

Genius Loci

(Spirit of Place)

Ai Weiwei
Daniel Buren
Tony Cragg
Richard Deacon
Spencer Finch
Dan Graham
Shirazeh Houshiary
Anish Kapoor
Richard Long
Tatsuo Miyajima
Julian Opie
Pedro Reyes
Santiago Sierra
Lee Ufan
Koen Vanmechelen
Joana Vasconcelos
Lawrence Weiner
Richard Wentworth
Tokujin Yoshioka

Genius Loci (Spirit of Place)

On the occasion of the 14th International Architecture Biennale in Venice, curated this year by Rem Koolhaas, the Lisson Gallery and Berengo Studio present an exhibition addressing the complex relationship between art and the public realm. By existing beyond the walls, ‘public’ art can help define the character of its location, sometimes functioning harmoniously and sometimes in tension with the architecture or landscape it inhabits.

In classical mythology, the Latin term *genius loci* refers to a protective spirit attached to a place – a guardian who watches over their part of the world and imbues it with a special character. In modern reality, we still need to be able to identify a *genius loci* in order to give us an understanding of our environment. One way of negotiating between the public realm and the individual is through common symbols – in the form of works of art – that help us identify with our landscapes. Whether those symbols add, enhance, complement or even come to represent their surroundings depends on the impact and intention of the works of art being placed. Anish Kapoor’s *Cloud Gate*, for example, was conceived as a central focus for the Millennium Park in Chicago, drawing the sky and the surrounding buildings into its seamless, curved stainless steel surface, in keeping with the artist’s wider aesthetic. Yet, since its unveiling in 2006, Kapoor’s undulating and essentially abstract sculpture has become an unofficial emblem of the city, a tourist attraction in its own right and, perhaps, the contemporary definition of a *genius loci*.

Another public project that reflected and perhaps improved its environment, began around the same time in Culiacán, a city in Mexico known for its drug-related gun crime. The Mexican artist Pedro Reyes reacted to

a government weapons amnesty there by melting down guns to make an equal quantity of shovels. These in turn were used to plant the same number of trees, 1,527 to be precise, both in Culiacán and in different locations around the world. Despite Reyes’s *Palas por Pistolas* seemingly representing the inverse impetus and proportion of Kapoor’s monumental symbol, it also responded to its location, arguably also managing to distill something of the spirit of its place, albeit in a very different way.

As experienced producers of large-scale public commissions, Lisson Gallery and Berengo Studio present a range of major artworks by 19 artists, both inside and outside the historic Venetian Palazzo Franchetti. The exhibition also includes models, drawings and proposals of public projects – some unrealized, some temporary, some permanent – along with photographic documentation of actual objects as they exist out in the world, all displayed in a special laboratory room, within a structure designed by the London-based architectural practice Carmody Groarke.

The exhibition focuses on real (as opposed to notional), life-size sculptures, most of which are not propositions for bigger or more public works, but simply standalone examples of how artists engage with material, space, place, architecture, fellow humans and nature. In the final reckoning, surely the test of any great work – public or private – is that it helps us better appreciate, contemplate and understand the world around us. When architects, artists, developers, and planners fully understand this, then the results, in terms of public art, can truly attain the character of genius.

Greg Hilty, *Lisson Gallery*
Patrizia Spadafora, *Berengo Studio*

Legend and Locus

I.

Let us begin with the myth: In the spiritual pantheon of the ancients, beneath the peaks of the gods, and among fertile banks, valleys and coastal plains inhabited by man, lived semi-divine deities; dryads, nymphs and genii apportioned to guard, guide, and sometimes meddle with the busy work of life on Earth. Every fountain, fortress, and forest glade had its own *genius loci*, a personified spirit who dwelled in a particular place. In order for a structure to stay intact, the *genius* of its location had to remain. *Genii locorum* were not immortal, and the gods were apt to punish those who would cause the protective spirits to flee or fall.

Geese, associated with the 'genius' of the Roman Capitol, woke the consul Manlius Marcus in 390 BC, allowing him to defend it from invading Gauls. The Tower of London – and the kingdom – will stand, according to legend, as long as its six guardian ravens remain. Gradually, however, anthropomorphic readings of the phrase slid towards a more ineffable sense of authenticity. Taken up by landscape designers during the nineteenth century, *genius loci* usually suggested the indistinct, yet ineluctable virtue of a place due to its environmental, cultural or spatial values. A spiritual pre-existence, which ensures continuity between all things borne of a specific location: the idea of the *genius loci* endures, as does our fascination with the particularities of place.

II.

As the artist and architect Vito Acconci points out, art is one of the only disciplines whose very name reifies itself; *'art, when pronounced as being such, is immediately valorised as a connection to the sacred; man's confrontation with the consciousness and continuity of being'*. This perception, whether demanded or not, projects onto the artist a freedom which Marshall Berman describes as *'a perfectly formed, perfectly sealed tomb'*; artistic production becomes a disclosure of the *condition* of being.

By contrast, architecture fancies itself as beleaguered, or at least beholden to functional constraints of housing the *activities* of being. Together with disciplinary contingencies of legal, political, economic and technological structures, this allows architecture professionals to imagine the artist as a relatively liberated figure.

The Venice Biennale is itself an illustration of the uneasy yet eager relationship between these two 'worlds'. The biennial art exhibition has been running since 1895, while architecture had to wait for almost a century before being formally acknowledged. In 1980, the first ever designated Venice Biennale of Architecture was directed by the Roman architect Paolo Portoghesi, under the title *'The Presence of the Past'*.

Just as Portoghesi was devising his 1980 Biennale – which included the theatrically postmodern 'Strada Novissima' installation – the Norwegian theorist Christian Norberg-Schulz published his influential book, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*.

An aside: It's funny to note how things turn in circles. Several years prior to this first architecture Biennale, Portoghesi and some friends took a walk around the Roman forum. It was Portoghesi's partner, the engineer Vittorio Gigliotti who pointed out, to a young and rapt Norberg-Schulz, an 'altar' to the deity or 'genius loci' of that place...

For Norberg-Schulz, the needs of society and community were to be appropriated through the readings of Heidegger: architecture could act as a poetic attempt to materialise the existential space of the human being. A student of Siegfried Giedion, he shared his mentor's concern for the modern separation between technological advances and human experience, or in Giedion's own words (expressed, for example, in *Mechanization takes Command*), the split between thinking and feeling in modernity.

At the first post-war meeting of CIAM (Congrès Internationale d'Architecture Moderne), Norberg-Schulz had observed the Anglo-Italian architect Ernesto Nathan Rogers valorising the pre-existent ambience of 'place'. Ears thus ringing with the humanist tremors shaking the foundations of High Modernism, his own theories on the *genius loci* sought to restore balance through focussing on the essential, elemental qualities of space.

An emphatic observation of found conditions would allow for place-specificity, for acknowledgment of the *genius loci* without exclusion. Belonging would be found in materials, landscape, topography, and the play between ground, sky, enclosure and threshold. These fundamental qualities would provide ground against which to establish both continuity and difference. *'The role of the architect is to make people see the special nature of the location'*, Norberg-Schulz wrote; architecture's insertion into the natural order would provide it with significance.

Norberg-Schulz's theories firmly established a place for phenomenology in architectural theory; against this history, one could map a parallel rise of abstract and conceptual shifts within art, as well as the rise of Land art and site-specific projects. However, Norberg-Schulz's *genius loci*, in its quest to resolve the profound and the particular, does not allow for the shifting paradigms of culture, where the politics of place and meaning are in continual flux.

As Hal Foster has written, we can no longer uphold any pretence of separation between the cultural and the economic. In its reduced reading as 'the essence of place', *genius loci* allows for just such a separation – a virtuous singularity elevated above politics, but susceptible to commerce. This saleable idea is artfully employed in the service of urban regeneration and city-making.

