



RAD HOURANI
COUTURE UNISEXE #14

26.01—30.01.2015

with

Anselm Kiefer

David Altmejd

Giuseppe Penone

Nick Cave

Oscar Tuazon

Theaster Gates

Tony Lewis

Ugo Rondinone

The exhibition *RAD HOURANI COUTURE UNISEX #14* was produced in partnership with Arsenal Contemporary Art. Presented at the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris from January 26 to 30, 2015.

Officially inaugurated on April 2, 1970, the Canadian Cultural Centre endeavored to promote Canadian culture in France. The centre aims to promote the most innovative contemporary Canadian artforms through public and private institutional partnerships and collaborations with various French festivals and events.

The centre hosts exhibitions by Canadian contemporary artists, concerts by Canadian musicians of all genres, film screenings, lectures, and events for young audiences throughout the year—all free.

With its unique programming focusing on the diversity and vitality of artistic voices, the Canadian Cultural Centre is a point of convergence for disciplines, languages, and living cultures from all the provinces and territories of Canada.

1 A ceiling view of the centre's exhibition space, 2015. Photo: Rad Hourani. © Rad Hourani

7 The entrance view of the centre's exhibition space, 2015. Photo: Rad Hourani. © Rad Hourani

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RAD HOURANI COUTURE UNISEXE #14

COUTURE UNISEXE #14, an artistic exploration by Rad Hourani, transcends traditional artistic boundaries, reshaping the relationship between art, couture, and societal norms. This collection, a fusion of textile, costume, sculpture, curation, photography, video, and installation, serves as a deliberate exploration by the artist, challenging the tangible limitations imposed by categorizations and presenting unrestrained works of art that defy normative methods of human conformity.

The conception unfolds as Rad Hourani intricately crafts multiple gender-neutral patterns of sculptural forms, intertwining a fluid range of costumes and textiles. Exploring forms through a tapestry of natural and industrial materials to liberate the language of Haute Couture through unconventional wear. Rad's sculptures, embodying Unisex Couture, utilize rigid textiles like vinyl and nylon, paired with unsynchronized colors from a 21st-century palette. Departing from binary restrictions in clothing, the pieces feature unfinished, twisted shapes and unbalanced proportions, provoking the possibilities of contemporary couture. These sculptural transformations become abstract narratives, prompting contemplation of the intricate relationship between humanity and evolution.

The collection challenges historical confines, traditionally restricting Haute Couture to women. Rad envisions an existence free from limitations by introducing an inclusive language of couture that embraces all genders. This inclusive vision initiates an exploration of the masculine notion within Haute Couture versus the arts. Rad delves into the creative processes of male artists, contrasting their unrestricted sculptural mediums with the constraints faced by men in the world of Haute Couture. The artist further stimulates a parallel dialogue on aesthetics, masculinity, and the expansive boundaries of creativity through a curated installation that serves as an analogy.

Utilizing the medium of curation, Rad Hourani selects male-made artworks from the Arsenal Contemporary Art collection pavilion in Montréal, juxtaposing them with his Unisex Couture sculptures. This

curated installation features works by Anselm Kiefer, David Altmejd, Giuseppe Penone, Nick Cave, Oscar Tuazon, Theaster Gates, Tony Lewis, and Ugo Rondinone. Captured through the lens of Rad Hourani in a photograph series and video performative installation, exploring the intersection between masculinity, art, and couture. Performers adorned in Rad's experimental pieces engage in the filmed performance installation, activating the space around the curated artworks. The resulting video installation features three series of performative human movements, showcasing the physical expressiveness of semiotic elements and the dynamic relationship between body and space. This immersive experience serves as a reflection on contemporary times and the human condition, confronting social and historical topics.

The culmination of Rad Hourani's *COUTURE UNISEXE #14* complete body of work is strategically envisioned for exhibition at the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris. Its historical aesthetics of French molding in the 7th arrondissement provide a fitting backdrop for Rad's final curated installation. Seamlessly fusing past with future, desirable with mundane, old with new, and body with mind, this comprehensive body of work becomes a medium for questioning collective memory and exploring the desire for art and couture values versus human values. Rad Hourani continues to create a new language, concealing gender norms and offering a visual embodiment of social consciousness. This convergence of history and contemporary dialogues serves as a catalyst for change, instigating a new narrative that celebrates the diverse expressions of human identity.



