

Press Release

Ryan Gander *These are the markers of our time*

10 September – 17 October 2020
508 West 24th Street, New York

“For all their concern for promoting individuality as opposed to collectivity, fractioning as opposed to solidifying, communitarianism as opposed to commonality, to the subjects of identity politics and the internet, the hyper-real and the not so real, and your nostalgic hankerings in a quest to slow time... you are perhaps somewhat missing the point, or at least the subject. These are not the subjects of your time, these are only the consequences of your time.

Time... That is the subject of your time.”

- Extract from Ryan Gander, ‘The End’ (February, 2020)

Ryan Gander will open Lisson Gallery’s new space in New York with an exhibition highlighting time as the new currency, reflecting on how – in an age of identity politics, selfie culture and an incessant need to shout the loudest – the focus of our time should be on the value of time itself. The exhibition is made up of many individual works that create a whole, like chapters in a book, but with no linear beginning or end. Upon entering the space, the visitor is presented with a feeling of disarray – from broken glass to graphite marks on the walls – where each work is a piece of the puzzle, referencing Gander’s interest in chance, serendipity and storytelling, laying out a series of clues and markers to be decrypted.

In his last exhibition at Lisson Gallery London, Gander encouraged the viewer to allow a natural course of action, claiming that time has its own course, a power that we cannot control. Gander now delves into the complexity of our experience of time, reflecting on the two Greek terms for time: ‘kronos’ and ‘kairos’. While we just have one word to describe many realities, the Greeks used ‘kronos’ (or ‘chronus’, from which ‘chronology’ is derived) to refer to linear, sequential, measureable time, and ‘kairos’ to describe a circular time, dancing back and forth with no clear beginning or end. Arguably today, ‘kronos’ prevails, in a world driven by clocks and calendars. This also reflects our incessant growth-led culture and fear of the unknown, where all visualisations of the future are seemingly apocalyptic, contrasting to for example, the optimism of futuristic science fiction films.

Leaning on one of the walls is the one figurative element of the show – *Balthazar: Bit Part Player*. Having just marked the pristine walls of the gallery, as well as his own perfectly white tracksuit, with smudges of graphite, the figure's posture is one of resignation or fatigue as his form collapses towards the floor in an act of endless waiting. Gander here comments on our collective obsession with legacy, mark-making: our attempt to interrupt the natural course of time by reinserting ourselves within it.

A selection from Gander’s *Broken Windows* series (2019) – geometric, abstract paintings – are hung on the walls of the gallery. These works are created by happenstance: Gander places a sheet of glass on a table and, without being able to see it, smashes the glass with a hammer. He then tapes over the cracks with black gaffe tape, resulting in an abstracted composition that marks a moment in time, each different from the next, created by a planned accident. The theme of fortuity continues within the works: hidden within each *Broken Windows* painting hides a fortune cookie describing an idea for an artwork. This series also alludes to the ‘Broken Windows Theory’, referencing the history of sociological transformation in New York, and demonstrating how profoundly humans are affected by the aesthetics of their surroundings.

The information Totem, a mirrored screen, displays a controlled reading of a new work, Gander's *Staccato Refractions* (2020). Taking the form of a digital animated concrete poetry, the Totem displays the prose, choosing chapters in a random order, meaning any given visitor receives a unique narrative. The text investigates our fascination with the invisible values represented by tangible things, nationality represented by a flag for example and the opposing notion of the Black Box, the devices that we interact with that we can't comprehend... (in science, computing, and engineering, a black box being a device, system or object which can be viewed in terms of its inputs and outputs without any knowledge of its internal workings, highlighting the way we give value to objects that we cannot physically understand. A transistor, an engine, an algorithm, the human brain, an institution or government.)

In the far side of the gallery, a tiny brown mouse emerges from debris in the wall. "If you had ten days to live, would you spend it looking at Instagram?", the mouse asks. Written by Gander and read by his youngest daughter, the mouse sermonises some of the biggest questions that face humanity, from our ability to cognitively time travel to our limitations in being able to foresee our own end. Demanding our attention by refusing to be the one that shouts the loudest, we kneel down to hear what the mouse has to say. Nearby (first greeting you by the window), three animatronic stray cats can be found – one ginger, one tabby and one white. Luckily for the mouse, *The squatters* (as Gander titles them) are relatively benign and disengaged, instead found sleeping on their newly-claimed homes: pedestals previously owned by historic works of art by Susan Hiller, Richard Wentworth and Ceal Floyer.

