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**Belvedere 21**  
Arsenalstraße 1  
1030 Vienna

**Press downloads:**  
[belvedere.at/en/press](https://belvedere.at/en/press)

**Press contact:**  
Désirée Schellerer  
+43 664 800 141 303  
[d.schellerer@belvedere.at](mailto:d.schellerer@belvedere.at)  
Irene Jäger  
+43 664 800 141 185  
[i.jaeger@belvedere.at](mailto:i.jaeger@belvedere.at)

Installation view „Ugo Rondinone. nude in the landscape“, photo: Johannes Stoll / Belvedere, Vienna

## UGO RONDINONE

### NUDE IN THE LANDSCAPE

12 December 2021 to 1 May 2022

**Landscapes, suns, nudes, and still lifes – Ugo Rondinone's visual worlds transport the viewer into an unfamiliar reality. For his first solo exhibition in a museum in Austria, the multimedia conceptual and installation artist has devised a polyphonic, immersive cosmos.**

Stella Rollig, CEO of the Belvedere: *"Exhaustion, melancholy, and unfulfillable longing are present-day modes of being in the face of oppressive reality. Ugo Rondinone, magician, creates an allegory of these inner worlds as a space of unreality where world-weariness refracts itself in sheer beauty."*

Ugo Rondinone has been crossing boundaries between media and disciplines for more than thirty years. Works by the New York-based Swiss artist are often inspired by everyday issues and subjects that take on a poetic dimension through isolation, amplification, or specific material treatment. Ideas of Romanticism, the sublime, and transience resonate, as do the leitmotifs that define Rondinone's work: figuration and abstraction, humans and nature, day and night, space and time. Rondinone's conceptual approach is to make differences between things productive; he includes contradictions and allows them to flow into one another. By combining series of works or individual elements plucked from these, ever new meanings, possible interpretations, and narratives emerge in each specific exhibition context. A dense web of works, themes, temporal levels, and references is thus created in fluid new constellations that correspond with one another in a polyphonic cosmos. Rondinone's art speaks to both the emotional and the rational and opens up contemplative spaces for meaning or

interpretation. In highly artificial installations that cite art history and popular culture, the artist creates haunting moods that capture our modern-day attitude toward life.

*nude in the landscape* is Rondinone's first solo show in an Austrian museum. With the genres "nude" and "landscape" cited in the title, the artist opens up a broad artistic and art historical space of signification that extends through different eras to our present day. As viewers step into a calm, almost meditative setting, a "landscape tableau" made up of several elements unfolds before them.

The exhibition opens with an intimate prelude of sixty framed works on paper from the *poems* series, which Rondinone began in 2003 and has been continuing since 2020. This prelude is followed by a monumental statement: *two standing landscapes with sunrise and sunset* (2021), the title of Rondinone's oversized two-part work created specifically for this show. Standing over four meters tall, these "walls" are 16 and 18 meters wide respectively and weigh several tons; they can be read both as paintings and as sculptures. The two circular sections placed at different heights denote a sunrise and sunset.

Juxtaposed against the *landscapes* are fourteen life-size *nudes* (2010/11), wax casts of dancers, captured in a moment of contemplation and indifferent repose. Each figure consists of up to twenty segments, with earth pigments from different continents mixed into the material to produce a variety of color gradations. The bodies thus carry different parts of the earth within and at the same time symbolize individuality and diversity.

Also part of this atmospheric setting is *winter cloud* (2019). The heavy, rock-like materials Rondinone uses contradict our notion of a cloud floating in the sky. In addition, there is a series of clocks without hands: *red clock* (2016), *blue clock* (2016), and *yellow clock* (2016). Their respective colors could be understood as references to the blue hour, the midday sun, and sunset. A transparent gray foil work on the glass façade of the Belvedere 21, titled *when the sun goes down and the moon comes up* (2021), blurs the boundaries between day and night, interior and exterior, art and nature. The romantic longing to capture a particular fleeting moment, or rather to suspend time by artistic means, permeates the entire exhibition.

