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APR 21–JUN 17, 2018
RICHARD REZAC
ADDRESS

Address brings together twenty sculptures by Richard Rezac produced over the last two decades. Alongside a number of new works commissioned by the Renaissance Society, the exhibition features primarily recent sculptures and a small selection from earlier in his career.

The title plays on the multivalent quality of the word. As an action, it reflects the artist's efforts to address the questions and opportunities posed by the unique architecture of the Renaissance Society's gallery space. In this sense, it also nods to the sculptures' relationship to their presumptive audience, affirming the specificity of each instance of seeing and being seen. As a noun, it recalls for the artist significant geographical contexts: his studio, where all of the works in *Address* were produced, as well as specific locations reflected in a number of the works' titles.

Rezac has lived and worked in Chicago since 1985, and the monumental architecture of the city has inspired a deep engagement with the

histories of design and the built environment. Ongoing research—including travel to sites across the United States, Europe, and Japan—informs his approach to composition and use of materials, techniques, and ornamentation. The artist in particular cites his study of the Baroque period as suggesting a more formally complex direction for his practice. As a student in Portland, OR in the 1970s, Rezac was drawn to Japanese and Native American art which, along with the Minimalist art of the time and Shaker design, were early influences on the simplicity and geometry of his work. Over time, as the artist's relationships with these traditions develop, they find formal manifestations in the work that he has described as “a progression from something like a dense sphere to something that is much more angular or linear, with several materials, some of which are colorful or reflective.”

Each sculpture begins with a drawing or series of drawings. These initial sketches are largely abstract and improvisational, but they also

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incorporate references to personal memories and formal motifs from his research. The choice of the sculptures' scale—modest and relating to the human body—is illuminated by the artist's process of creating these 1:1 plans. To Rezac, it is important that one can perceive the entirety of the work at once: first for his own comprehension in the process of creation, and then for its eventual audience. This invitation to look closely draws attention to the subtle qualities that reveal the sculptures as handmade and offers an opportunity to consider the precise balance of form, texture, and color in each work.

Rezac's long history in Chicago also has had bearing on the approach he took to selecting and producing work for *Address*. Having seen numerous exhibitions here at the Renaissance Society over a thirty-year period, he was keenly aware of how much the architecture could change dramatically with each presentation. He and curator Solveig Øvstebø have conceived of *Address* as a cohesive installation informed by and responding to the openness of the gallery. Each sculpture's precise placement is the result of careful consideration of its own spatial requirements and the composition of various sightlines throughout the exhibition.

Untitled (Ren Screen), for example, is a new work that is at once sculpture, room divider, and display structure. It is situated in such a way—perpendicular to the only built wall and parallel with the windows—that it both demarcates space and catches the light, particularly on *Cremona*, a small cherry wood work situated on the back side. Across the gallery *Chigi* echoes the screen's fence-like form as it incorporates

references to Italian Baroque architect Francesco Borromini.

The arrangement of works in *Address* offers a variety of experiences in encountering them. Rezac makes use of the gallery's height with two works that hang from the ceiling: the delicate, metallic *Untitled (05-07)* and the large, bright *Untitled (17-07)*, which announces the exhibition to arriving visitors. Viewers also look up at *Quimby* and *Untitled (15-02)*, which are mounted high on the interior wall, while the small, white *Largo* is positioned for peering down on.

Rezac's sculptures exude a certain familiarity, both as individual works and in conversation with one another. His practice avoids symbolism and illustration, but it also is not concrete, closed, or strictly formal. In taking this intuitive approach, the artist invites viewers to consider the multiple layers and possible readings of each piece.

Curated by Solveig Øvstebø.

- 1 *Zeilschip (blue)*, 2013
Cast bronze and painted cherry wood
Private collection
- 2 *Zeilschip (knot)*, 2014
Nickel-plated cast bronze and cast bronze
Collection of Jay Franke and David Herro
- 3 *Zeilschip (lunar distance)*, 2015
Cast bronze and painted cherry wood
Collection of Espen Galtung Dosvig, Bergen
- 4 *Zeilschip (gauge)*, 2016
Cast bronze and nickel-plated bronze
Private collection, New York
- 5 *Untitled (Ren Screen)*, 2016-17
Painted wood and aluminum
Courtesy of the artist
- 6 *Cremona*, 1996
Cherry wood
Collection of Dudley and Michael Del Balso
- 7 *Untitled (05-07)*, 2005
Cast bronze and steel cable
Private collection, New York
- 8 *Tendril (Thomaskirche)*, 2017
Cast bronze and painted wood
Courtesy of the artist and Rhona Hoffman Gallery
- 9 *Largo*, 2017
Cast bronze and paint
Courtesy of the artist
- 10 *Untitled (17-07)*, 2017
painted wood and cast aluminum
Courtesy of the artist and Rhona Hoffman Gallery
- 11 *Untitled (14-04)*, 2014
Painted cherry wood, aluminum, painted steel and aluminum
Private collection
- 12 *Dreigesight (Hurson)*, 2016
Cast bronze and nickel-plated cast bronze
Courtesy of the artist
- 13 *Untitled (13-04)*, 2013
Nickel-plated cast bronze
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi
- 14 *Untitled (17-05)*, 2017
Cast bronze
Courtesy of the artist and James Harris Gallery
- 15 *Laterano*, 2016
Painted cherry wood, plate glass, and aluminum
Courtesy of the artist
- 16 *Untitled (15-02)*, 2015
Aluminum and painted maple wood
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi
- 17 *Chigi*, 2016-17
Painted wood and cast hydrocal
Courtesy of the artist
- 18 *Quimby*, 2017
Painted steel, plate glass, enameled plate glass, and cherry wood
Collection of Espen Galtung Dosvig, Bergen
- 19 *Untitled (10-01)*, 2010
Painted cherry wood, cast bronze, and aluminum
Collection of Yale University Art Gallery, Janet and Simeon Braguin Fund
- 20 *Aerial (Largo)*, 2018
Cast bronze and paint
Courtesy of the artist