Today, art and architecture are locked in an embrace of mutual exploitation; together, they go shopping. Both disciplines have long been instrumentalised by state or sovereign, underlining existing power structures and latterly, market dynamics. Behold the abundant litter of recently established museums and galleries: the very act of hosting art – within

an arresting architectural stage, of course – is charged with boosting the economic profile of depressed regions.

Contemporary public space is characterised by a tension between economic forces, political agendas and cultural resistance. In the parlance of urban regeneration, the closest living relative of the *genius loci* goes by the name of 'place-making' – an equally mystical process by which denuded space is made into 'place'. When rampant speculation threatens to strip a place of all identity, art is drafted in to endow a 'neutralised' ground with meaning and focus. (Occasionally architecture is called upon to perform similar feats of repair, albeit conflicted by its own role in the undoing.)

For the artist, this is a heavy load. If *genius loci* originally corresponds to authenticity and preexistence – whether in cultural residue or material, sensuous quality – the aim of conferring identity and meaning is dubious. When the values embodied in artworks are not reflective of values of their viewing public, then any attempt to confer authenticity – or to reconcile between deities and earthly planes – will be unsuccessful. In the legislative negotiations that hitch public art to development, redemption is sought through inscrutable, spectacular commissions (wherein the art objects, like real estate, act also as investments). This effectively repositions corporate interests as the provision of public good.

Yet to allow for a public encounter with art in the space of everyday life, outside of the rarified confines of the museum and gallery, is surely an unimpeachable intent. Public art is not subject to controlled conditions; its viewers are not required to behave or respond in a manner encoded by the architecture of designated art spaces. It may face ambivalence; equally it may offer delight, intrigue, a perspectival challenge to prevailing and sanctioned narratives.

Liberated by the functional constraints of building, artworks that are intended to coexist with architecture can animate and play with it. Responding to physical, material and ideological conditions found in the built environment, their mutual exploitation can, so to speak, turn a profit. At its best, art in the immediacy of the public realm can offer an authentic response to the experience of place.

III.

The selection of works and artists exhibiting here are assembled on the grounds that their work has been exhibited in a public context; that is to say, that at a certain time, their work has been brought into encounter with a broader public, additional to a self-defined museum-going audience. Furthermore, several of the artists and artworks here respond directly to an architectonic or urban condition.

This text chooses not to mention the particular works, nor does it offer much in the way of cushioning the relationship between notable artists or architects. There are shared tools, of course, and these may be observed in any number of the works on display: modulations of light and form, circulation and movement; echoes of industrial and post-industrial material pasts; humane gestures of wit and critique. Norberg-Schulz's concerns for ground and the sky come into it, as do the glass-and-steel tectonics of the late-capitalist city.

Yet the real feat of the works assembled here will be reached through experience alone, and following this, through contemplation of their dis-location. If the title suggests contemplating the essence of specific places, the realisation of *genius loci* occurs in the transposition between the works as experienced, and as sited in other conditions.

Shumi Bose

Shumi Bose is an historian, editor and teacher based in London. She teaches histories and theories of architecture at the Architectural Association and at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design. She was a curatorial collaborator for the 2012 Venice Biennale, co-editing *Common Ground: A Critical Reader* and is a contributing editor for *Blueprint* magazine.

Ai Weiwei

Ai Weiwei is one of the leading cultural figures of his generation and consistently displays great courage in placing himself at risk to affect social change through his art. He serves as an example for legitimate social criticism and free expression both in China and internationally. In recycling historical materials, loaded with meaning, such as Han Dynasty vases or wood from destroyed temples, Ai distils ancient and modern aesthetics in works of salvage or iconoclasm. Public commissions, like bringing 1,001 Chinese citizens to the small German town of Kassel for documenta 12 (*Fairytales*, 2007), or the pouring of hundreds of millions of handmade porcelain seeds into the Tate's Turbine Hall (*Sunflower Seeds*, 2010), are audacious gestures that command global attention, but are nevertheless always underlain with humor and compassion.

Exhibited works

- ① *Forever*, 2014
1,179 bicycles
728.6 × 1603.8 × 397.9cm

Ai has created a monumental new installation of bicycles on the lawn facing the Accademia Bridge, as part of his ongoing series, *Forever*. Ai's groupings of stainless-steel bikes – configured in modular shapes and layers of geometrically stacked structures – refer to the famous 'Forever' brand of bicycles that have been mass-manufactured in Shanghai since 1940. As in other works by Ai, the concepts of assembling and copying play an important role.

- ② *Tree*, 2009–10
Tree sections
550 × 635 × 590cm

Since 2009 Ai has created a series of monumental wooden sculptures from the roots, trunks and branches of dead trees, collected in the mountainous regions of southern China. This work also refers to traditional Chinese craftsmanship, carpentry and marquetry skills of the kinds used to build temples or furniture.

- ③ *Rock*, 2009–11
Porcelain
33.7 × 117.8 × 75cm

These blue and white rocks were handcrafted from clay in Jingdezhen, the same city, famed for its pottery production and for Ai's *Sunflower Seeds*. Just as portions of dry wood and tree parts can be appreciated for their interesting shapes, in the tradition of Chinese scholars' rocks, so these porcelain stones also help to create a meditative space for contemplation.

- Ⓣ *Taxi Window Crank*, 2012
Glass (set of 4)
4 × 12 × 3cm each

Prior to past National Party Congresses, the Beijing Government ordered all window levers to be removed from taxis. This comically anachronistic move was to ensure that passengers could not throw political pamphlets out of cab windows during the Congress.

Select public commissions

Miami chandeliers, 2008
Miami Beach, Florida

Ai's only permanent installation in the US consists of three elaborate chandeliers decorating the lobby of the Fontainebleau hotel in Miami. They recall previous conical light structures by the artist, which in turn pay homage to Russian architect Vladimir Tatlin's famous *Monument to the Third International*, a model from 1919 of a government building for the new Communist regime.

Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads, 2010
Various locations

In 1860, an imperial retreat in Beijing was ransacked by French and British troops, and the 12 bronze animal heads representing the traditional Chinese zodiac were pillaged. Here Ai reinterprets those heads on a grand scale, focusing our attention on questions of looting and repatriation, while extending his on-going exploration of the 'fake' in relation to the original.



Ai Weiwei, *Forever* (detail), 2014



Daniel Buren, *A White Triangle for a Mirror*, 2007

Daniel Buren

Daniel Buren is France's most influential living artist. Over the past 50 years he has created unforgettable interventions and thought-provoking public art projects all over the world. Despite this, Buren was actually arrested in 1969 for an early intervention in the public realm, in which he covered billboards in Berne with his distinctive stripes. He began using 8.7cm-wide vertical stripes in 1965 as the starting point for research into what painting is, how it is presented and, more broadly, the physical and social environment in which an artist works. All of his art is created 'in situ', appropriating and colouring the spaces in which it is presented. Buren is creating a new permanent installation for two London tube stations, to be completed in 2016, to be seen by over 200,000 passengers each day.

Exhibited works

- ④ *4 Colours at 3 Metres High*, 2014
Clear acrylic sheets, coloured self-adhesive filters, wood, screws, white paint, self-adhesive black vinyl

This newly constructed walkway, which washes the visitors, the walls and floors with coloured shadows, is a variation on the theme of the pergola or an 'attrape soleil', which Buren has explored in several public works. It plays with outdoor light, the movement of the sun and changing visual effects.

- ⑤ *A White Triangle for a Mirror*, 2007
Mirror, paint, fibreboard, white vinyl plastic
252 x 252cm

Mirrors have long been used by Buren to facilitate the viewer's ability, as he says, "To see better, to see more or, better still, to see what, without them, would not be visible at all." Buren's primary concern remains the interaction between the spectator and the space. He states, "For me, a work exists from the time, and only from the time, that it is seen by a person other than the one producing it".

