

FROM HOW A 16-YEAR-OLD ARCHITECTURE

For Achilles, his work is multi-coloured, chaotic, and spans across different worlds, fighting against the odds from childhood to today: 16-year-old Achilles has a passion for design, wind and earth, and has built up less than a year's worth of experience as well as international exposure in this emerging field. His career began as a part-time intern at museums all over the world, and now he has his very own Museum of Modern Art.

Written by

LEGO TO MoMA

17-YEAR-OLD ARTIST AND SOCIAL ACTIVIST IS BRINGING OUR PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

As Souras, it all began with Lego. A lifelong connoisseur of these primary-school heirloom building blocks, Achilleas began architecting visionary rollercoasters, towering structures, and intricate designs at an early age. Fast forward 17 years-old and a high school junior at the American School of Barcelona, he has drawn upon his love of Lego to create a structure able to resist gale force winds and earthquakes. His most ambitious architectural endeavour to-date, conceived 17 years ago, is already turning heads and stirring-up discussion all over Europe and internationally. The installation, aptly named "Save Our Souls," epitomizes the young artist, all at once contemplative, discerning, and socially conscious. What passion project has now received attention and exhibition opportunities from museums and galleries all over the world, including a recent endorsement on the website of New York's Museum of Modern Art.

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Photography by Joao Gaudenzi/Luis Calau



Achilleas feels humbled and blessed to get to share his work and vision with so many different communities. Born in London, Achilleas grew up with his mom (of Thai, Austrian, and Italian ancestry), dad (half British and half Greek), and younger brother Adrianos in a wide array of places, including Athens, NYC, Frankfurt, and now Barcelona. Consequently, he is fluent in quite a few languages; although, he considers the language of “art” to be his primary tongue.

For Achilleas, engaging in art goes beyond a simple drawing or design. He values art that tells a story and raises awareness about the issues that matter to him most: human rights, advocacy, cultural identity, wellness, and security. He seeks to do work that makes an impact.

The Souras family fondly recalls a meal they shared at a local eatery in Frankfurt, Germany, back in the summer of 2012 when Achilleas was 12. Perplexed by the amount of homeless people he saw in the surrounding neighbourhoods, Achilleas abruptly jumped up from the table, dead-set on offering a portion of the unfinished meal to a homeless man he had seen earlier that night camping on the sidewalk. The man, emboldened by this act of kindness, enjoyed every morsel of the food and then felt at ease to finish his meal alongside other patrons on the restaurant’s patio, soon afterwards being offered a glass of water, napkins, and utensils by the servers. This spontaneous act that allowed this homeless man to behave and feel as though he, too, could be “a part of” mainstream society, encapsulates the sensibility and sensitivity that goads Achilleas, instilling the foundation, moral compass, and springboard that would inform his future accomplishments.

From those early days of doodling, using pens to combine shapes and lines in unusual ways, and making castles and spaceships out of Lego, Achilleas has evolved considerably as an artist. After begging his parents to take art classes and glean fodder and inspiration from the best of them, Achilleas emerged with his own style and passionate mission for his art. His multicultural upbringing and travels led him to see the good and the not-so-stellar universal challenges facing nearly every community, regardless of time, place, and ethnicity. “Everywhere I go, I see so many people who feel like outsiders...like they are barred from having access to a sustainable life...a life that many of us take for granted.” Achilleas has always believed that shelter is a basic need for everybody. Further affected by the international refugee crisis, the daily media coverage, and startling evidence all around him, Achilleas felt moved to take action. He wondered, “What can I do? How can I help? What do I have to offer to raise awareness?” For Achilleas, the answer was clear: “I can speak volumes through my art.”

In 2016, he conceptualized “Save Our Souls” to combine sustainability, recycling, art, and human rights. “I had just finished an eye-opening summer architecture program at SCI-Arc in California,” explains Achilleas.

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