

DUNDEE CONTEMPORARY ARTS

**NINA RHODE:
FRIENDLY FIRE**

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DCA

Dundee Contemporary Arts

NINA RHODE: FRIENDLY FIRE

*Dans le tourbillon de la vie
On a continue a tourner*

*(In the whirlwind of life
We continue to turn)*

Le tourbillon de la vie sung by Jeanne Moreau, *Jules et Jim* soundtrack, 1962

(Stories inside stories, movies inside movies, paintings inside paintings, Russian dolls inside Russian dolls (even parenthetical comments inside parenthetical comments!) – these are just a few of the charms of recursion.)

Douglas Hofstadter: *Godel, Escher, Bach: an Eternal Golden Braid*, 1980, Penguin Middlesex, p127

Nina Rhode presents *Friendly Fire*, her first solo exhibition in the UK, including her celebrated resonant spinning sculptures. These kinetic wheels rotate, playing tricks with the eye, hypnotising the viewer. Her practice also celebrates unusual and unexpected found objects alongside meticulously constructed works.

Born in Düsseldorf in 1971, Rhode lives and works in Berlin. Under the name Ninja Pleasure, she is renowned for her collaborations with the musician Gonzales and is perhaps best known as a member of the art collective Honey-Suckle Company whose participation in the 1998 Berlin Biennale, and exhibitions at Kunsthalle Basel, Cubitt, London and Kunstverein Stuttgart, earned them a legendary status in their native Germany. Recent exhibitions by Nina Rhode include *You Don't Love Me Anymore*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Munster; *modern modern*, Chelsea Art Museum, New York; and *Fantomas*, Sandra Bürgel Gallery, Berlin.

“Even if I make a work that is not officially moving, I try to make your eye move inside the work.”

Nina Rhode

LIST OF WORKS

Bin, 2011

Cast, epoxy resin, paint

This perfect cast of a melted street bin appears almost absorbed into the gallery floor. Nina takes a quotidian object that has been transformed through vandalism and transforms it into a work of art through a casting process that in some way is the mirror opposite of the vandal's action. The transformation from bin to sculpture began in 2009 during the May Day riots in Berlin which are infamous for their anti-capitalist damage.

Procurator, 2011

Burnt fireworks, wood, paint

A sculpture resembling a church organ is made from hundreds of burnt out fireworks collected by Rhode on New Year's Day - the morning after the night before. Rhode finds magic in other people's discarded objects. The burnt out cases are collected to form a pagan or voodoo inspired work shaped in the symbol of a religious instrument. Again, someone else's act of destruction turns into a magical creation.

Wenn die Damen Vasen tragen (Systeme tragen, Frauen) If The Ladies Carry Vases (Carry Systems, Ladies), 2011

Clay

These empty vessels come together to form an almost human scale female. The voluptuous curves hint at familiar fertility symbols such as the *Venus-of-Willendorf* or artworks such as John Latham's *Niddrie Woman*. Equally, the work is a still-life about boredom and emptiness.

Gong, 2011

Tree trunk, metal, rope

A gong which visitors can strike to participate in Nina's sensory exhibition. A found tree trunk and two discarded stone-cutting steel disks are improvised by the artist to make a large scale work which is both visible and audible. The work is inspired by a recent trip to Japan and the use of these ceremonial (and usually much more ornate) instruments.

***Fenster (Window)*, 2007 / 2011**

Silver Gelatine Print

A photograph taken through old glass contorts a landscape. An echo of visual interference which could be the result of the nearby vibrations of *Gong*.

***Es It*, 2004 / 2011**

C-Print

A self-portrait through a looking glass of the artist in her studio with found objects assembled as a throne.

***Moor*, 2011**

Glass, frame

***Loch*, 2011**

Glass, frame

Exquisite sheets of coloured mirrored glass which offer a disturbance of the viewer's perception.

NINA'S RADS (WHEELS)

A significant strand in the artist's practice is her ongoing series of her spinning circular sculptures. DCA are delighted to present the largest showcase to date of these objects.

***Ikea Turbine*, 2006**

Perspex, motor

The largest of Nina's wheels to date is an incredibly colourful work introducing the exhibition.

***Heat*, 2010**

Mirror, motor, cable

The reflection through this spinning mirror is akin to heat haze - like the fuzzy phenomenon of a road appearing to wobble in the middle distance on a hot day.

Clowning, 2008

Wood, motor, cable

The artist utilises the spare parts of a square from which a circle has been removed.

Harmonica, C-Major, 2009

Harmonicas on perspex, motor, cable

As the golden harmonicas spin, a lovely warm humming sound envelopes the work. The glowing from the centre light-bulb also creates a shadow of the work behind the perspex disc.

Televisor, 2010

Wood, metal

Resembling a satellite dish this work of art can be spun by the viewer.

Untitled (Column)

C-Prints, steel

Three Colour Separation, 2011

C-Print, steel, varnish

Photographs of the wheels captured mid-spin. The vertical axis enables the artist to play with the similarities and distinctions within the individual works. They make reference to art therapy and to Anthroposophic¹ beliefs.

¹ Derived from Anththropos - humankind, sophis - wisdom.

"Rudolf Steiner (1861 - 1925) did not discard the intellectual accomplishments of our scientific age but, by utilizing them, researched another dimension, which is needed to complement the admirable achievements of our times." Gunther Hauk: *Bees: Lectures by Rudolf Steiner*, Anthroposophic Press, Barrington, MA, 1998, p viii

SMALL GALLERIES

***Dreirad (Three Wheel)*, 2008**

Three wooden disks, acrylic paint, aluminium, camera lens, motor, cable, strobe lights

Private Collection

Strobe lights pulse on a rotating three-wheeled work (the work is triggered by a motion sensor in the room that detects your arrival and animates the work). Visitors can manipulate the strobe effects.

***Lens*, 1995 / 2011**

Silver Gelatine Print

A self-portrait through a camera lens (and a magnifying glass) that changes the subject's shape in a work from 1995 that the artist has revisited.

***Twist & Shout*, 2008 / 2011**

Bitumen

Two large feet are all that are left of a figure looking out of the window, slowly melting.

***Man of Black Whole*, 2008**

Glass, metal, motor, cable
courtesy of Collection Ragdan El-Akabi

A typically playful take on portals to parallel universes, black holes and at this stage of the exhibition, the full stop.



Nina Rhode

Es It, 2004 / 2011

C-Print

Courtesy of the artist and Sandra Bürgel Gallery, Berlin

ACTIVITY ROOM

Rudolf Beuys, 2011

Aluminium, wood, cable, switch, chalk, sponge, bucket

This work is designed to be drawn upon by visitors, using chalk to create temporary artworks. Placed in DCA's popular Activity Room, the sculpture is named after both Rudolf Steiner - the late 19th century and early 20th Century philosopher and social thinker, and Joseph Beuys - the canonical 20th Century artist who acknowledged Steiner's influence on his thinking and creating. Both are famous for their blackboards and their expanded views of human creativity.

Beuys's famous dictum that "*Everyone is an Artist*" is made available to all ages of the DCA audience. The Activity Room is open daily, unless being used for a workshop and is place where people of all ages can play by making connections with the practice of contemporary artists.

Nina Rhode's exhibition positively encourages this participation. Her recent inclusion in the exhibition *You Don't Love Me Anymore* at Westfälischer Kunstverein, Munster, featured a version of this sculpture and proved incredibly popular.

All works courtesy of the artist and Sandra Bürgel Gallery unless stated.

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