Under the patronage of Canada's Ambassador to France, the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris presents the *RAD HOURANI COUTURE UNISEXE #14* exhibition. This unveiling invites the public to immerse themselves in the visionary multidisciplinary practice of Rad Hourani, showcasing its impact on societal norms and the promotion of inclusivity within the realms of couture and art.

Between 2005 and 2007, Rad Hourani marked history by innovating the first gender-neutral patterns and a unisex sizing system. His commitment to non-binary collections reached its zenith with the presentation of the inaugural unisex couture collection in the history of Haute Couture in 2013.

Rad Hourani, the first Canadian "guest member" of the *Fédération Française de la Haute Couture*, introduces his non-conformist vision into the annals of Haute Couture. The exhibition showcases his installations during Haute Couture Week in Paris, aiming to continue his dialogue on non-binarity through the medium of costume.

Maintaining a global presence through international press events, lectures, and exhibitions, Rad Hourani's activism through his art serves as a reminder. It underscores that limiting preconceptions in the current ethos and rules of fashion history are intertwined with human inequality.

A pioneer in championing inclusivity and diversity within the arts, Rad Hourani challenges the binary conventions of gender in clothing. His impact is evidenced by recognition for innovative creations graced in prestigious publications, museums, and institutions worldwide, attesting to the significance and impact of his artistic endeavors.

Rad Hourani carves a space for nuanced discussions around societal and institutional biases, challenging fundamental normative codes. His invention and vision evoke radical change globally, revolutionizing our reality.

This exhibition stands as a testament to Rad Hourani's dedication to pushing boundaries and fostering inclusivity. Through groundbreaking contributions as an innovator, artist, curator, activist, and more, Rad Hourani persists in shaping and enriching the broader artistic landscape, leaving an indelible mark on our world.



Canadian Cultural Centre Paris

26.01–30.01.2015

RAD HOURANI

Rad Hourani's multi-disciplinary practice transcends conventional artistic boundaries through his innovation and thought-provoking creations. His repertoire spans sculpture, photography, costume, performance, textile, installation, video, curation, and text, challenging established hierarchies and social norms. With his hybrid approach, Rad delves into the foundations of geopolitical, religious, sexual, and economic systems, surpassing the boundaries of artistic expression.

Rooted in Rad's early experiences grappling with questions of identity and societal constructs, his artistic journey was catalyzed by a keen observation of the world's fragmentation. This observation ignited a lifelong exploration of the labels used to code and categorize humans.

As a non-conformist artist, innovator, and activist, Rad Hourani continuously reshapes the landscape of art. Through his activism, he proposes, transmits, collaborates, and nurtures a universal and inclusive concept of the arts. Rad's transdisciplinary vision challenges institutional formalism and aesthetics, advocating for a union between different artistic disciplines. His conceptual process embodies a philosophy that questions the discriminatory bases of nationalism, racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, and authoritarianism.

Rad Hourani's oeuvre serves as a catalyst for questioning preconceptions of identity, fostering inclusivity, and stimulating dialogue on issues of inequality. Furthermore, his art inspires us to reevaluate our societal functioning and envision an existence free from limitations and conditioning.



Installation view: *Rad Hourani Couture Unisex #14*.
From left to right: Rad Hourani, Exhibition wall text (detail), 2015; Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Forms 2, 11, 5, 8, 13)* (detail), 2015; Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Vid. 1)* (detail), 2015



Installation views: *Rad Hourani Couture Unisex* #14.
 From left to right: Rad Hourani, Exhibition wall text (detail), 2015; Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Form 1)*, 2015



Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Forms 11, 12, 13)*, 2015; Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pic. 7)* (detail), 2015; Anselm Kiefer, *Let a Thousand Flowers Bloom*, 2006



Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Forms 14, 10, 4, 5, 1)* (detail), 2015; Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pic. 7)* (detail), 2015; Anselm Kiefer, *Let a Thousand Flowers Bloom*, 2006



Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Forms 1, 4)* (detail), 2015

ANSELM KIEFER

Anselm Kiefer's monumental body of work represents a microcosm of collective memory, visually encapsulating a broad range of cultural, literary, and philosophical allusions—from the Old and New Testaments, Kabbalah mysticism, Norse mythology, and Wagner's Ring Cycle to the poetry of Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan.