Curator Axel Köhne: "*nude in the landscape blurs genres, concepts, and roles and is always tied back to the visitor's perception. Against the impositions and speed of the neoliberal world, the exhibition forms an almost timeless magical projection surface that eludes any conclusive interpretation and allows for semantic murmurs and oscillations. If rational modernity has disenchanted the world, Rondinone is working on bringing the magic back.*"

## BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Ugo Rondinone was born 1964 in Brunnen, Switzerland; he studied at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna from 1986 to 1990 with Oswald Oberhuber and Ernst Caramelle (prior to that, he worked as an assistant to the Viennese Actionist Hermann Nitsch at Prinzenhof Castle and studied briefly at the Academy of Fine Arts with Bruno Gironcoli). In 1997 he relocated to New York, where he currently lives and works. In 2007 he represented Switzerland at the Venice Biennale. Today his works can be found in museum collections worldwide. In recent years, Rondinone has had solo exhibitions and installations at the following institutions, among others: Medellín Museum of Modern Art, Colombia; Kunsthalle Helsinki, Finland; Guild Hall, East Hampton, New York, 2019; Fundación Casa Wabi, Puerto Escondido, Mexico; Arken Museum of Modern Art, Ishøj, Denmark; Tate Liverpool, UK, 2018; Bass Museum of Art, Miami; Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, California; Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio; Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow, 2017; Place Vendôme, Paris; MACRO and Mercati di Traiano, Rome; The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Carré d'Art, Nîmes, France; Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 2016; Museum Anahuacalli, Mexico City; Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai, 2014; M Museum, Leuven, Belgium, 2013. In 2013 Rondinone installed *human nature*, an exhibition of nine monumental stone figures in Rockefeller Plaza, New York, organized by the Public Art Fund. In 2016, Rondinone's large-scale public work *seven magic mountains* opened outside Las Vegas, co-produced by the Art Production Fund and the Nevada Museum of Art. In 2017, Rondinone curated a city-wide exhibition, *Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno*, which was presented in twelve New York non-profit institutions and venues: Artists Space, High Line Art, How! Happening, Hunter College Art Galleries, The Kitchen, New Museum, Red Bull Arts New York, Rubin Museum of Art, SkyArt, Swiss Institute, White Columns, and 80WSE Gallery. Recent and upcoming exhibitions include: Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand; Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich; Kamel Mennour, Paris; Gladstone Gallery, NY; Sadie Coles HQ, London; Esther Schipper, Berlin; Sant'Andrea de Scaphis, Rome; Galerie Krobath, Vienna; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City; Scuola Grande San Giovanni Evangelista / Venice Biennale; Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt; Städel Museum, Frankfurt; and Phillip's Collection, Washington, D.C.

Ugo Rondinone, along with the Belvedere's art education team and in cooperation with elementary schools throughout Austria, implemented the participatory work *your age and my age and the age of the rainbow*. The 70-meter-long installation, consisting of 1,085 rainbow panels painted by children aged 6 to 12, was on view from 13 June to 1 November 2021 in the Baroque Garden located between the Belvedere and the Belvedere 21.

## CATALOGUE

Ugo Rondinone. Akt in der Landschaft / nude in the landscape

Editors: Stella Rollig, Axel Köhne

Authors: Laura Hoptman, Axel Köhne, Stella Rollig

Graphics: Willi Schmid

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## EXHIBITION PROGRAM

Subject to the current valid regulations.

The Exhibition Program can be found under [www.belvedere.at/programm](http://www.belvedere.at/programm).

We are looking forward to your visit!

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition title	Ugo Rondinone nude in the landscape
Curator	Axel Köhne
Exhibition management	Kristof Viola
Works	21 partly multi-piece works, including 14 <i>nudes</i> , three <i>clocks</i> , one <i>cloud</i> , the two-piece sculpture <i>landscape</i> and one work consisting of 60 <i>poems</i>
Duration	12 December 2021 to 1 May 2022
Exhibition venue	Belvedere 21 Arsenalstraße 1, 1030 Vienna
Opening hours	Tuesday to Sunday 11 am to 6 pm Only open Mondays on public holidays
Tickets	Regular   € 10.50 Reduced   € 8 Belvedere annual ticket   € 39 Children and youth up to the age of 18   free
Web	belvedere.at facebook.com/belvedere21 twitter.com/belvedere21 instagram.com/belvedere21wien  #UgoRondinone

For more information on the exhibition and high-resolution press photos please visit [belvedere.at/en/press](https://belvedere.at/en/press).