



MECONOMORPH SEED GROWS IN PROVIDENCE

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It perches, raptor-like, atop a kiosk lined with brochures and guides. This MeconoMorph “Seed” landed in the Providence Conventions Center on Jan 23, 2019. Since then, hundreds of visitors have lingered and moved slowly around the installation. “A lot of people who come through here stop for this one,” said Richard Muserlian, a visitors center associate. “They spend time with it.” Seen from afar, the

airy, hollow, geodesic structure seems organic, reminiscent of both coral and crystal. But this sculpture is made of business cards and, moving closer, I caught the black and glowing green of my own logo, then those of other local businesses. “When did those get added on?” I asked artist Viktor Genel. “It never stops growing,” he said, motioning to a collection box. “People keep leaving their cards, asking to be part of it.”

MeconoMorph is both an art concept and a business initiative. In a sense, it is also a living thing in that the Seeds, once dropped, are continually added onto; they do not stay one shape or size. MeconoMorph takes more cards into itself over time, growing both in size and in community. What makes this collection so unique is that anyone can become a part of it. At least, anyone with a set of standard American business cards. I asked Viktor what made this specific card size so important. The answer was more complex than I expected.

“I believe that someone, perhaps the Masons, thought about it for a long time before they came up with the ratio 3.5 by 2 inches,” mused Viktor. “The standard American size allows for a shape based on The Square Root of Three, a figure used prominently in sacred geometry and in entities like the Vesica Pisces, one of the most profound geometrical images of ancient and modern times. If you fold

such business cards diagonally, you will get two triangles with 30 and 60 degree angles.

This is the basic configuration for a Mecon, the individual Seed unit having eight hexagonal faces and six square faces. The Mecon is a truncated octahedron, the only Archimedean solid besides a cube which is capable of packing the space and creating three dimensional tessellations.” This art/science approach has created a MeconoMorph Seed capable of growing into many shapes and incarnations.

Visiting Viktor’s Instagram page, what struck me about his sculptures was that they seemed to have eyes that stared back at the world. In every picture, the forms seemed to survey the area around them, some staring up toward the sky while others scanned the parameters. In snapshots, MeconoMorphs grew up from the ground, spilled through rooms, and clustered on walls and ceilings. On the close-ups, you can see the names, the businesses, the designers and causes that are part of each collaborative structure, and I could sense those personalities and energies in the impact made by the whole.

“As a general rule, when something becomes useful, it ceases to be beautiful.”

– Théophile Gautier

I first met Viktor in 2016, at a pop-up exhibition on Washington Street in Providence. His MeconoMorph sculpture emanated from the wall, its multicolored cells bubbling forth among exhibits of paintings and artisan items. He explained to me that his goal was to take away the function of an object so that the beauty if its form could be seen. I didn’t quite understand it then, but as I view more of his works and I can see that these standard American cards, stripped of their normal use, become not only beautiful, but also something greater than the use in which they were first trapped.

The geodesic virtual villages that Viktor continues to build are not so much temporary exhibits as they are plantings for continuous future growth. When Elise Swearingen, visitor center manager for the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Christine Phillips, director of partnership development, invited the project to be in the Center, there was no discussion about time-frame at all. They needed an attraction there, and MeconoMorph fit the bill. Viktor’s hope is that more Seeds will spread around in places looking to attract visitors. It provides a platform and exposure for the people who have become part of this venture. Sprout Coworking has also taken a MeconoMorph Seed into its own fertile garden of artists and entrepreneurs: [instagram.com/p/Bs2-QqZDa0A](https://www.instagram.com/p/Bs2-QqZDa0A), and Genel told me that *Motif* magazine sent him a set of cards to join the burgeoning collection. *To find out how to become a part of MeconoMorph yourself, visit tiny.cc/Affiliate. To learn how to make a MeconoMorph, visit instructables.com/howto/meconomorph. For MeconoMorph Instagram page: tiny.cc/MeconoMorph. For current locations: tiny.cc/goProv*