- Ⓣ *Graphic sketches*, 2007
Drawings from a series of nine
21 x 29.7 cm each

Select public commissions

Le Vent Souffle où il Veut
(*The Wind Blows Wherever It Pleases*), 2011
Royal Marina, Nieuwpoort, Belgium

Buren created a design for 100 flagpoles with windsocks in different colours, located just off the beach promenade in the Belgian city of Nieuwpoort. It serves as a colourful forest of weathervanes and is part of a permanent coastal sculpture park.

Excentrique(s), 2012
Grand Palais, Paris

Buren was invited to fill the vast spaces of the Grand Palais for the fifth in its biennial series of *Monumenta* installations, one of the largest commissions of its kind in the world. He sited many brightly hued, spherical Plexiglas shelters for viewers to walk through, with his signature stripes decorating the glass and steel structure above.

La Capilla, De la Cúpula a la Rotunda, 2013-14
Hospicio Cabañas, Guadalajara, Mexico

Buren has transformed a 19th century Mexican hospice, now a cultural institute, into a maze of light and colour, harmonising the relationship between its buildings and open spaces. Cloister columns have been wrapped in geometric patterns; vaults painted in bright hues and mirrored structures built to create distorted views of the exotic surroundings.

Tony Cragg

Tony Cragg is one of Britain's foremost sculptors. Constantly pushing to find new relations between people and the material world, he works with stone, wood, glass, aluminium, cast bronze and cast iron, as well as fibreglass and kevlar. His early works were assemblages or conglomerations of found materials, utilising everything from plastics to domestic items such as dice, ranged together like molecules in a giant organism. He then began employing techniques such as turning, welding and casting for ever larger and more complex works, which fuse industrial processes with naturalistic forms. Cragg has created major public works all over the world, including numerous sculptures in Asia, Europe and America. Cragg's work is particularly well represented in Germany, where he founded a sculpture park in 2006, at Waldfrieden in Wuppertal, where he has been based since 1997.

Exhibited works

- ⑥ *Hedge*, 2010
Fiberglass
200 x 380 x 150cm

The interlocking shapes of this multipartite piece are inspired by agricultural fences and countryside hedges. Its fabulously complicated, flexible form – an outer skin hiding something that is alive with energy underneath – is constructed in sections and can be multiplied in scale and length.

Select public commissions

- Elliptical Column*, 2012
Exhibition Road, London, UK

This tall, slender stainless steel sculpture is from the *Rational Beings* series of sculptures that take the outline of a human gesture or profile as a starting point. Five major Cragg sculptures were shown together in this instance, acting as visual counterpoints to the surrounding architecture – of cultural institutions such as the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Science Museum and Imperial College – along a newly pedestrianised street along a newly pedestrianised street, dubbed the Museum Mile.

- Mixed Feelings*, 2012
Waldfrieden Sculpture Park, Wuppertal, Germany

This monumental, totemic bronze explores the tension between two towers intertwining as they become one or as they attempt to rip apart. Its dynamically stacked surface, formed of repeating and clashing disks, encourages multiple perceptions and metamorphoses as the viewer walks around its twisting surfaces.

- Red Figure*, 2011
Sa Llotja, Palma de Mallorca, Spain

This pairing of figures or profiles merging and emerging from one another is constructed from wood and was exhibited in an old Gothic building on the harbour. Cragg's method of layering is a simple, almost elementary technique that belies the sophistication of the final outcome; endlessly varied, often vast, always expressive and full of life.

Richard Deacon

Richard Deacon's voluptuous abstract forms have placed him at the helm of British sculpture since the 1980s and his works are now visible in many major international public commissions. His voracious appetite for material has seen him move between laminated wood, stainless steel, marble, clay, vinyl, foam and even leather. As he explained, "Changing materials from one work to the next is a way of beginning again each time (and thus of finishing what had gone before)". Deacon also describes himself as a 'fabricator' – although many of the works are indeed cast, modelled or carved by hand – and the logic of construction is often exposed in his work. He has been commissioned to make public sculptures, ranging from immense monuments, such as *Moor* of 1990, a 250-metre long sculpture adjacent to a bridge in Plymouth, on the south coast of Britain, to set designs and architectural interventions.

Exhibited works

- ⑦ *Gap 1-8*, 2004
Glazed ceramics
Various dimensions

Deacon's dissatisfaction with the materials commonly associated with outdoor works drove him to explore the use of clay on a large scale. These flowing ceramic pieces exemplify the process of carving in which form is created by cutting away and hollowing out, continuing Deacon's long-standing investigation of the boundaries between interior and exterior.

- ⑧ *Singapore, Marina Bay Sands*, 2012
UV print on shaped STPI handmade paper,
collaged on screen printed Saunders paper
112 x 142cm

Deacon's exploration of techniques in printmaking, collage and drawing extend his already radical vocabulary of three-dimensional forms, which encompasses the organic, amorphous, geometric, rectilinear, intimate and the monumental. In this series, based on time spent working on a commission for Marina Bay Sands in Singapore, Deacon presents dynamic voids inserted into images of sky and water.

Select public commissions

- One Eagle Place*, 2013
Piccadilly, London

Deacon worked collaboratively on his first architectural commission to fix 39 individual ceramic sculptures with polychromatic glazes to an existing façade. Deacon created a unique pattern that reflects the bustle and artifice of Piccadilly Circus below.

- Footfall*, 2013
Stainless steel

Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Switzerland
Footfall was commissioned for the museum's centenary and to link the new extension to the original building. It also echoes the architectural surroundings and mimics the folds of the nearby staircase.

- Associate*, 2014
Henry Moore Foundation, UK

Individual polygonal frames interlock to create a single, sculptural congregation that draws inspiration from collective organisations. A myriad of shapes and angles invite multiple perspectives and act as a reminder of its individual parts. The work cannot be perceived in a singular moment and, rather, the spectator is forced to move around it, navigating its form.