Born during the closing months of World War II, Kiefer reflects on Germany's post-war identity and history, grappling with the national mythology of the Third Reich. Fusing art and literature, painting and sculpture, Kiefer engages the complex events of history and the ancestral epics of life, death, and the cosmos. His boundless repertoire of imagery is paralleled only by the breadth of media palpable in his work.

Kiefer's oeuvre encompasses paintings, vitrines, installations, artist books, and an array of works on paper such as drawings, watercolors, collages, and altered photographs. The physical elements of his practice—from lead, concrete, and glass to textiles, tree roots, and burned books—are as symbolically resonant as they are vast-ranging. By integrating, expanding, and regenerating imagery and techniques, he brings to light the importance of the sacred and spiritual, myth, and memory.

Installation view: *Rad Hourani Couture Unisex #14*.
From left to right: *Rad Hourani, UC14 (Vid. 2)* (still), 2015; Anselm Kiefer, *Let a Thousand Flowers Bloom*, 2006; *Rad Hourani, UC14 (Pics 1, 2, 3)* (detail), 2015





DAVID ALTMJEJD

David Altmejd explores the constitution and disintegration of the self, producing sculptures that expand the range of figurative representation and conjure abstract regions beyond the realm of recognizability. His work is centered on the human form, which in Altmejd's vision includes not only the body but also the mind, the imagination, and the soul, not to mention the ways the material world is perceived and felt through these channels. To this end, each of his works arises from an ongoing intuitive relationship with the large array of materials with which they are built, including clay, foam, mirror, quartz, resin, and both synthetic and human hair. Traditional processes like casting exist alongside idiosyncratic forms of bricolage; no two sculptures are alike, even when they seem to address related subjects. Altmejd approaches scale as a relative quantity, and over the course of his two-decade career, he has treated room-sized installations and intimate busts with the same levels of intensity and commitment. Cosmological in scope, his work reveals a world-making ethos across its surfaces and in its details, where countless moments of curiosity reflect the ever-unfolding mysteries of consciousness.



Installation view: *Rod Hourani Couture Unisex #14*.
From left to right: Rod Hourani, *UC14 (pics 13, 14)*, 2015; Tony Lewis,
6. Have a Firm Handshake (detail), 2014; David Altmejd, *The New North*, 2007

GIUSEPPE PENONE

Installation view: *Rad Hourani Couture Unisex #14*.
From left to right: *Rad Hourani, UC14 (Videos 2, 3)*, 2015; Giuseppe Penone, *Tra...*, 2008

Giuseppe Penone employs a wide range of materials and forms in an exploration of the fundamental language of sculpture in regards to the connection between natural and man-made forms. In Penone's work, sculptural transformations draw the viewer's attention to details that have long existed but are easily overlooked. By bringing the grandeur—as well as the modesty and intimacy—of raw but also cultural material into various settings, Penone raises questions about sculpture and its essence.



NICK CAVE

Nick Cave works between the visual and performing arts through a wide range of mediums, including sculpture, installation, video, sound, and performance. Cave is known for his Soundsuits, sculptural forms based on the scale of his body, initially created in direct response to the police beating of Rodney King in 1991. Soundsuits camouflage the body, masking and creating a second skin that conceals race, gender, and class, forcing the viewer to look without judgment. They serve as a visual embodiment of social justice and represent both brutality and empowerment.

Throughout his practice, Cave has created spaces of memorial by combining found historical objects with contemporary dialogues on gun violence and death, underscoring the anxiety of severe trauma brought on by catastrophic loss. From dismembered body parts stem delicate metal flowers, affirming the potential of new growth. Cave encourages a profound and compassionate analysis of violence and its effects as the path towards an ultimate metamorphosis. He asks how we may reposition ourselves to recognize the issues, come together on a global scale, instigate change, and ultimately heal.



