Donald Urquhart
b 1969, Bankfoot, Perthshire

About the artist

Donald Urquhart grew up in rural surroundings in the north of Scotland where he explored the countryside and forests. His grandfather was a forester and this has inspired his love of nature and his interest in the environment since he was a child. He started out by studying Drawing & Painting at Edinburgh College of Art. While grounded in the disciplines of Drawing and Painting, Urquhart's practice has diversified in recent years, with work taking form in both landscape and architectural contexts and encompassing the use of a wide range of media including audio, text, video and photography.

An Enlightened Stand (1999) Grizedale Forest © Donald Urquhart

About the work

An Enlightened Stand is a site-specific work (i.e. made for that exact place), appearing amongst the trees like a painting of the shadows cast in the striking sunlight. The lighter, square shape on the ground is similar to the canvas support of a painting. It is as if Urquhart has captured a moment in time almost like a photograph. There is also a seemingly simple underlying geometry suggested in the work.
Context

Donald Urquhart’s work is usually conceptual, meaning that the ideas behind the work are more important than the materials. Urquhart is interested in the ideas associated with the environment and the use of natural materials that grow and change with the seasons. In this case, the natural light is overpowered by the strong colour of the trees but this would add a different dimension depending on the time of day and the weather conditions.

Materials and processes

Donald Urquhart’s artistic practice involves working with the environmental space to create permanent outdoor installations using natural materials to define colours, shapes and forms.

The artist has ‘painted’ an effective visual image of trees casting long shadows. To create the square on the ground he removed 42 tons of earth and replaced it with 30 tons of white Dolomite marble chips.