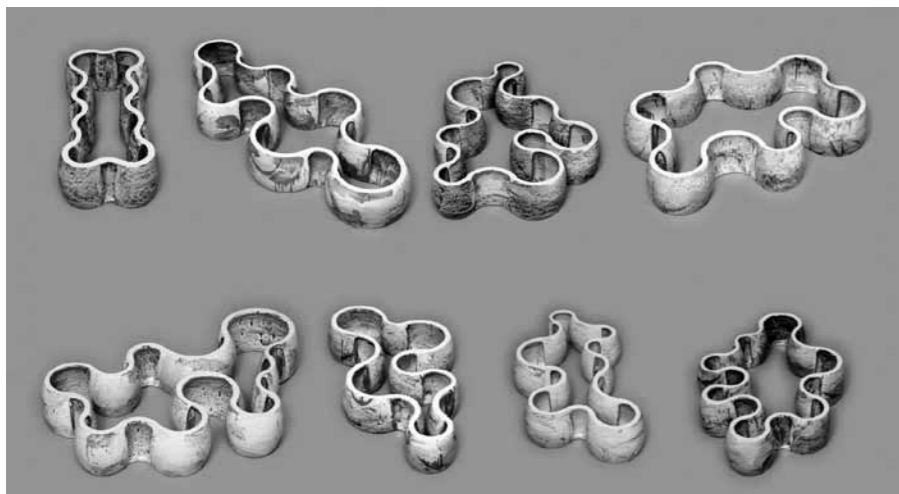
Tony Cragg, *Hedge*, 2010



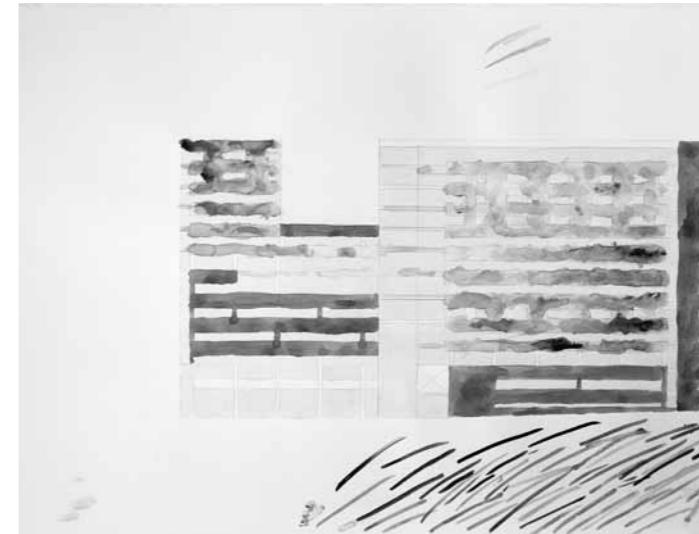
Tony Cragg, *Mixed Feelings*, 2012



Spencer Finch, John Hopkins Hospital, 2009



Richard Deacon, *Gap 1-8*, 2004



Spencer Finch, drawing for John Hopkins Hospital, 2009

Spencer Finch

Spencer Finch is best known for ethereal light installations that visualise his experience of natural phenomena. His investigations into the nature of light, colour, memory and perception proceed in watercolours, drawings, video and photographs. Each project furthers Finch's attempts to capture the most fleeting glimpses of nature's beauty as it shifts and mutates at different times and in changing weather. Compelled by what he describes as "the impossible desire to see oneself seeing," Finch holds up an enchanting prism between the outer world and inner thought. He has produced numerous major exhibitions and public projects in Australia, Europe and the US, including a commission for the National September 11 Memorial Museum in New York. He has also been selected to create a permanent, monumental 120-metre-long work for a new train station concourse at Paddington in London.

Exhibited works

- ⑨ *Night Sky, Over the Painted Desert, Arizona, 1/9/04, 2004*
401 incandescent bulbs, 85 light fixtures
Dimensions variable

History, place, and literature all feature in Finch's art and process, and he travels extensively to pursue ideas. Each of the light fittings in this early work represents the molecules of a pigment mix that matched the colour of the night sky over the Painted Desert in Arizona. These molecules are iron oxide (Mars Black), Manganese Violet, Cobalt Blue, and Titanium White.

Select public commissions

Star Map, 2008
Stavanger, Norway

The entire installation is powered by our own star, the sun, via solar panels on the roof of the building. The location of each illuminated globe is determined by the star's location in the night sky and the height is determined by the star's distance from Earth (lower globes are stars closest to Earth). The colour of each globe refers to the wavelength of light that the star emits.

John Hopkins Hospital, 2009
Baltimore, Maryland, USA

This giant curtain façade is based on studies of reflection and absorption of natural colours in water. The final composition is abstract, but references both the pigment selection and the play between surface and depth of a Monet water lily painting.

The River That Flows Both Ways, 2009
The High Line, New York, USA

This project transforms an existing series of windows with 700 individual panes of glass, representing the water conditions on the Hudson River over a period of 700 minutes in a single day. The work, like the river, is experienced differently depending on the light levels and atmospheric conditions of the day and time.

Dan Graham

For over 50 years, Dan Graham has traced the symbiosis between architectural environments and their inhabitants. With a practice that encompasses curating, writing, performance, installation, video, photography and architecture, his engagement with social, psychological and experiential themes manifests most alluringly in his glass and mirrored pavilions, which he has designed since the late 1970s and which have been realised in sites all over the world. These instruments highlight the voyeuristic elements of design in the built world. Poised between sculpture and architecture, Graham himself has described the pavilions as "Geometric forms inhabited and activated by the presence of the viewer, [producing] a sense of uneasiness and psychological alienation through a constant play between feelings of inclusion and exclusion."

Exhibited works

- Ⓙ *Two cubes/One rotated 45°, 1985-86*
Glass and aluminium
47.5 x 89 x 65.9cm

- Ⓙ *Untitled, 2011*
2-way mirror glass, aluminium, cellulose, MDF
107 x 107 x 71cm

Select public commissions

City of London Rococo, 2012
Sculpture in the City, London, UK

Dan Graham's specially commissioned mirror and glass structures blur the line between art and architecture, producing diverse optical effects. Created as hybrids, they operate as quasi-functional spaces and art installations. Viewers who enter the work are transformed into performers; in glimpsing their own reflections, they are also made acutely aware of the act of looking.

Hedge Two-Way Mirror Walkabout, 2014
Metropolitan Museum Roof Garden Commission,
New York, USA

A collaboration with the Swiss landscape architect Günther Vogt, Graham's structure comprises an 'S' shaped curve of steel and two-way mirrored glass, set between ivy hedgerows. Graham's structure is part garden maze, part modernist skyscraper façade.



Dan Graham, *Two cubes/One rotated 45°*, 1985–86



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Spin*, 2011



Anish Kapoor, *Ark Nova*, 2013

Shirazeh Houshiary

Since rising to prominence as a sculptor in the 1980s, Shirazeh Houshiary's practice has swelled to encompass painting, installation, architectural projects and film. Veils, membranes and mists are leitmotifs in work that visualises modes of perception, spanning the scientific and the cosmic while drawing on sources as wide-ranging as Sufism, Renaissance painting, physics and poetry. Aluminium armatures and elliptical brick towers, charged with dynamic tension, appear different from every angle. "The universe is in a process of disintegration," she says, "everything is in a state of erosion, and yet we try to stabilise it. This tension fascinates me and it's at the core of my work."

Exhibited works

- ⑩ *Spin*, 2011
Anodised aluminium
112.4 × 70 × 50 cm

This work is constructed of hollow and solid blocks of anodized aluminium forming a configuration of twisting veils that stretch, pierce, tear and curl the space within and smoothly deform their exterior skin. Houshiary deals with revealing invisible forms that are somehow otherwise unnoticed in the observable realm.

- ⑪ *Glass Tower (Berengo)*, 2014
Alessandrite lead glass, mirror polished stainless steel
135 × 86 cm

- Ⓣ *Drawing 6*, 2006
Graphite and white aquacryl
on black aquacryl on paper
40 × 40 cm

- Ⓣ *Model for Sheffield Town Hall Square*, 1997
80 × 61 × 61 cm

Select public commissions

- Bloom*, 2006
Roppongi, Tokyo, Japan

Constructed in hollow aluminium blocks and anodised in a light blue colour, the internal structure is a complex armature of stainless steel, complimentary to the overall form, which also has to be able to withstand earthquakes.

- East Window*, 2008
St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London, UK

In collaboration with the architect Pip Horne, Houshiary created a sublime fusion of contemporary art and classical architecture for this Grade I listed church. The glass, held within a stainless steel framework, is made of mouth-blown clear glass panels etched on both sides with a subtle, feathery pattern, a recognisable hallmark of Houshiary's paintings.

- String Quintet*, 2011–12
Sculpture in the City, London, UK

The five spiralling stainless steel ribbons or 'strings' that unravel from the ground in this sculpture, inspired by music and musical notation, each rise at a different wavelength, intertwining and weaving gently upwards. The changing daylight simultaneously animates and dissolves its rise and fall.

Anish Kapoor

Anish Kapoor is one of the most influential sculptors of his generation. Perhaps most famous for public sculptures that are both adventures in form and feats of engineering, he manoeuvres between vastly different scales, across numerous series of work. Immense PVC skins, stretched or deflated; concave or convex mirrors whose reflections attract and swallow the viewer; recesses carved in stone and pigmented so as to disappear: these voids and protrusions summon up deep-felt metaphysical polarities of presence and absence, concealment and revelation. Forms turn themselves inside out, womb-like, and materials are not painted but impregnated with colour, as if to negate the idea of an outer surface, inviting the viewer to the inner reaches of the imagination.