Installation view (detail): Rad Hourani Couture Unisex #14.
From left to right: Rad Hourani, UCI4 (Pic. 1) (detail), 2015; Nick Cave, Soundsuit, 2014

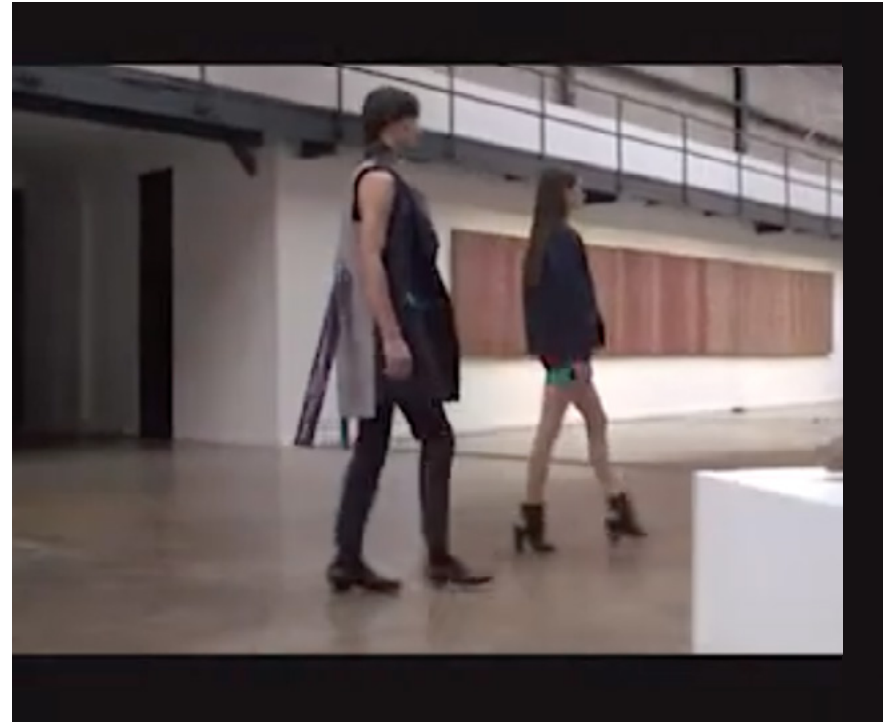
OSCAR TUAZON



Oscar Tuazon works with natural and industrial materials to create inventive objects, structures, and installations that can be used, occupied, or otherwise engaged by viewers. With a strong interest in and influence from architecture and minimalism, Tuazon turns both disciplines on their heads as he mangles, twists, combines, and connects steel, glass, and concrete, as well as two-by-fours, tree trunks, and found objects. Tuazon produces objects and environments that draw out humanity's relationship to buildings, interior and exterior spaces, and other objects and structures.

Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Vid. 2)* (still), 2015; Oscar Tuazon, *Untitled*, 2012

THEASTER GATES



Theaster Gates creates work that focuses on space theory, land development, sculpture, and performance. Drawing on his interest and training in urban planning and preservation, Gates redeems spaces that have been left behind. Known for his recirculation of art-world capital, Gates creates work that focuses on the possibility of "life within things." Gates smartly upturns art values, land values, and human values. In all aspects of his work, he contends with the notion of black space as a formal exercise, one defined by collective desire, artistic agency, and the tactics of a pragmatist.

