

The Green Gallery 1500 N Farwell Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53202

Ugo Rondinone *Milwaukee landscapes*

June 9 - July 22, 2023

opening Friday June 9th from 5-7pm

The Green Gallery welcomes Ugo Rondinone's exhibition *Milwaukee landscapes*, the first solo presentation of the artist's work in Wisconsin, to be held in conjunction with *Nature Doesn't Know About Us* with Sculpture Milwaukee.

The exhibition features 16 monochrome paintings with custom frames designed for Milwaukee. These works make use of landscape as a literal material. Upon viewing this suite of works, the viewer first senses the physical presence of each object. Herein, we engage soil, small rocks, and decomposing matter, encased in resin. This natural substrate for which we all walk upon has been fixed and made solid for our viewing experience. It in some ways acts as a permanent, physical record of the natural.

Equal in prominence is the function of color. Rondinone's *Milwaukee landscapes* feel highly energetic. The paintings vibrate in the gallery projecting a glow beyond their physical presence. The radiant palette emulates illuminated skies or luminous screens, perhaps suggesting how the synthetic has become quite *natural* in the present. Often our experience of the landscape first comes by way of high definition and overly saturated colors on screen; these works start to echo a duality of our moment. Drawn in by the radiant use of color we have come to know and expect, we are amazed by the raw material presence of the surface.

Each work in *Milwaukee landscapes* is housed by a custom frame. This gesture is manifold. It posits that this investment in material is a picture. Although it makes use of real stuff, it is also representational; pointing to other constructs of nature we encounter. The frame also traditionally suggests a window; a framed experience of the world. We are asked to consider what is included and what is excluded; a moment where choice can be highly politicized. These frames further allow a moment of play for the artist. With such emphasis placed on color, the frames offer moments of contrast as well as sophisticated color control. Some frames are calibrated to optically buzz in the eye. This phenomenon occurs when two complementary colors of the same (or close) value are placed next to one another. Other frames push the subtle dynamics of the monochrome further, gingerly tweaking saturation and temperature. Further combinations feel invested in appearance, nodding to pairings found in pop culture at large. Although the frame is often considered an act of finishing, here it takes on an integral role in the art object.

Milwaukee landscapes coincides with Rondinone's curatorial project *Nature Doesn't Know Us* (summer 2022 - fall 2023) hosted by Sculpture Milwaukee. The exhibition at The Green Gallery helps to contextualize thought processes made by the artist in the broader context of Rondinone's curatorial project. Proceeds from *Milwaukee landscapes* serve as a benefit for Sculpture Milwaukee's *Nature Doesn't Know Us* programming.

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One of twelve pieces included in *Nature Doesn't Know About Us* is *Toilet Tree*, 2004 by David Hammons. This work is proudly on public display at The Green Gallery during Rondinone's exhibition and through the fall of 2023.

The Green Gallery is proudly participating in QKE, where *Milwaukee landscapes* will run in conjunction with a city-wide collaboration joining Milwaukee's galleries and art organizations to maintain a supportive space for LGBTQ+ communities and to recognize the impact and importance of queer art.

Please join us for our public opening Friday June 9th from 5 to 7pm. Special thanks to Ugo and the Studio Rondinone team for their help in making this exhibition possible.

Ugo Rondinone is recognized as one of the major voices of his generation, an artist who composes searing meditations on nature and the human condition while establishing an organic formal vocabulary that fuses a variety of sculptural and painterly traditions. The breadth and generosity of his vision of human nature have resulted in a wide range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional objects, installations, videos, and performances. His hybridized forms, which borrow from ancient and modern cultural sources alike, exude pathos and humor, going straight to the heart of the most pressing issues of our time, where modernist achievement and archaic expression intersect.

Ugo Rondinone was born in 1964 in Brunnen, Switzerland. He studied at the Universität für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna before moving to New York in 1997, where he lives and works to this day. His work has been the subject of solo presentations at the Centre George Pompidou, Paris (2003); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2006) Art Institute of Chicago (2013); Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2014) Palais de Tokyo, 2015, Secession, Vienna 2015, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam 2016, MACRO, Rome 2016, Carre D'Art, Nimes 2016, Berkley Art Museum, Berkeley, Contemporary Art Center Cincinnati, Cincinnati 2017, Bass Museum of Art, Miami (2017); Belvedere, Vienna (2021) Tamayo Museum, Mexico City (2022) and Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2022), Pe5t Palais, Paris (2022), Scuola Grande San Giovanni Evangelista di Venezia, Venice (2022), and The Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva, (2023). In 2007 he represented Switzerland at the 52nd Venice Biennale. Forthcoming exhibitions include:, Storm King, New York, The Städel Museum, Frankfurt and The Phillips Collection, Washington.