

MB&F M.A.D.Gallery proudly presents the mesmerizing kinetic and interactive sculptures by Swiss artist Ralfonso

Ralfonso is a powerhouse in kinetic sculpture, with an expansive portfolio of work in permanent collections around the world to prove it. A master at the intersection of engineering and art, Ralfonso goes beyond traditional sculpture by incorporating movement into his pieces – Art in Motion!

Here at the MB&F M.A.D.Gallery Geneva, we are thrilled to showcase a selection of his small-scale very limited series of graceful “Art in Motion” works from January 10th 2018.

Kinetic Sculptures

Wind, water, light, and the element of Time add an intriguing fourth dimension to Ralfonso's dynamic sculptures. Natural surroundings fuel the fluid movements of his kinetic works creating dynamic and unpredictable interactions at the hands of Mother Nature.

“My work has the added element of time and change-over-time - so it goes beyond just a three-dimensional shape,” Ralfonso points out.

A perfect example of an environmentally interactive art piece is Ralfonso's monumental 10-meter tall *Dance with the Wind*, which was commissioned for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. This sculpture undulates with the gentlest breeze or the strongest winds to produce a poetic, yet unpredictable dance. The wind triggers a stack of five balls by pushing a flat, round disk at the top of the vertical composition, which is counterbalanced by a weighted sphere at the base. Mirror-polished stainless steel enhances the viewer's experience, its reflective qualities revealing its surroundings shimmering in the sun. A smaller collector version standing 100 cm tall and limited to 15 pieces engages spectators with its hypnotic sway.

Ralfonso masters kinetic sculpture with unparalleled imagination and an exceptional ability to set art into motion. These unique talents shine through in *KARO*, a German word for rhombus, a geometric diamond shape. Closer inspection of this 120 cm tall artwork, limited to just 10 pieces, reveals 16 self-balancing diamond-shaped elements forming an even larger rhombus. The striking, clean lines come to life with the slightest breeze or touch of the hand, moving each rhombus back and forth in an unlimited combination of patterns.

Another artwork in the exhibition is the slowly tilting *EXclamation* – an exclamation point that looks as though it should fall over and stay down, but doesn't, thanks to a clever weight system bringing it upright. Imagine these striking sculptural constructions or other brilliant works by Ralfonso moving in harmony with the trees in a garden or swaying in the breeze on a rooftop terrace. Standing 80 cm tall, *EXclamation* is a limited edition of 33 pieces.

Creation Process

From large-scale outdoor installations like *TUBUS* measuring 15 meters in length, to sculptures as small as 45 cm, Ralfonso's inspiration is the nature surrounding him – and the world is his studio.

The creation process takes between four months and a year depending on the scope of the project. Ralfonso's design idea is transferred into a sketch detailing the structure of the sculpture and the hidden mechanics required to create mechanisms with a horizontal axis or weighted elements. "Finding the right place at the intersection of design, mechanics, and technology – and creating never before seen 'art in motion' pieces," as Ralfonso describes.

The initial drawing is then constructed in three dimensions using small models. To test and fine-tune the construction, several CAD programs may be used. Construction is the final step utilizing all available techniques including laser, water jet, CNC cutting, and 3D printing. Once the piece is built to scale and tested it is finally ready for installation.

Ralfonso's works are in tune with the desires of collectors, offering very limited series and bespoke, site-specific and unique "one – off" designs for discerning clients. Depending on the final location of the installation, the collector can choose from a variety of materials ranging from 316L stainless steel and fiberglass, to aluminum and even Kevlar, with finishing options including colors and mirror or matte polishing. The possibilities are endless. His works have recently sold very successfully at the Sotheby's New York "Contemporary Curated" auction.

Background

Ralfonso began creating large, public kinetic art in 1999 and is now a recognized master. His pieces can be found in public, private and museum collections all over the world, from his native Switzerland to the Netherlands, Russia, China, Germany, Hong Kong, United Arab Emirates, France and the USA.

Working in reverse with his sculptures as compared to most artists, Ralfonso started his art career immediately with large public installations; in fact, his very first commission was Moving on UP for a "New Star luxury high rise" in St. Petersburg, Russia. Ralfonso has since expanded his collection with small-scale very limited series kinetic sculptures.

In January of 2015 CNN INTERNATIONAL produced a documentary about his kinetic art around the world entitled: "THE ART OF MOVEMENT – Wind Sculptures Inspired by Nature". Shortly afterwards FORBES magazine published an in-depth article about Ralfonso's smaller sculptures, entitled "Kinetic Art Trending In Homes Thanks to Artist Ralfonso".

Dedicated to his passion for kinetic art, Ralfonso co-founded the Kinetic Art Organization (KAO) in 2001, which has grown to 1,000 members residing in more than 60 countries around the world.

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