

PROJECT 27

13 Rooms

2013

13 Rooms

11 – 21 April 2013

Pier 2/3, Walsh Bay, Sydney

BIOGRAPHIES

HANS ULRICH OBRIST

Swiss curator Hans Ulrich Obrist is Co-director of Exhibitions and Programs and Director of International Projects at the Serpentine Gallery, London. He has previously served as curator of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and Museum in Progress, Vienna.

KLAUS BIESENBACH

Klaus Biesenbach is Director of MoMA PS1 in New York and a Chief Curator at Large at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. He was the Founding Director of both the Kunst-Werke Institute of Contemporary Art in Berlin and the Berlin Biennale. Key international exhibitions organised by Biesenbach include MoMA's landmark show *Marina Abramovic: The Artist is Present* (2010) and *Hybrid Workspace* at documenta X (Kassel, 1997).

EXHIBITING ARTISTS

Marina Abramović; John Baldessari; Joan Jonas; Damien Hirst; Tino Sehgal; Allora and Calzadilla; Simon Fujiwara; Xavier Le Roy; Laura Lima; Roman Ondak; Santiago Sierra; Xu Zhen; Clark Beaumont

FACTS

- *It's not called 13 Performances because it's not 13 performances. It's not called 13 Artists because that would be irritating. It's not called 13 Sculptures because that would be misleading. Instead it's called 13 Rooms.*
– Klaus Biesenbach
- *Exhibitions are fundamentally a medium of social encounter.*
– Hans Ulrich Obrist
- 13 Rooms ran for 11 days at Pier 2/3, Walsh Bay, Sydney.
- The exhibition was originally commissioned as *11 Rooms* by Manchester International Festival, the International Arts Festival RUHRTRIENNALE 2012-2014 and Manchester Art Gallery.
- In addition to the 12 international artists selected to participate in the project, Australian artist duo Clark Beaumont were invited by the curators to present work in a new thirteenth room.
- In each room, a cast of one or more performers enacted the instructions of an artist.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

With over one hundred performers presenting new and reimagined works by some of the world's best-known contemporary artists, *13 Rooms* ran for eleven days at Pier 2/3 in Sydney's Walsh Bay to great acclaim and attendance. *13 Rooms* included previous and future Kaldor project artists Marina Abramović, Allora & Calzadilla, John Baldessari, Xavier Le Roy, Roman Ondak, Tino Sehgal and Santiago Sierra, alongside major international artists Joan Jonas, Damien Hirst, Simon Fujiwara, Laura Lima and Xu Zhen, and emerging Australian artist duo Clark Beaumont.

The project was conceptualised by Klaus Biesenbach, then-director of MoMA PS1, New York, and Hans Ulrich Obrist, then co-director of London's Serpentine Galleries, as an innovative group exhibition of "living sculptures" in purpose-built rooms. *13 Rooms* was originally commissioned by the Manchester International Festival in 2011 as *11 Rooms*, and grew to *12 Rooms* at the 2012 International Arts Festival Ruhrtriennale in Germany.

13 Rooms featured a range of artists who incorporate performance into their practice; including iconic forerunners of performance art and younger artists working exclusively with live art.

Writing in the Sydney Morning Herald, John McDonald described the works of *13 Rooms* as "a celebration of performance art that conceive the human body as a portable sculpture".

LIST OF WORKS

Marina Abramović, *Luminosity*, 1997

A performer sits on a bicycle seat bathed in light, high up on the wall, in this physically and mentally demanding work.

John Baldessari, *Thirteen Colourful Inside Jobs*, 2013

A painter continuously changes the wall colour in one room for the duration of the exhibition, carefully following the artist's instructions.

Joan Jonas, *Mirror Check*, 1960

A woman observes and examines her own naked body in a small, round, hand-held mirror.

Damien Hirst, *Twins*, 1992

A rotating cast of identical twins are positioned in front of two of Hirst's iconic spot paintings. Rather than a fixed shape, the work is continually shifting.

Tino Sehgal, *This is New*, 2003

Sehgal forbids any documentation of his work – the only way they are circulated is through his unwritten verbal instructions.

Allora and Calzadilla, *Revolving Door*, 2011

A group of dancers spontaneously forms a line and begins to rotate in a circular motion, literally sweeping up visitors as they circle the space.

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Simon Fujiwara, *Future/Perfect*, 2012

A series of individual men lie on a tanning bed, learning a foreign language via headphones, audibly sounding out words and phrases.

Xavier Le Roy, *Untitled*, 2012

Two masked figures with similar physiques move together in the darkness, making it impossible to know who, or what, they are.

Laura Lima, *Man=flesh/Woman=flesh – FLAT*, 1997

Visitors experience the world from a different angle, bending their bodies to view the actions of a performer with a physical disability.

Roman Ondak, *Swap*, 2011

A performer waits behind a table and selects an object. Visitors to the exhibition are then given the opportunity to swap the object with anything else they would be willing to exchange.

Santiago Sierra, *Veterans of the Wars of Afghanistan, Timor-Leste, Iraq and Vietnam Facing the Corner*, 2013

A series of war veterans, from varied past conflicts, stand facing the corner within the 5 × 5 metre room.

Xu Zhen, *In Just a Blink of an Eye*, 2005

A breathing body floats mysteriously in mid-air, frozen in time and space as if defying the constraints of physics.

Clark Beaumont, *Coexisting*, 2013

Explicitly positioning the artists as artwork, the artists spend the duration of the exhibition on a plinth with a surface area slightly too small for two people to comfortably occupy.

Laura Lima,
*Man=flesh/Woman=
flesh - FLAT*, 1997
Performed for
Kaldor Public Art
Project 27: *13
Rooms*, curated by
Klaus Biesenbach
and Hans Ulrich
Obrist, at Pier 2/3,
Walsh Bay, Sydney,
April 11-21, 2013

Photo: Jamie
North/Kaldor Public
Art Projects



Damien Hirst
*DHS 4985
Curtis, Jeffrey*,
1992
Household gloss on
wall, chairs and
twins
Dimensions variable
Detail installation
shot from Kaldor
Public Art Project
27: *13 Rooms*,
curated by Klaus
Biesenbach and
Hans Ulrich
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