of joy and euphoria. It is characterized by the emotions it evokes, the contrasting color palettes, and the popular imagery, yet it is distinct from pop art in that it lacks ambiguity.

His works aim to brighten cityscapes, towns, and homes by showcasing lively scenes filled with joy and nature imagery. The vivid colors inspire happiness and engage both the audience and their environment. Gerstein's extensive body of work includes numerous outdoor sculptures in cities around the world, including Momentum, an 18.5-meter-tall sculpture in Singapore's business district, recognized as the tallest sculpture in the country.

Today, Gerstein continues to express himself through art and enriches culture with his expanding collections of wall-sculpture series, miniatures, public projects, and more. His studio, nestled between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, offers views of the region's lush, hilly landscape. The multiple levels house his extensive collection of works, ranging from early oil paintings to more vibrant pieces produced today. It also serves as a hub for creative minds, featuring workshops across four stories filled with painters, printers, metalworkers, and various artisans dedicated to realizing Gerstein's artistic visions.

Gerstein's outdoor sculptures are installed in numerous public spaces worldwide, including Israel, Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, and China.

ARTIST CV

Education:

- **1965-1966:** Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem
- **1966-1968:** École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris
- **1968-1970:** Art Students League, New York
- **1973-1974:** Postgraduate: Saint Martin's School of Art, London

Awards:

- **1980:** Ben-Yitzhak Israel Museum Prize for illustration for the book "Siamina and the Cats of Yemin Moshe" by Uri Orlev
- **2016:** Taiwan's Artistic Creation Award

Exhibitions and Solo Shows:

David Gerstein has had numerous exhibitions and solo shows throughout his career. While a comprehensive list with exact dates is extensive, here are some notable exhibitions:

- **1971:** First exhibition in Israel at the Engel Gallery, Jerusalem, featuring figurative drawings and watercolors
- **1972:** Exhibited large oil paintings focusing on interiors and seaside themes at the Jerusalem Artists' House
- **1981:** Displayed his early sculptures at the Horace Richter Gallery, Tel Aviv

- **1987:** Featured in a significant exhibition at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, titled "From Dudu to 3-D," showcasing colorful and dynamic sculptures reminiscent of toys or paper cutouts
- **1990-1991:** Created a series of paintings during his residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris
- **1997:** Held a solo exhibition at the Rosenfeld Gallery, Tel Aviv, presenting his evolving sculptural works
- **2008:** Published "Gerstein Sculptures," a comprehensive collection of his works, accompanied by exhibitions in various galleries
- **2012:** Released "David Gerstein: Past and Present," further solidifying his international presence with exhibitions in Europe and Asia
- **2015:**
 - **"Made In Germany":** Collaborative work with Otmar Alt Foundation, Bochum, Germany.
 - **Galerie D'art Perbet:** Annecy, France.
 - **Galerie Montmartre:** Paris, France.
 - **Miva Gallery:** Stockholm, Sweden.
- **2016:**
 - **Shenzhen MixC:** Shenzhen, China.
 - **Gana Gallery:** Busan, South Korea.
 - **Galeria D'Art Mar:** Barcelona, Spain.
- **2017:**
 - **"Layers":** Today Art Museum, Beijing, China.
 - **Kellerman Gallery:** Düsseldorf, Germany.
 - **Kpopulous Gallery:** Mykonos, Greece.
- **2018:**
 - **Froots Gallery:** 798 Art District, Beijing, China.
 - **"XYZ":** Galerie Duret, Paris, France, and Brussels, Belgium.
- **2019:**
 - **"Small is Beautiful":** Froots Gallery, Shanghai, China.
 - **"Back & Forth":** Miva Gallery, Gothenburg and Malmö, Sweden.
 - **Belle Gallery:** Denmark.
- **2020:**
 - **"Art in Motion":** Galerie Duret, Paris, France, and Brussels, Belgium.
 - **"U-Turn":** Artists' House, Tel Aviv, Israel.
- **2021:**
 - **"Urban Dream":** Galerie Duret, Brussels, Belgium, and Paris, France.
- **2022:**
 - **"Such & Such":** Lushy Gallery, Tel Aviv, Israel.
 - **"Watercolors & Wall Sculptures":** Solo exhibition at Galerie Duret, Brussels
 - **"Pink Gradient":** Galerie Duret, Brussels, Belgium
 - **"Everyday Sunrise":** Group show at Galerie Duret, Paris, France
- **2023:**
 - **"Winter Group Show":** Galerie Duret, Paris, France
- **2024:**
 - **"Carnet de Voyage":** Galerie Duret, Paris, France
 - **80th Birthday Celebration:** Frank Fluegel Galerie, Nürnberg, Germany
 - **"Love Beyond Colour":** Print Bakery, Seol, South Korea, Korea Art Festival