Exhibited works

- ⑫ *Non-object (door)*, 2008
Stainless steel
281.3 x 118.1 x 118.1cm

Kapoor has created a group of sculptures he calls 'non-objects', whose twisted geometry and perfectly reflective material carry the conditions of their own disappearance. Kapoor's curved forms provide a lens that shows the universe as it really is, where light is warped on its way through space and our intuition is turned inside out.

- Ⓣ *No Place*, 1989
80 x 54 x 61cm

- Ⓣ *Pavilion for Salvation Army (model)*, 2001
140 x 73 x 98cm

- Ⓣ *Sea Mirror (model)*, 2006
40 x 60cm

- Ⓣ *Sky Garden*, 2013

- Ⓣ *Ridge*, 2014
80 x 57 x 36cm

Select public commissions

- Ark Nova*, 2013
Various locations, Japan

This mobile concert hall, designed in collaboration with architect Arata Isozaki, was transported to various locations in the region devastated by the 2011 earthquake off the Pacific coast. The multi-component design includes a hall with seating for between 500 to 700 spectators. The inflatable shell is made of an elastic material that allows quick erection and dismantling.

- Cloud Gate*, 2004
Millennium Park, Chicago

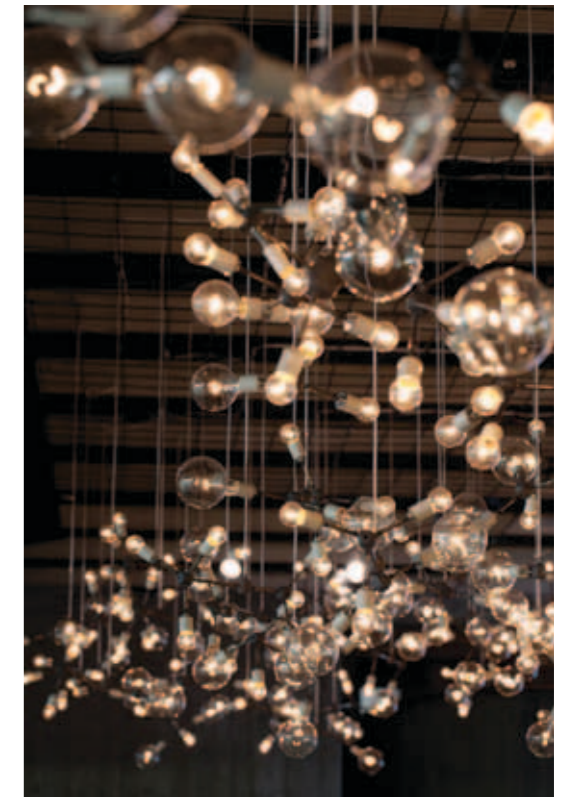
The 110-ton polished stainless steel sculpture, Kapoor's first permanent US commission, has become a beloved urban icon. Its polished, seamless surface skews and morphs the surrounding urban environment and disorients visitors from perceiving any singular sense of scale or situation.

- Taratantara*, 1999-2000
Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead;
Piazza Plebiscito, Naples

With its title recalling the sound made by a trumpet fanfare, the sculpture does indeed suggest two funnel-like trumpet bells joined and flaring out to both ends. Constructed of red PVC and measuring more than 50 metres long and 25 metres wide, the work was staged first in the north of England and later in Naples, where Kapoor was also working on designs for a new underground station.



Tokujin Yoshioka, *Water Block*, 2002



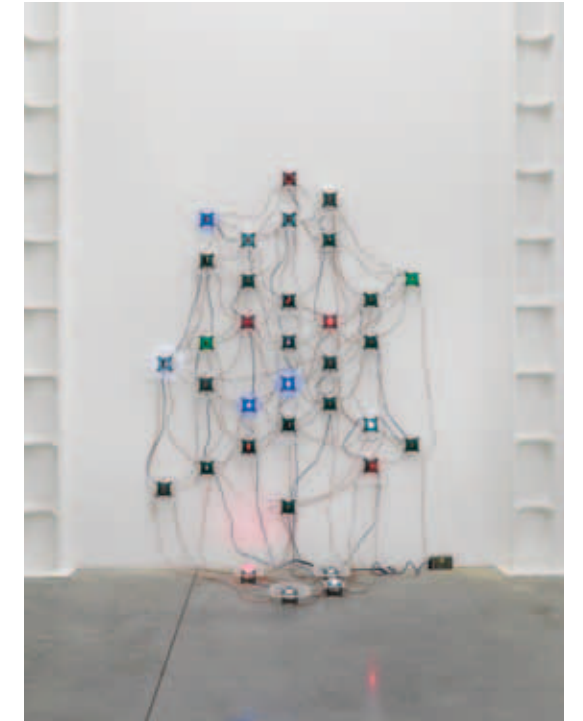
Spencer Finch, *Night Sky, Over the Painted Desert*, Arizona, 1/9/04, 2004



Anish Kapoor, *Taratantara*, 2000, Piazza Plebiscito, Naples, Italy



Spencer Finch, *Star Map*, 2008, Stavanger, Norway



Tatsuo Miyajima, *Life (Corps sans Organes) No.15*, 2013



Tatsuo Miyajima, *Counter Void*, 2003, Tokyo, Japan



Richard Long, *Box Hill Road River*, 2012, Box Hill, UK



Daniel Buren, *Le Vent Souffle où il Veut (The Wind Blows Wherever it Pleases)*, 2011, Royal Marina, Nieuwpoort, Belgium



Koen Vanmechelen, *In Captivity - C.C.P.*, 2014



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Bloom*, 2006, Tokyo, Japan



Shirazeh Houshiary, *East Window*, 2008, St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London, UK



Richard Deacon, *Associate*, 2014, Henry Moore Foundation, UK



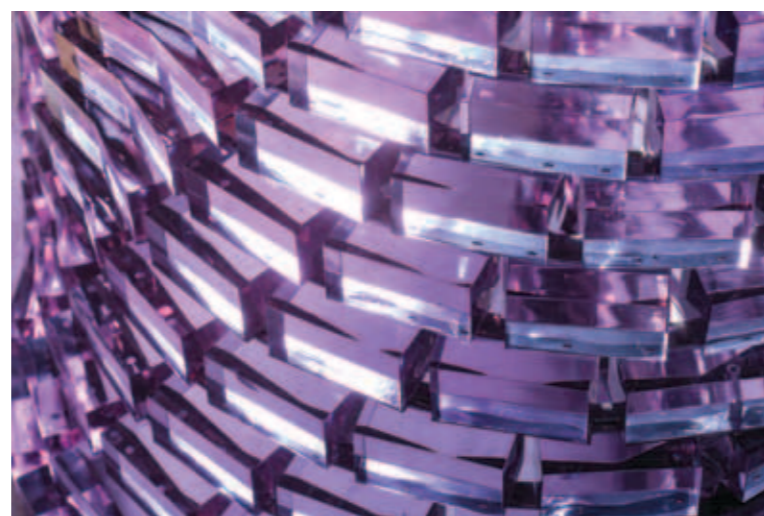
Anish Kapoor, *Non-object (door)*, 2008



Richard Long, *Untitled diptych*, 2014



Julie Opie, *Promenade*, 2011, Calgary, Canada



Shirazeh Houshiary, *Glass tower (Berengo)*, 2014



Ai Weiwei, *Iron Tree*, 2013



Daniel Buren, *La Capilla*, 2013-14, Hospicio Cabañas, Guadalajara, Mexico



Dan Graham, *Hedge Two-Way Mirror Walkabout*, 2014, Metropolitan Museum, New York, USA



Richard Deacon, *Footfall*, 2013, Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Switzerland



Anish Kapoor, *Cloud Gate*, 2004-06, Millennium Park, Chicago, USA



Richard Wentworth, *Twenty-Four Hour Flag*, 2014, Sculpture in the City, London, UK

