

PROJECT 29

Tino Sehgal

2014

This is so contemporary

6 February – 23 February 2014

Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney

BIOGRAPHY

Tino Sehgal's radical and captivating way of making art leaves no material traces. The artist refuses all documentation, the works remaining a mystery to those who have not directly experienced them. Born in London in 1976, the Berlin-based artist, who originally studied political economics and dance, constructs 'situations' by orchestrating interpersonal encounters through dance, voice and movement. His works elicit a different kind of viewer, one who cannot be a passive spectator – they bear a responsibility to construct and contribute to the realisation of the actual piece.

FACTS

- Sehgal's works are 'constructed situations' not performances. A constructed situation is an idea created by the artist, which places the viewer into the middle of a situation, rather than a performance, where the viewer remains passive.
- Sehgal does not allow photography of his projects, does not write anything down as instructions, or as clarification of the concepts explored in his works. Neither does he allow wall texts or brochures outlining the works to be published as part of the exhibition.
- *This is so contemporary* was first presented at the 2005 Venice Biennale and made its Australian debut at the Art Gallery of NSW in 2014.
- The work was presented by a diverse group of interpreters, who were from all walks of life, and not necessarily performers or dancers. These interpreters were trained to create the experience in the gallery, bringing their own unique gestures to Sehgal's instructions.
- *[Y]ou cannot be uninvolved, somehow, when there's this other person who can look back at you. The viewer in my work is always confronted with him-- or herself, with his or her own presence in the situation, as something that matters, as something that influences and shapes this situation. This experience that his or her own presence has consequences can kind of empower the viewer.*
– Tino Sehgal

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

For the 29th Kaldor Public Art Project, internationally acclaimed artist Tino Sehgal presented *This is so contemporary*, from 6 – 23 February 2014. Spontaneous and contagiously uplifting, this work enlivened the entrance court to the Art Gallery of New South Wales, directly engaging the Gallery's visitors.

Sehgal has pioneered a radical and captivating way of making art. He orchestrates interpersonal encounters through dance, voice and movement, which have become renowned for their intimacy. *This is so contemporary* was no exception, challenging visitors as they entered the Gallery's classical vestibule. Sehgal's works remain somewhat of a mystery to those who have not directly experienced them, as they are not permitted to be photographed or filmed. Sehgal leaves no material traces, creating something that is at once valuable and entirely immaterial in a world already full of objects.

First presented at the 2005 Venice Biennale, Kaldor Public Art Project 29 marked the Australian debut of *This is so contemporary*. His recent exhibitions include *This progress* at the Guggenheim New York in 2010, *These associations* at the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall in 2012 and *This variation* at Documenta 13. At the 2013 Biennale in Venice, Sehgal was awarded the Golden Lion, one of the world's most prestigious art awards.