

UGO RONDINONE
Nude

13 October – 21 November 2009
69 South Audley St London W1

For his latest solo show at Sadie Coles HQ, Ugo Rondinone is displaying new sculptures from his ongoing *still.life.* series. Tree trunks, walnuts, potatoes and other everyday objects and materials have been cast in lead-filled bronze, echoing the lowly or perishable items traditionally depicted in still life paintings. Rondinone's subjects also glance back to the simple materials of *arte povera* in the 1960s and after. Yet Rondinone inflects that movement's methodology of appropriation, supplanting the concept of the readymade with a process of artful and painstaking fabrication.



As the show's title implies, Rondinone's subjects have been stripped down and re-contextualized both through their transposition into the gallery space and their transmutation into the incongruous bronze and lead medium. The pine tree sculptures traverse the gallery floor and wall like an architectural framework, acquiring a monumental quality even in their lopped, 'denuded' state. The tree is a recurring motif in Rondinone's work and evidences a quixotic pastoral strain that characterises many of his sculptures and drawings.

Rondinone's minimalist arrangements of bronze potatoes or polished stones draw upon Modernist sculpture in the way they accentuate the sculptural properties of quotidian forms and throwaway items. The textured surface of the cast cardboard likewise takes on a painterly or *malerische* dimension. Yet the bald 'ordinariness' of Rondinone's subjects endures owing to the mastery of their *trompe l'oeil*.

In this respect, *Nude* reflects the long tradition of still life – from the Dutch masters to Cézanne – of apparent naturalism underpinned by compositional artifice. Moreover, the sculptures possess the same sense of time suspended and death held at bay, almost like an intake of breath that remains perpetually and impossibly withheld. As the title *still.life.* suggests, the sculptures represent a self-contained, frozen moment – weighted and isolated with lead. The bronzes' lead cores reinforce the notion of heaviness pulling them towards the ground. Time is thickened and slowed into space. The lead-filled bronze casts constitute a stay against the passage of time, and revert to the ideas of impact, isolation and passivity that run through Rondinone's art. Yet paradoxically, in so doing, they mount a melancholy reflection on their subjects' inexorable transience.

Ugo Rondinone (Swiss, b. 1964) has exhibited internationally; recent solo shows include the Festival d'Automne, Paris, 2009; *MUSAC*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla, León (2008); the 2007 52nd International Art Exhibition Biennale, Venice, Italy, with Urs Fischer; Art on the Plaza, New York, presented by Creative Time, New York, 2007; and the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London in 2006. In 2007 he curated the show *The Third Mind* at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris. Next year, Rondinone will have solo shows at Kunstmuseum Aarau, Switzerland, and Louisiana Museum of Contemporary Art, Denmark. Ugo Rondinone lives and works in New York and Zürich.

For further information please contact James Cahill on +44 [0] 20 7493 8611 or james@sadiecoles.com
 Opening hours Tuesday – Saturday 10 – 6pm