

“...the system and concept of time, which has occupied my work since the beginning, gives me a certain sense of grounding.”

Kukje Gallery is very pleased to announce its first exhibition with Ugo Rondinone. Rondinone has garnered international attention for his poetic, evocative work across a wide range of styles and media. Often working on multiple ongoing series over many years, the artist is primarily interested in conducting personal investigations of the way materials possess and dispense energy. Gaining prominence in the 1990s, Rondinone’s work was heralded both for its preternatural use of material and its open-ended, emotional content. His confident and incisive voice allows viewers to enter the work without bias, as if seeing these things for the first time.

For his show at Kukje Gallery, Rondinone presents a series of five of his bluestone sculptures—monolithic sculptures consisting of bluestones that were cut and stacked to form raw but surprisingly emotive human effigies. Retaining the marks of the sculptural and quarrying process, these raw forms are titled *the nosy*, *the anomalous*, *the observant*, *the inquisitive*, and *the dutiful*. The stone figures arranged throughout the gallery bear silent but poignant witness to the natural eddies of time, creating an ambiguous yet charged tableaux.

Rondinone’s practice occupies a very special place in contemporary art. His fluency in both conceptual idioms and material inventiveness allows him to fluidly traverse multiple media—sculpture, photography, installation, and painting. His ability to use both humor and pathos, together with popular cultural iconography like clowns and rainbows, makes his work not only critically important, but also fun and socially engaging; a combination that further differentiates this visionary artist’s oeuvre from that of his contemporaries. Indeed, Rondinone approaches his individual work as being connected to a total art statement, and as such, each exhibition functions like a poignant chapter or stanza in a poem. A concise and incisive introduction, this exhibition is a perfectly crafted presentation of one of today’s most important artists.

Ugo Rondinone was born in Brunnen, Switzerland in 1964, and currently lives and works in New York City. He has had solo exhibitions at Musée National d’Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2003); Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2006); Creative Time: Art on the Plaza, Battery Park, New York (2007); New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2007); Hayward Gallery, London (2008); amongst many others. Rondinone represented Switzerland, along with Urs Fischer, in the 52<sup>nd</sup> Venice Biennale (2007). His recent major exhibitions include a presentation of earth installations and body wax sculptures at M-Museum, Leuven (2013); monolithic bluestone sculptures commissioned by the Public Art Fund for the Rockefeller Plaza, New York (2013); and colorful wall paintings and clowns

at the Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2014). Rondinone's work is featured in major museum collections, including Museum of Modern Art, New York; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and Dallas Museum of Art.