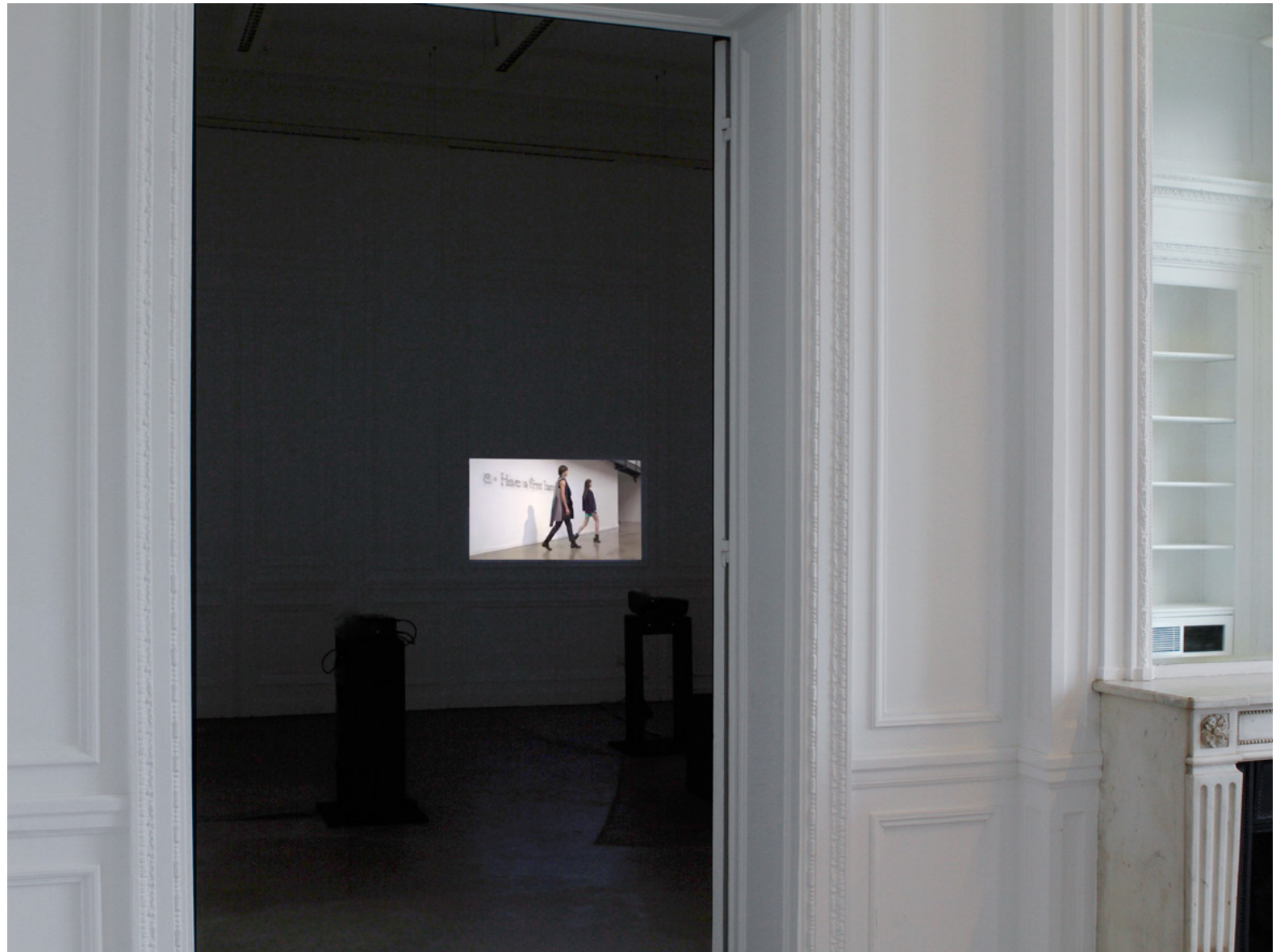
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Vid. 3)* (still), 2015; Theaster Gates, *Gees Red*, 2012



Installation view: *Red Hourani Couture Unisex #14*.
From left to right: *Red Hourani, UC14* (pics 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1), 2015; *Anselm Kiefer, Let a Thousand Flowers Bloom* (detail), 2006; *Ugo Rondinone, Let's Turn Back Time, Let's Start This Day Again* (detail), 2008;
David Altmejd, The New North (detail), 2007; *Nick Cave, Soundstuck*, 2014.

TONY LEWIS

Tony Lewis's practice focuses on the relationship between semiotics and language to confront social and political topics such as race, power, communication, and labor. Lewis creates drawings using graphite, pencil, and paper, mediums the artist uses to trace and develop abstract narratives and reflections on the notion of the gestural. By pushing the boundaries of drawing and the possibilities of abstraction, he expands the use of the "material" of language.



Installation view: Rad Hourani *Couture Unisex* #14.
From left to right: Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Vid. 1)* (detail), *UC14 (Vid. 2)*,
2015; Tony Lewis, *6. Have a Firm Handshake*, 2014

UGO RONDINONE

Ugo Rondinone works with mixed-media installations that include sculpture, painting, video, and photography. His wide-ranging practice utilizes metaphoric and iconographic images such as clouds, animals, and figures, as well as powerful declarative sayings. Rondinone has long embraced a fluid range of forms and media. By allowing himself to be so formal, he creates the conditions for an expansive emotional range. His work has become recognized for its ability to channel both psychological expressiveness and profound insight into the human condition and the relationship between humans and nature.

