

Press Release

Nick Renshaw

Myriad

12th February to 30th March 2011

Opening Saturday 12th February 16.00

Amsterdam based artist Nick Renshaw (1967, York) produced some remarkable work in 2010. He carried out an ambitious commission for the Gemeentehuis of Ouderkerk aan de Amstel, a large bronze sculpture for the exterior as well as two hundred small porcelain pieces for the interior of the building.

Renshaw says his current work “comes, in part, directly from the commission”. The bronze piece, *‘Zittend’* (‘Sitting’), and the porcelain multiples *‘Staannd’* (‘Standing’), are fascinating examples of how public art can work well when sensitively sited by forward-thinking councils.

Renshaw made these sculptures in China, a country he now visits frequently to develop large scale projects. “The longer I’m there, the more visual references I absorb”, he says.

‘Myriad’, the title referring to countless or limitless possibilities, includes a number of human, doll-like figures, around 30 cm high, some portraying human features, some with perfect spheres for heads. They have the otherworldly characteristics of astronauts concealed in air-tight space suits, their hidden features meaning these characters remain enigmatic, impassive. As Renshaw says; “they have the universality of anonymity”. Other ‘humanoid’ sculptures have a variety of surface treatments. Some have exquisite grey or white lines of crackle glaze, others unglazed with hand-embossed surface patterning often seen on traditional Chinese ceramics. He says “These sculptures are a development of previous work. The show has industrial elements as well as other formal constellations, a combination of both figurative and non-figurative work.”

What is particularly attractive about these works is their contemplative, quiet presence.

He also shows composite figures, some with porcelain heads larger than their bodies and others with stoneware parts, partially glazed. Many pieces assume colours imparted by the firing process. The minimal presence of colour and the use of repeated forms lending a subdued authority to the work.

Nick Renshaw is currently working towards a PhD at Sunderland University, focusing on the subject of international ceramic art residencies. As he says “You can never learn enough about what you do.” In addition, he has been invited to exhibit in a group show in the Oude Kerk, Delft in April 2011. His work now has a global reach, from the provinces of southern China to the towns of Zuid Holland, finding, for a while, their still centre at Galerie de Witte Voet in Amsterdam.

© Siobhan Wall 2010