The theme of play and chance continues throughout the exhibition with a vending machine filled with graphite pebbles – cast from real pebbles found on the beach, one of these holds the key to the whole machine and its contents – and a crumpled up letter, *A Letter to a Young Artist*, written by Gander to himself when he was eight years old.

The exhibition follows the release of British rock band, the IDLES' new music video, directed by Gander; and precedes the launch of a new Gander-designed sportswear line with Kappa, realised with A FOUR Labs and Kazuki Kuraishi which will be released later this year. The texts featured in this exhibition were realised during an extensive period of research supported by Princeton University, Hodder Fellowship 2019.

About Ryan Gander

Ryan Gander has established an international reputation through artworks that materialise in many different forms – from sculpture to film, writing, graphic design, installation, performance and more besides. Through associative thought processes that connect the everyday and the esoteric, the overlooked and the commonplace, Gander's work involves a questioning of language and knowledge, as well as a reinvention of both the modes of appearance and the creation of an artwork. His work can be reminiscent of a puzzle, or a network with multiple connections and the fragments of an embedded story. It is ultimately a huge set of hidden clues to be deciphered, encouraging viewers to make their own associations and invent their own narrative in order to unravel the complexities staged by the artist.

Ryan Gander (born 1976, Chester, UK) lives and works in Suffolk and London. He studied at Manchester Metropolitan University, UK; the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam, Netherlands; and the Jan van Eyck Akademie, Maastricht, Netherlands. The artist has been a Professor of Visual Art at the University of Huddersfield and holds an honorary Doctor of the Arts at the Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Suffolk. In 2017 he was awarded an OBE for services to contemporary art. Recent solo shows have been held at Lisson Gallery, Shanghai, China (2019), Esther Schipper, Berlin, Germany (2019), 21st Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2018), TARO NASU, Tokyo, Japan (2018); gb Agency, Paris, France (2018); Dazaifu Shrine, Fukuoka, Japan (2017); Remai Modern, Saskatoon, Canada (2017); The Contemporary Austin, TX, USA (2017); the National Museum of Art Osaka, Osaka, Japan (2017); Hyundai Gallery, Seoul, South Korea (2017); Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgium (2016); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO, USA (2016); Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada (2015); Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, Australia (2015); Singapore Tyler Print Institute, Singapore, Singapore (2015); and Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester, UK (2014). Major projects include Liverpool Biennale, UK; Sydney Biennale, Sydney, Australia; British Art Show 8, Leeds, UK; Performa 15, New York, NY, USA; Panorama, High Line, New York, USA; Imagineering, Okayama Castle, Okayama, Japan; 'The artists have the keys', 2 Willow Road, London, UK; Unlimited, Art Basel, Basel, Switzerland; Parcours, Art Basel, Basel, Switzerland; Esperluette, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France; DOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany; 'Locked Room Scenario', commissioned by Artangel, London, UK; ILLUMInations at the 54th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy; 'Intervals' at Solomon R.

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Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY, USA; and 'The Happy Prince', Public Art Fund, Doris C. Freedman Plaza, Central Park, New York, NY, USA.

About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Today the gallery supports and promotes the work of more than 60 international artists across two spaces in London and two in New York as well as one in Shanghai. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, Lisson Gallery pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Art & Language, Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Donald Judd, John Latham, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long and Robert Ryman among many others. It still works with many of these artists as well as others of that generation from Carmen Herrera to the renowned estates of Leon Polk Smith, Ted Stamm and Roy Colmer. In its second decade the gallery introduced significant British sculptors to the public for the first time, including Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Shirazeh Houshiary and Julian Opie. Since 2000, the gallery has gone on to represent many more leading international artists such as Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei, John Akomfrah, Susan Hiller, Tatsuo Miyajima and Sean Scully. It is also responsible for raising the international profile of a younger generation of artists led by Cory Arcangel, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Ryan Gander, Haroon Mirza, Laure Prouvost, Pedro Reyes and Wael Shawky.