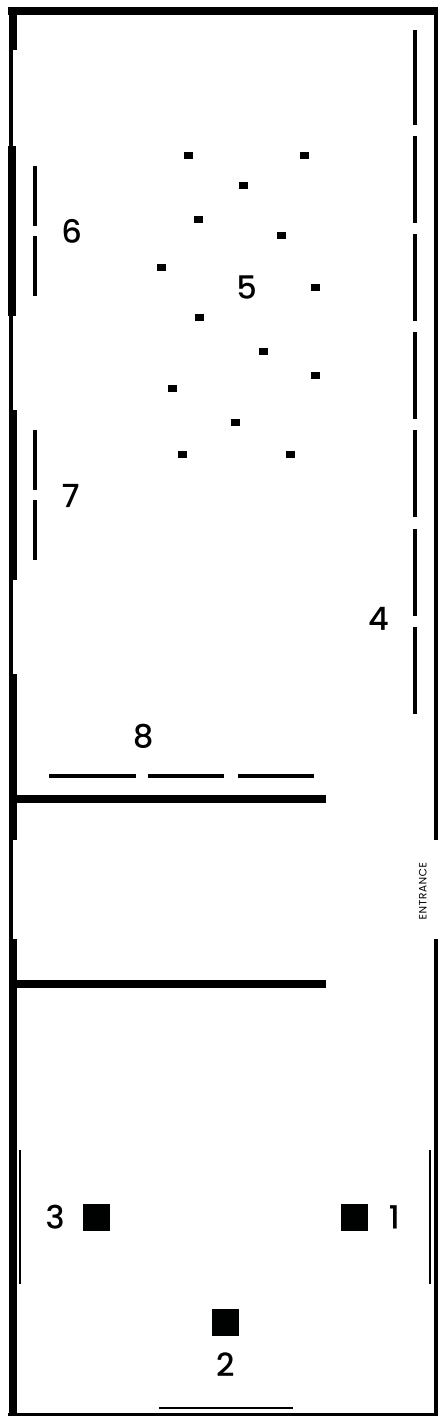


Installation view: *Rad Hourani, Couture Unisex #14*.
From left to right: *Rad Hourani, UC14 (Pics II, 10)*, 2015; *Ugo Rondinone, Let's Turn Back Time, Let's Start This Day Again*, 2009; *Rad Hourani, UC14 (Form I)*, 2015



Installation view: *Red Hourani, Couture, Unisex #14*.
From left to right: *Red Hourani, UCT4 (pics 11, 10)*, *UCT4 (form 9) (detail)*, *UCT4 (pics 9, 8)*, 2015, Ugo Rondinone, *Let's Turn Back Time, Let's Start This Day Again*, 2005

EXHIBITION PLAN



List of works:

- 1
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Vid. 1)*, 2015. Video installation, 1 projector, 1 media player, 1 minute (looped).
Giuseppe Penone, *Tra...*, 2008. Bronze, gold leaves, 105 x 63 x 34 and 101 x 89 x 34 in.
- 2
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Vid. 2)*, 2015. Video installation, 1 projector, 1 media player, 1 minute (looped).
Oscar Tuazon, *Untitled*, 2012. Mixed media with steel and concrete, dimensions variable.
- 3
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Vid. 3)*, 2015. Video installation, 1 projector, 1 media player, 1 minute (looped).
Theaster Gates, *Gees Red*, 2012. Firehoses, 132 x 1069 x 11 cm.
- 4
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pic. 1)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 144 x 204 cm.
Nick Cave, *Soundsuit*, 2014. Mixed media, approx. 82 x 23 x 26 in.
-
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pic. 2)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 144 x 204 cm.
David Altmejd, *The Shepherd*, 2008. Mixed media with wood, mirror, and horse hair, 147 x 72 x 48 in.
-
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pic. 3)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 144 x 204 cm.
Ugo Rondinone, *Let's Turn Back Time, Let's Start This Day Again*, 2009. Cast aluminum, white enamel, 177.12 x 219.25 in.
-
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pics 4,5,6)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 144 x 204 cm each.
-
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pic. 7)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 151 x 204 cm.
Anselm Kiefer, *Let a Thousand Flowers Bloom*, 2006. Emulsion, acrylic, lacquer, dried roses on canvas, 306 x 106 cm.
- 5
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Forms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)*, 2015. Mixed media with vinyl, canvas, steel, support, dimensions variable. Ed. of 1 each.
- 6
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pics 8, 9)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 101 x 204 cm each.
Ugo Rondinone, *Let's Turn Back Time, Let's Start This Day Again*, 2009. Cast aluminum, white enamel, 177.12 x 219.25 in.
- 7
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pics 10, 11)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 101 x 204 cm each.
Ugo Rondinone, *Let's Turn Back Time, Let's Start This Day Again*, 2009. Cast aluminum, white enamel, 177.12 x 219.25 in.
- 8
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pic. 12)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 144 x 204 cm.
David Altmejd, *The New North*, 2007. Mixed media with horse hair, and quartz crystal, 145.37 x 53.12 x 42.12 in.
-
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pic. 13)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 136 x 204 cm.
David Altmejd, *The New North*, 2007. Mixed media with horse hair, and quartz crystal, 145.37 x 53.12 x 42.12 in.
Tony Lewis, 6. *Have a Firm Handshake*, 2014. Powdered graphite, nails, rubber bands, dimensions variable.
-
Rad Hourani, *UC14 (Pic. 14)*, 2015. Print on 3mm aluminum dibond, 136 x 204 cm.
David Altmejd, *The New North*, 2007. Mixed media with horse hair, and quartz crystal, 145.37 x 53.12 x 42.12 in.