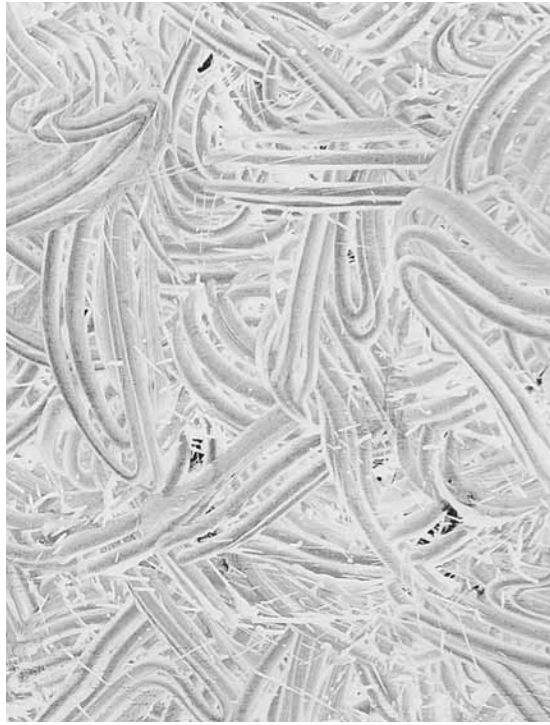
Lee Ufan

Painter, sculptor, writer and philosopher Lee Ufan came to prominence in the late 1960s as one of the major theoretical and practical proponents of the avant-garde Mono-ha (Object School) group. It rejected Western notions of representation, focusing on the relationships of materials and perceptions rather than on expression or intervention. His major public works and institutional commissions often involve large stones placed in landscapes, perhaps in juxtaposition to slabs of steel, creating a conversation between the two materials and the surrounding environment. In addition to a permanent museum dedicated to his work on the Japanese island of Naoshima, Lee is the guest artist at the Château de Versailles in 2014.

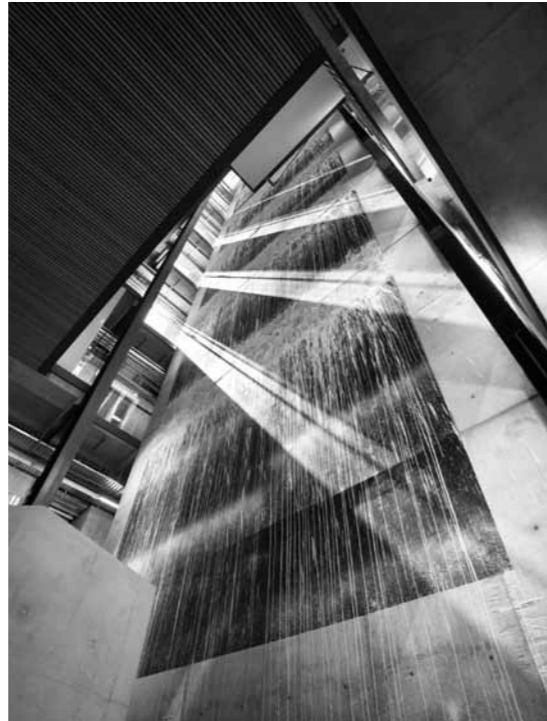
Exhibited works

- ⑬ *Relatum – She and He*, 2007-08
 Iron plate, 160 × 145 × 2 cm;
 natural stone: 70 × 60 × 60 cm

Lee's sculptural series *Relatum* is essentially minimal: each work includes one or more light-colored round stones and dark, rectangular iron plates. Consisting of untreated stone and iron, Ufan's installations explore such dialectical topics as emptiness and the void, natural and man-made phenomena, while the sculptural compositions themselves are both silent and richly suggestive.



Richard Long, *Untitled Diptych* (detail), 2014



Richard Long, *White Water Falls*, 2012

Richard Long

Richard Long has been in the vanguard of conceptual art since he created *A Line Made by Walking* in 1967, while still a student. This photograph of the path left by his feet in the grass, a fixed line of movement, established a precedent that art could be a journey. From that time he expanded his walks to wilderness regions all over the world. For his large-scale and public works, Long brings materials gathered from the outside world to make floor-bound arrangements – linear patterns or solid circles filled evenly with stones, slate, wood and so on – or paintings applied with mud by hand directly onto the walls. His works reassemble, reiterate and reassert the landscape wherever they are found.

Exhibited works

- ⑭ *Untitled Diptych*, 2014
Linen on plywood
260 × 200 cm (each)

These new large, gestural mud works are made using white Cornish clay and tidal river mud gathered from the banks of the Avon in Bristol. They are formed as much by natural forces – including gravity and the fluidity of the watery material – as they are by the human energy of Long's body and hand.

Select public commissions

White Water Falls, 2012
Garvan Institute, Sydney

Long has made many mud works in locations all over the world, predominantly major art museums and galleries. Usually they are on the wall; occasionally they are made on the floor, here a column of clay cascades down a gallery wall in a tower with thin lines of bright white water falling into pools of concrete grey.

Box Hill Road River, 2012
Box Hill, UK

Inspired by the traditional road graffiti chalked onto the road by fans at the Tour De France, this work, consisting of 100 metres of white road paint splashed to give a water-like effect, was commissioned by the National Trust for one of the Olympic cycling events in 2012.



Lee Ufan, *Relatum – She and He*, 2007-08

Tatsuo Miyajima

Tatsuo Miyajima is one of Japan's foremost sculptors and installation artists. Employing contemporary materials such as electric circuits, video, and computers, Miyajima's supremely technological works have centred on his use of digital light-emitting diode (LED) counters, or 'gadgets' as he calls them, since the late 1980s. These numbers, flashing in continual and repetitious – though not necessarily sequential – cycles from 1 to 9, represent the journey from life to death. Miyajima's LED numerals have been presented in grids, towers, complex integrated groupings or circuits and as simple digital counters, often on a public scale, but are all aligned with his interests in continuity, connection and eternity, as well as with the flow and span of time and space. "Time connects everything," says Miyajima. "I want people to think about the universe and the human spirit."

Exhibited works

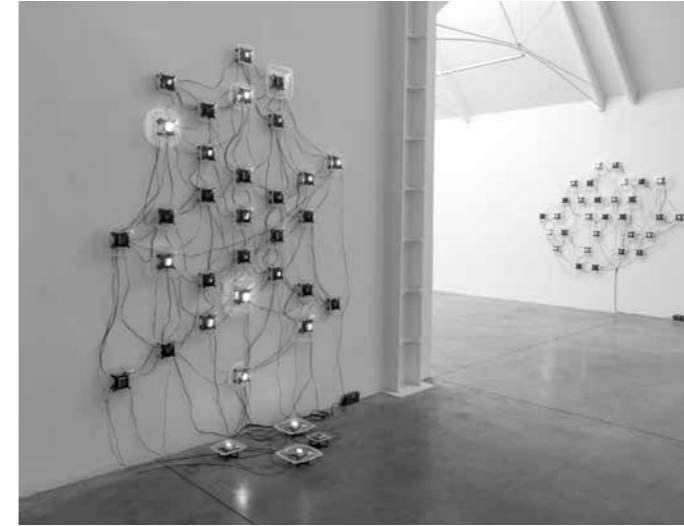
- ⑮ *Life (Corps sans Organes) No.15*, 2013
LEDs, microcomputer, steel, plastic covers,
passive sensor, electric wire
274 x 186 x 82cm

Miyajima's recent collaboration with an artificial life expert, Professor Takashi Ikegami of Tokyo University, resulted in a computer programme that generates number sequences responding to the rhythms and speeds of others in the system. So, instead of a collection of randomised counting circuits, these networks or clusters of flashing digits come together to create intelligent, 'living' organisms.