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LISSON GALLERY



Ryan Gander
These memories are not my own, 2020
Vending machine, stones, jesmonite, graphite, graphene
183.5 x 80 x 94 cm
72 1/8 x 31 1/2 x 37 in
ed. 1 of 1 + 1 AP
GAND200012-1



Ryan Gander
By physical or cognitive means (Broken Window Theory 13 May), 2019-2020
Ink on paper, emulsion paint, aluminium frame, reinforced broken glass, black gaffe/duct tape
200 x 148 x 7.5 cm
78 5/8 x 58 1/4 x 2 7/8 in
GAND190017



Ryan Gander
By physical or cognitive means (Broken Window Theory 5 July), 2019-2020
White-washed broken glass, aluminium frame, black gaffe/duct tape
200 x 148.5 x 7.5 cm
78 5/8 x 58 3/8 x 2 7/8 in
GAND190028



Ryan Gander
By physical or cognitive means (Broken Window Theory 1 July), 2019-2020
Ink on paper, emulsion paint, aluminium frame, reinforced broken glass, black gaffe/duct tape
120 x 95 x 7.5 cm
47 1/8 x 37 3/8 x 2 7/8 in
GAND190022



Ryan Gander
Bit Part Player (Balthazar, Merchant of Venice; Act 3, Scene 4), 2019-2020
Graphite, fibreglass, resin, cotton t-shirt and joggers
Figure: 183 x 65 x 47 cm
Figure: 72 x 25 1/2 x 18 1/2 in
GAND200011

LISSON GALLERY



Ryan Gander
'The End', 2020
Animatronics
Room: variable dimensions. Mouse unit: 19.5 x 24 x 22 cm
Room: variable dimensions. Mouse unit: 7 5/8 x 9 3/8 x 8 5/8 in
ed. 2 of 3 + 1 AP
GAND200001-2



Ryan Gander
By physical or cognitive means (Broken Window Theory 31 December), 2020
Framed painting on glass, Ink on paper, emulsion paint, aluminium frame, reinforced broken glass
120 x 95 x 7.6 cm
47 1/8 x 37 3/8 x 2 7/8 in
GAND200029



Ryan Gander
By physical or cognitive means (Broken Window Theory 14 May), 2019-2020
Ink on paper, emulsion paint, aluminium frame, reinforced broken glass, duct tape
180 x 135 x 7.5 cm
70 3/4 x 53 1/8 x 2 7/8 in
GAND190018



Ryan Gander
Staccato Refractions, 2020
Infotem sign, glass lens and *Monstera deliciosa* plants
Dimensions variable. Infotem sign: 70 x 196 x 55 cm
Dimensions variable. Infotem sign: 27 1/2 x 77 1/8 x 21 1/2 in
ed. 1 of 1 + 1 AP
GAND200002-1



Ryan Gander
What you lack in poetry you can not make up for in ambition, 2019-2020
Black dollar vinyl on floor
Dimensions variable
ed. 1 of 1 + 1 AP
GAND200013-1

LISSON GALLERY



Ryan Gander
Letter to a young artist, 2019-2020
Discarded letter
GAND190029



Ryan Gander
Memetic absence, or The squatters (Caesar meet Wentworth's Man and the Animals #2 (1991)), 2020
Animatronic cat (white)
12.7 x 40.6 x 30.5 cm
5 x 16 x 12 in
GAND200039



Ryan Gander
Goodnight London, or The squatters (Misty meet Floyer's Mirror Globe), 2020
Animatronic cat (ginger)
12.7 x 40.6 x 30.5 cm
5 x 16 x 12 in
GAND200034



Ryan Gander
Sowing confusion amongst the titles, or The squatters (Tiger meet Hiller's Lucidity & Intuition: Homage to Gertrude Stein (2011)), 2020
Animatronic cat (grey)
10.8 x 66 x 40.6 cm
4 1/4 x 26 x 16 in
GAND200036