

THE COMMON GUILD

Visual arts: Projects / Events / Exhibitions

MEDIA RELEASE

Ugo Rondinone

'primitive'

8 September - 17 November 2012

Preview Saturday 8 September 2012 3-5pm

21 Woodlands Terrace, Glasgow, G3 6DF

Continuing The Common Guild's commitment to bringing some of the very best international artists to a Scottish audience, we are delighted to present a solo exhibition by the Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone, the first ever presentation of his work in Scotland, and only the second public show of his work in the UK.

Rondinone's exhibition at The Common Guild will feature a group of recent works, reconfigured specifically for the domestic spaces of 21 Woodlands Terrace. Comprising a series of bird sculptures, the work will penetrate the building with an almost threatening persistence. However, at roughly life size, the sculptures could easily be missed if it wasn't for their sheer number.

Unlike other sculptures by Rondinone, there is no attempt at realism, and although each of the 59 birds are slightly different, they bear no distinguishing marks or features. They do however, all have their own titles, ranging from 'the sun' and 'the moon' to 'the universe' and 'the atmosphere', every bird is named after a natural element or phenomena, referencing the natural world beyond the gallery and bringing the outside in. The titles also serve to provide a contrast between the modest scale of the sculptures and the vastness of the spectacles after which they are named, prompting the viewer to consider these inanimate objects as part of a wider, almost spiritual, context.

Cast in bronze but bearing the artist's fingerprints as if freshly hewn from a lump of clay, the birds reference the simultaneously permanent and temporary nature of their making, preserving the moment of creation and providing "...a melancholy reflection on their subjects' inexorable transience"¹. Rondinone's sculptures have been described as possessing a

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¹ Text accompanying 'Ugo Rondinone: Nude' at Sadie Coles HQ, 13 Oct - 21 Nov 2009

“...sense of time suspended and death held at bay, almost like an intake of breath that remains perpetually and impossibly withheld”¹ and the relationship between life and death is clearly present here.

The exhibition also includes new works entitled 'clockwork without arms', that reference the passing of time in a very different way: suspended stained glass clock faces, stripped of their hands, and illuminated by natural light. These new works provide a central focus around which the other works orbit, providing a constant suggestion of our consciousness of time.

Rondinone first came to international attention in the early 1990s with installations combining strikingly diverse forms; photography, video, painting, drawing, sculpture and sound. His exhibitions can include India ink landscapes in the Romantic tradition, or mesmerising target paintings that recall the trance-inducing images of 1960s psychædelia. He combines works with an up-beat, pop sensibility with others that reflect a mood of longing and disconnection, from photographs of a man and a woman who never meet to melancholy images of clowns slumped on floors. His works reflect on the conflict between reality and a world of mirrors, dreams and artifice.

This project is supported by Pro Helvetia and continues The Common Guild's growing reputation for carefully conceived and immaculately presented exhibitions. In the few short years since coming into being, The Common Guild has established a reputation for the quality and pitch of our exhibitions, which has helped extend our capacity to realise significant exhibitions with important artists. From shows with major established figures (such as Roni Horn and Wolfgang Tillmans) to more emergent figures (like Ulla von Brandenburg and Thea Djordjadze), our programme has developed a strong and vital internationalist dimension for contemporary art programming in Glasgow.

Exhibition open Tuesday - Saturday 12noon-5pm, until 7pm on Thursdays and Fridays, and by appointment.

1. **Ugo Rondinone** (born in Switzerland in 1964) lives and works in New York and Zürich. Rondinone has exhibited extensively internationally; recent and upcoming solo shows include: 'human nature, a new commission for Public Art Fund, Rockefeller Plaza, New York (2013); 'SUNRISE. East', Museum Dhondt Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgium, and 'Die Nacht aus Blei' ('The Night of Lead'), Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau (both 2010); 'SUNRISE. East', the Festival d'Automne, Paris and 'The Night of Lead', MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla, León (both 2009); 'CLOCKWORK FOR ORACLES II', ICA Boston, Art Wall Project; 'Dog Days Are Over', Hayward Gallery, South Bank Centre, London, and 'We Burn, We Shiver', Sculpture Center, New York, with Martin Boyce, (all 2008); 'get up girl a sun is running the world', the 52nd International Art Exhibition Biennale, Venice, Italy, with Urs Fischer, and ', air gets into everything even nothing', Art on the Plaza, New York, presented by Creative Time, New York (both 2007); and 'zero built a nest in my navel', the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2006). In 2007 he curated the show 'The Third Mind' at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris.

2. **The Common Guild** is a visual arts organisation based in Glasgow. It was established in 2006 and presents a dynamic, international programme of contemporary visual art projects, exhibitions, and events. These include

¹ Ibid.

gallery-based exhibitions at our current premises as well as non-gallery, one-off projects, talks and collaborations. We are committed to presenting artists' work in interesting and engaging ways and aim to offer access to world-class contemporary art experiences and discussions. The Common Guild is a not-for-profit visual arts organisation, receiving Flexible Funding from Creative Scotland.

For more information about The Common Guild please visit:
www.thecommonguild.org.uk

3. The Common Guild's temporary home at **21 Woodlands Terrace** is a grand, Victorian townhouse to the west of the city centre next to Kelvingrove Park. Exhibitions take place over two floors, including a unique library, designed by artist Andrew Miller, which includes a selection of books and catalogues on the exhibiting artists.

4. The Common Guild have been appointed as curators for the **Scotland + Venice 2013** presentation. The Venice Biennale is the largest and most prestigious visual arts exhibition in the world. This will be the sixth presentation from Scotland and Venice, a partnership between Creative Scotland, National Galleries of Scotland and British Council Scotland. The 2013 Biennale will be the 55th International Art Exhibition.

The Common Guild will present projects by three of Scotland's most compelling and consistently interesting artists: **Duncan Campbell**, **Hayley Tompkins** and **Corin Sworn**. The exhibition will be presented in the Palazzo Pisani, Venice from June to November 2013.

5. Ugo Rondinone's exhibition coincides with **Michael Clark** Dance Company's landmark dance event at the Glasgow Barrowlands on 8 & 9 September, the final weekend of the London 2012 festival,

Taking over the celebrated Glasgow Barrowlands, now a revered rock music venue and with a history as Glasgow's premier dance hall, the performance project is specially created by Michael Clark, the iconic Scottish dancer, choreographer and artist. The Barrowlands Project invites local people to become performers in the choreography alongside company dancers, accentuating the communal dance experience. For more information please visit:
www.michaelclarkcompany.com

6. Ugo Rondinone's solo exhibition 'pure sunshine' at **Sadie Coles**, 4 New Burlington Place, London W1S 2HS, opens 5 September - 4 October (open Tuesday-Saturday 11-6). For more information see: www.sadiecoles.com



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