

GLADSTONE

Ugo Rondinone presents *primordial (rainbow)*, an exhibition of new sculptures at Gladstone in Brussels

Murano glass fish sculptures form an immersive seascape, opening September 4

Gladstone will debut an exhibition of new work by Ugo Rondinone at its space in Brussels, featuring an immersive installation of forty-seven Murano glass fish hung at varying heights throughout the gallery. Suspended in a kind of rhythmic cadence across the space as if swimming underwater, the fish invite a sense of floating, a pleasurable destabilizing experience for the viewer. This exhibition expands on Rondinone's 2016 presentation at Gladstone Brussels, *primordial*, which featured fish sculptures cast in bronze. Other related series include *primal*, comprising bronze birds, and *primitive*, comprising miniature bronze horses, each of which began with a clay model bearing the impressions of the artist's fingers. Taken together, the bodies of work invoke the sea, the air, and the land—the essentials for life, an environmental totality—cast in a new material derived from nature. A concurrent exhibition of monumental waterfall sculptures by Rondinone will be on view at Gladstone's 21st Street space in New York.

The exhibition is accompanied by a statement written by the artist:

primordial (rainbow)

Fish are among the oldest living forms on Earth. They emerged long before birds, mammals, or human beings, inhabiting an ancient ocean from which all complex life eventually evolved.

In 2016, I modeled forty-seven fish in clay and cast them in raw bronze. Each fish was given the name of a natural phenomenon; cloud, rain, lightning, mountain, moon, wind, as though every force in nature emerged from the same primordial source. Together they formed *primordial*.

Ten years later, the fish return to Gladstone Gallery in Brussels, occupying the very same rooms in which they first appeared. Their forms remain unchanged, yet they have undergone a transformation. Cast this time in colored glass, they no longer absorb light but hold it within themselves. The heaviness of bronze gives way to transparency. What once felt geological now becomes luminous.

The installation unfolds as a dialogue between two moments in time. The gallery remembers the earlier work, while the new material allows it to be experienced anew. Nothing has changed except the substance from which it is made, revealing how identity can remain constant while perception shifts.

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The title, *primordial (rainbow)*, marks this transformation. *Primordial* evokes the origin of life, while rainbow suggests the passage of light through matter. The fish remain ancient creatures, yet they now appear suspended between the depths of the ocean and the openness of the sky. They drift through space like living constellations, each distinct, yet together forming a larger field.

As throughout my work, nature becomes a universal language. The fish are not illustrations of the natural world but archetypes through which we recognize ourselves. They remind us that every living being, every landscape, and every natural phenomenon belongs to the same continuous cycle of transformation; from matter to light.

ugo rondinone, august 2026

Exhibition Details

Ugo Rondinone

primordial (rainbow)

September 4 – October 31, 2026

Grote Hertstraat 12 Rue du Grand Cerf

Brussels, Belgium 1000

About Ugo Rondinone

Ugo Rondinone (b.1964, Brunnen, Switzerland) studied at the Universität für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna before moving to New York in 1997 where he currently lives and works. His work has been the subject of solo presentations at the Centre George Pompidou, Paris (2003); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2006); Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois (2013); Rockbund Art Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2016); Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Roma, Rome (2016); Carre D'Art, Nîmes, France (2016); Berkeley Art Museum, California (2017); Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati (2017); Bass Museum of Art, Miami (2017); Belvedere, Vienna (2021); Tamayo Museum, Mexico City (2022); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2022); Petit Palais, Paris (2022); Scuola Grande San Giovanni Evangelista di Venezia, Venice (2022); The Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva (2023); Parrish Museum, Water Mill, New York (2023); Städel Museum, Frankfurt (2023); Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, New York (2023); Museum SAN, Wonju, Korea (2024); Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland (2024); Würth Museum, Kunzelsau, Germany (2024); Aspen Art Museum, Colorado (2024); Madoo Conservancy, Sagaponack, New York (2025); Pilane Sculpture Park, Tjörn, Sweden (2025); and Institute de France, Paris (2025).

About Gladstone Gallery

Gladstone is known for its commitment to artists whose prescient approaches and experimental practices have defined the contours of contemporary art. The gallery has long been an active partner in the cultivation of iconoclastic careers, fostering a roster of artists recognized for their ground-breaking contributions. Headquartered in New York and including outposts in both Brussels and Seoul, Gladstone's impact extends

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globally, enabling both the presentation of new bodies of work, and an amplification of the international reach of its artists. Alongside its work with contemporary artists, the gallery is steward to the legacies of pivotal historical artists and serves as an advocate for the enduring power of art. Gladstone is led by a team of partners who spearhead its long-term vision and program, building on the values of its founder Barbara Gladstone.

Press Contacts

press@gladstonegallery.com