

ARKEN

PRESS RELEASE

Ugo Rondinone's iconic clowns

Slumbering clowns with hats at rakish angles and sparkling, festive costumes. 45 lifelike clown sculptures move into ARKEN when star artist Ugo Rondinone opens his new solo exhibition.

Rainbow-coloured messages in neon, towers of stacked boulders in the Nevada Desert, and melancholy clowns. The internationally renowned Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone creates joyous, meditative works that speak to both heart and mind. From 16 December his fascinating installation *vocabulary of solitude* takes over ARKEN's 150 metre long Art Axis.

Brilliantly coloured dreamscape

In Ugo Rondinone's immersive installation you step into a brilliantly coloured dreamscape populated by 45 lifelike human sculptures in full clown costume cast from male and female models. Usually clowns are happy, energetic and entertaining, but here they are the opposite – tired and passive. They are just people – out of character and out of their clown shoes – captured in a moment of meditative calm before or after the show. With few resources Rondinone stages familiar figures and symbols like a clown, a tree or a rainbow in displaced ways, and we see them with new eyes.

A portrait of a day

vocabulary of solitude is a portrait of a single person's day represented in 45 acts. Each clown is a stand-in for one of these actions and is named with a verb in the present tense. Together they form an endless 24-hour loop: *be. breathe. sleep. dream. wake. rise. sit. hear. look. think. stand. walk. pee. shower. dress. drink. fart. shit. read. laugh. cook. smell. taste. eat. clean. write. daydream. remember. cry. nap. touch. feel. moan. enjoy. float. love. hope. wish. sing. dance. fall. curse. yawn. undress. lie.*

Large-scale signature works

The exhibition has been created in close collaboration with Ugo Rondinone. The artist has meticulously placed every single work in a flow that invites the visitor on a walk through an animated dreamscape. In addition to *vocabulary of solitude* the exhibition includes several large-scale signature works, such as the work *wind moon* from 2011: a six-metre tall aluminium tree coated in white enamel cast from a 2000 year old olive tree. The extensive site-specific window installation *love invents us* from 1999 illuminates the Art Axis in all the colours of the rainbow. Also included is the painting *achtundzwanzigsterjunizweitausendundsechzehn*, 2016. Created with an airbrush technique the piece causes an optical effect making the painting dance before your eyes. Made out of wood, glass, aluminum and paint the work, *the open* from 2014 is a blind window at once reflecting the viewer and

offering a gaze into a blue void. Lastly, the exhibition includes the subtle work *calm* from 2006, a pair of ragged clown shoes emphasizing the tension between show time and closing time.

vocabulary of solitude can be experienced at ARKEN from 16 December 2017 until 30 December 2018. The exhibition has been organized in collaboration with Ugo Rondinone and Frahm & Frahm.

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