

This exhibition of sculptures at Tramway draws together some of the most significant works from the ARTIST ROOMS collection and new work which responds to the unique context of Tramway's redoubtable main gallery.

Born in the Greek port city of Piraeus in 1936, Jannis Kounellis moved to Rome in 1956, and has lived and worked there ever since. Kounellis is best known as an influential figure of 'Arte Povera', a movement that emerged in the 1960s.

Kounellis is a painter, performance artist and a sculptor. In the early 1960s, his painting gradually became more sculptural incorporating found elements and using unusual combinations of opposing materials.

Redefining traditional sculpture, Kounellis uses various materials such as soil, coal, stones, sacks, fire, live animals, bed frames and doorways to create highly original sculptures, performances and large scale installations. Kounellis' use of everyday life objects reflects the idea of merging life with art.

The use of antithetical media, such as raw material and objets trouvés, expresses the tension and alienation of our contemporary society which is built on mass urban and industrial civilisation on one hand and still retains a link to traditional, primitive and individual values.

In the twenty-first century, Kounellis has developed a visual language through his vast material vocabulary, challenging the notion of painting, manipulating the exhibition space and the viewer's experience.

Following the exhibition of his famous work Untitled 1969, where he brought live horses into the space of Whitechapel gallery (1982), Kounellis has exhibited all over the world and is represented in major museum collections internationally. From the 70s until today, his work has been shown extensively internationally. He has taken part in seven editions of the Venice Biennale since 1972. His work was also featured at the Documenta in Kassel in 1972 and 1982. Kounellis is the most frequently exhibited Greek artist in museums worldwide

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