Select public commissions

- Counter Void*, 2003
TV Asahi headquarters, Roppongi, Tokyo

Six huge digital counters, backed by neon lights, each scroll through a number sequence from 9 to 1, at differing speeds. In daylight, the background neon is switched off and the black is reversed so that the numbers appear in bright white relief.



Tatsuo Miyajima, *Life (Corps sans Organes) No.15*, 2013



Julian Opie, *Jennifer Walking 2*, 2010

Julian Opie

Julian Opie's work is instantly recognisable in public commissions around the world. His distinctive formal language is the result of drawing, presenting images as black outlines and simplified areas of colour; referencing Minimal and Pop art, of billboard signs, classical portraiture and sculpture and Japanese woodblock prints. Opie works in a variety of media and technologies, from inkjet on canvas and painted aluminium to vinyl on walls and sculptures of everyday features: scaled-down buildings, life-size cars, signposts. His programme of image purification has been applied to reproductions of paintings, telephone directories, books as well as to portraits, where faces or bodies are distilled to astonishing likenesses and landscapes are emptied out of unmemorable detail to become the essence of themselves.

Exhibited works

⑩ *Jennifer Walking 2*, 2010
LED, double-sided monolith
238 x 133 x 62cm

⑪ *Tina Walking 2*, 2010
LED, double-sided monolith
186.5 x 86 x 26cm

These double-sided animations feature images of a walking female figure. While these types of screens are typically used outdoors as store signs, billboards, or on public transport, Opie transforms simple signage and pictographic information to evoke real people and places.

Select public commissions

Lindo Wing, 2012
St Mary's Hospital, London, UK

Opie provided 40 panels for display over four floors of a refurbished maternity ward. The designs were rendered with minimal detail in the black line drawing that is a hallmark of the artist's style.

Promenade, 2011
Calgary, Canada

A high-tech, 24-foot LED tower, Opie's second commission in Canada, marks the gateway to the riverside promenade in Calgary. It is formed of 20 coloured panels of animated drawings featuring a cast of characters from the artist's repertoire, including Jeremy, Jennifer, Rod, Tina, Verity and Kris.

Pedro Reyes

Pedro Reyes has won international attention for large-scale projects that take existing social problems and imagine solutions for a happier world. His political stance, use of found materials and disavowal of the corporate mentality is seen most keenly in his tackling of Mexican gun culture in works such as *Disarm* (2013), for which the Mexican government passed over 6,700 confiscated firearms for Reyes to turn into mechanical musical instruments. Other works tackle first world problems through participatory techniques. *Sanatorium* (2011-13) invites visitors to sign up for a 'temporary clinic', with the mission of treating various kinds of urban malaise, while *The People's United Nations* (2013) invited an alternative gathering of delegates of immigrant New Yorkers from every member or observer state represented in the real UN.

Exhibited works

① *Palas por Pistolas*, 2008
Culiacán, Mexico

Initially conceived for the Botanical Garden in Culiacán, a city in western Mexico with the highest rate of handgun deaths in the country, Reyes worked with local authorities to melt down 1,527 guns into 1,527 shovels, intended to plant 1,527 trees in cities elsewhere in the world (including Mexico City, Vancouver, and San Francisco). "I am on a crusade to come up with creative initiatives to disarm all these cities," said Reyes of the project.



Pedro Reyes, *Palas por Pistolas*, 2008

Santiago Sierra

Santiago Sierra addresses structures of power that operate in our everyday existence. He intervenes into these structures, exposing situations of exploitation and marginalisation, famously hiring underprivileged individuals who, in exchange for money, are willing to undertake pointless or unpleasant tasks. His public works have been equally controversial, perhaps involving the removal of all the art from a Belgian museum before also taking out all the glass from exterior doors and windows. Sierra has a record of these kind of drastic acts against architecture – shuttering galleries, loading museums with 300 tonnes of bricks or even bringing harsh reminders of reality into holy spaces or historically venerable institutions.

Exhibited works

- ⑱ *World's Largest Graffiti*, 2012
C-print, 240 × 450cm
and video, duration: 1h 13mins

To protest against the situation of those living for many years in tents in the Smara Refugee Camp in Algeria, Sierra had the letters S.O.S. engraved into the desert floor outside the camp using a road grader, creating the world's largest piece of graffiti: 5 kilometres long and 1.7 km wide. Seeing no help coming from terrestrial powers he aimed his message at observers from a higher point of view, in this case from the Ikonos III Satellite.

- Ⓣ *NO, Global Tour*, 2011
HD 1080i and 35 mm, black-and-white film,
duration 2h 3mins

Challenging the social, political and aesthetic norms of exhibiting work outdoors, Sierra's *NO, Global Tour* involved towing two giant black letters – N and O, together weighing about half a tonne – from place to place, visiting some 40 towns and cities internationally.



Santiago Sierra, *NO, Global Tour*, 2011

Koen Vanmechelen

The Belgian conceptual artist Koen Vanmechelen is internationally renowned for his *Cosmopolitan Chicken Project*, a worldwide artistic breeding project began in 1999 in search of a hybrid or cosmopolitan chicken. This super chicken would eventually carry the genes of all breeds of chicken on this planet. His work, an ode to life, revolves around two major themes: biocultural diversity and identity. For his projects, the artist collaborates with scientists from all over the world.

Exhibited works

- ①9 *In Captivity – C.C.P.*, 2014
Murano glass eggs, steel frame, glass walls
100 x 270 x 20cm

Known for exhibiting live chickens in his gallery shows, here Vanmechelen has instead caged glass eggs – produced at Berengo Studio, Venice – in a steel frame. “The egg is a protected environment and a source of life. Yet it is also a cage, a restriction from which we have to break free.”

Joana Vasconcelos

The nature of Joana Vasconcelos’s creative process is based on the appropriation, decontextualisation and subversion of pre-existent objects and everyday realities. Although often brightly coloured and constructed from crocheted or knitted material, the artist’s work deals both ironically and directly with issues of feminism and gender convention. Sculptures and installations, which are revealing of an acute sense of scale and mastery of colour, often morph into large-scale public projects, such as those conceived for the artist’s major solo presentation at the Château de Versailles in 2012, which included a Bell 47 helicopter adorned with pink ostrich feathers and Swarovski Crystals.

Exhibited works

- ②0 *Glasshouse*, 2014
Murano glass
196 x 95 x 204cm

A house is meant to be a shelter – a protective, interior space. Vasconcelos’s *Glasshouse*, a reproduction of a child’s playhouse made entirely from vitreous material, however, denies the cosy environment of safety associated with such structures, while also questioning architecture’s delineation between the public and private spheres of life.