Installation views, Arsenal Contemporary Art collection pavillion, Montréal, 2014. Photos: Rad Hourani. © Rad Hourani

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Exhibition

26.01—30.01.2015

10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Free Access

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Tony Lewis

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Curator Rad Hourani

In collaboration with

ARSENAL

Performers: Emma Genier, Simon du Perron,

Claire-Marie Asselin, and Kieran Jarvis

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The Canadian Cultural Centre is a

member of the Forum des Instituts

Culturels Étrangers à Paris



Forum
des Instituts culturels
étrangers à Paris

2015

Publication

ISBN: 978-0-9960453-8-5

Canada

Rad Hourani, a Canadian interdisciplinary artist, has redefined the landscape of contemporary art through his revolutionary concept of genderless collections and a new sizing system tailored for a complete unisex wardrobe. His impact on societal norms is evident in his visual arts practice, where he utilizes physical expression to challenge conformity.

Rad Hourani's unisex collections defy convention with a language that transcends trends and seasons. Each numerically identified collection liberates itself from temporal constraints, advocating for modernity unrestricted by gender, age, race, borders, or conditioning. Employing architectural principles, Rad crafts pieces that engage in a dialogue on non-binarity through the expressive medium of what we wear.

The transformative nature of Rad's geometrically neutral proportions demonstrates an expansive language of silhouettes, rejecting the binaries of costume. Ensembles portray ageless forms of neutral lines, timeless textures, and a dichromatic palette of black and white. Minimalist schemes establish the neutrality of the pieces, initiating a dialogue of new possibilities through symbolic vocabulary and an exploration of the meaning of dressing. His revelation dismantles binary conditions, rejecting the coercion of conforming to society's superimposed norms.

The result is groundbreaking within the context of counterculture; his work stands out in the historical context of fashion trends, such as the garconne look of the 1920s and the peacock revolution of the 1960s. Rad Hourani's depictions propose non-gendered definitions of cuts and forms, inviting contemplation to empower individual narratives.

Upholding a baseline of equality, Rad Hourani's genderless work paved the way for boundary-pushing creations of the future, employing non-binary terms such as non-gendered, agender, genderfluid, all genders, ungendered, human, and others.

Rad Hourani's work has been the subject of numerous exhibitions, notably at the Jardin du Palais-Royal in Paris (2009), the Yvon Lambert Gallery in New York (2010), Arnhem Biennale in Arnhem (2011), the Palazzo Morando Museum in Milan (2011), the Mannerheim Gallery in Paris (2011), the LT Gallery in Hong Kong (2012), the Centre Pompidou in Paris (2012), Tate Modern in London (2013), the Phi Centre in Montréal (2013), the FIT Museum in New York (2014), the MU Hybrid Art House in Eindhoven (2014), Art Week in Dubai (2014), the Artco Gallery in Beijing (2014), the Canadian Center for Architecture CCA in Montréal (2015), the Hering Museum of Contemporary Art in Hering (2015), and upcoming at Arsenal Contemporary Art in Montréal (2015).



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