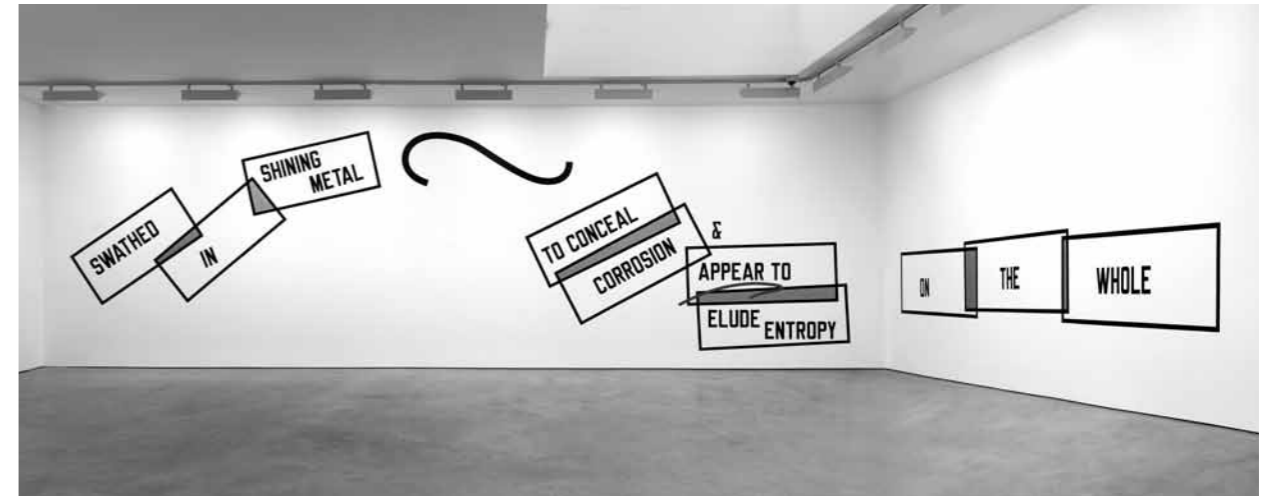
Lawrence Weiner

Lawrence Weiner has spent the last five decades deconstructing artistic practices into various concepts of language and idea. His process sees him work with unconventional sculptural materials, translating the experience into text, often inventing new fonts. The resulting texts are often ambiguous and open to interpretation, leaving space for multiple iterations of the same piece. The manifestations of his work are similarly open-ended and Weiner considers the conveying of information as the core of the work, taking precedence over its physicality. The multitude of forms his works have taken over the years bears testament to this, with previous works sung, painted or engraved on walls, enacted, built, printed or stamped on coins and manhole covers.

Exhibited works

- ②1 *Swathed in Shining Metal to Conceal Corrosion & Appear to Elude Entropy on the Whole*, 2012
Dimensions variable

The artist considers language to be a sculptural material and believes a construction in language can function as a sculpture. This text of this vinyl work, unusually attached to the ceiling, alludes to the permanence of much public art. Before Weiner began working with language, he created sculptural works in the landscape, setting off explosions to form craters in Northern California, for example. However, he soon realized that it was not possible to build many of the large-scale, site-specific pieces he envisioned and so he began presenting them in language that signified such intentions.



Lawrence Weiner, *Swathed in Shining Metal to Conceal Corrosion & Appear to Elude Entropy on the Whole*, 2012



Joana Vasconcelos, *Babylon*, 2013

Richard Wentworth

Richard Wentworth has played a leading role in New British Sculpture since the end of the 1970s. His work, encircling the notion of objects and their use as part of our day-to-day experiences, has altered the traditional definition of sculpture as well as photography. By transforming and manipulating industrial and/or found objects into works of art, Wentworth subverts their original function and extends our understanding of them by breaking the conventional system of classification. The sculptural arrangements play with the notion of readymade and juxtaposition of objects that bear no relation to each other.

Exhibited works

- ②② *In Plain Sight*, 2014
Dimensions and materials variable

Wentworth has intervened directly in the exhibition space to create a porous, architectonic wall, punctuated with numerous recent works from his photographic series *Making Do and Getting By* (begun in 1974). The artist uses photography as a means of documenting what might be called 'the sculpture of the everyday' and the examples printed here include found images taken in Istanbul, Beijing, Spain and London. "I live in a ready-made landscape," he remarked early in his career, "and I want to put it to use."

Select public commissions

- Black Maria*, 2013
St Martins College of Art and Design, London

Wentworth was commissioned by Artangel to respond to the moment of flux during the development of the new cultural quarter of King's Cross. Designed in collaboration with Swiss architectural practice Gruppe, the timber structure inhabited its atrium as a public space during the day, becoming a space for discussions and screenings in the evenings.

- Twenty-Four Hour Flag*, 2014
Sculpture in the City, London

A group of red-and-white kitchen chairs were suspended on the side of an office building, creating jeopardy and casting a surreal light on these precipitously displaced everyday objects.

Tokuji Yoshioka

Tokuji Yoshioka is a world-renowned designer and artist, best known for his experimental work in glass and crystal. Yoshioka adopts these materials for a variety of sculptural media and installation works, which includes furniture such as a 'spider's thread' chair, suspended in the air by crystals growing onto fine fibres. His spatial designs and installations give the viewer the sensation of experiencing light, snow, storms and other natural phenomena.

Exhibited works

- ②③ *Rainbow Chair*, 2007
35 x 46 x 144cm

A solid sculpture made from thick, high transparency crystal glass, doubles both as a chair and a prism, emitting a shaft of rainbow light. The same effect was achieved in Yoshioka's accompanying *Rainbow Church* installation, where 500 crystal prisms converted natural rays into rainbows, flooding the space with coloured light.

Select public commissions

- Water Block*, 2002
120 x 40 x 42cm

Yoshioka's *Water Block* benches, many of which are permanently installed at the Musée d'Orsay, function both as seating and as translucent sculptures that take the form of a contained body of water – the delicate rippling of the surface echoing the play of light on water.



Richard Wentworth, *On and on, and on* (detail), 2013



Richard Wentworth, *Istanbul*, 2006

Credits

Genius Loci (Spirit of Place)
 7 June – 23 November 2014
 Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 6pm (closed Mondays)
 Palazzo Franchetti
 S. Marco, 2842, 30124 Venice

www.lissongallery.com
www.berengo.com
www.palazzofranchetti.it

Acknowledgments

Special mention goes to Patrizia Spadafora for developing the project and to Greg Hilty and Marc Tutt for curating the exhibition, also to everyone at the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere e Arti/Palazzo Franchetti, Berengo Studio and Lisson Gallery. Thanks also to Michelangelo Bendandi, Adriano Berengo, Marco Berengo, Lewis Biggs, Shumi Bose, Anita Braghetta, Laura Bushell, Aldo Cibic, Kevin Carmody, Tamsin Dillon, Eidotech (Berlin), Andy Ekins, Ekow Eshun, John Gallagher, Francis Gardner, Andy Groarke, Trevor Hall, Lewis Kinneir, Maximilian Koeth, Nicholas Logsdail, Stefano Lo Duca, Michela Mantovani (MACO), Louise McKinney, Tim Meaker at SetWorks, Kit Merritt, Pascaline Monier, Daniel Pettitt, Euthymia Procopé, Federico Salza (Pisa) Anne Seni, Emily Skeppner, Tom Saunders, Deyan Sudjic, Tim Summers, Joana Vasconcelos, Nina Wang (ACP, China), Ossian Ward, Dave Williams.

Edited by: Ossian Ward
 Designed by: A Practice for Everyday Life
 Printed by: Blackmore
 Typeset in: Founders Grotesk

Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Since being founded in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, it has championed the careers of artists who have transformed the way art was made and presented. It continues to support the future of its artists, the legacy of historical figures, the evolving practice of established artists and the wide-ranging potential of emerging and new talents.

This collaboration, *Genius Loci* – Spirit of Place, is part of the Lisson Presents programme, a series off-site exhibitions that extends the legacy of curatorial innovation beyond its gallery spaces, working with institutions and artists to present new initiatives around the world. Recent projects include two celebrated Collateral Events of the 55th International Venice Art Biennale in 2013; Shirazeh Houshiary's *Breath*, a unique, site-specific installation in the Torre di Porta Nuova adjacent to the Arsenale; and Ai Weiwei's *Disposition*, an exhibition of two major works by Ai Weiwei addressing his arrest by the Chinese Government and the 81-day period subsequently spent in captivity.

Berengo Studio

The Berengo Foundation and Studio are innovators in the dissemination and experimentation of glass as a material for the expression of contemporary art. During the 1980s and '90s, the studio's founder, Adriano Berengo, invited artists to use glass and collaborate with master glassmakers to translate their works into glass sculptures. Berengo Studio strives to free glass from its perception as a functional material and to update the highly decorative traditions of Murano glass. For almost twenty years, more than 140 international artists have come to the Berengo furnace to create glass sculptures and have contributed to making this ambitious project real. With galleries in Venice, Murano and Tokyo, Berengo Studio works are found in numerous public and private collections throughout the world.

LISSON GALLERY

