

## Art Previewed

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16 Ugo Rondinone, *yellow red monk*, 2020, painted bronze, 295×171×97 cm. Courtesy Studio Rondinone and Kukje Gallery, Seoul & Busan

(2016), for example, a potted cactus (of the type many people acquired during lockdowns) is attached to a wall made of a grid of bathroom tiles. On either side of the cactus are concrete models of residential tower blocks, bound to the plant by string. The whole brings interior into conversation with exterior, nature into conversation with the urban condition, and asks viewers to find the place between these four poles in an absurdist dance of alienation and connection: perhaps the truest reflection of contemporary urban life

On a similar note, but with very different results, **Ugo Rondinone** describes his upcoming exhibition at the Scuola Grande San

Giovanni Evangelista in Venice as an exercise in coaxing 'the sublime from the subliminal'. *Burn shine fly* derives its title from a book of poems by the New York-based Swiss artist's late partner John Giorno titled *you got to burn to shine* (1994) and features 'iconic' works (although the precise nature of these works is under wraps at the time of writing, his best-known works, which generally combine humour and pathos, include stacks of car-size boulders painted in various luminescent colours, electric rain-bows, ghoulish oversize masks, and a series of rather creepy, collapsing, but equally vibrantly costumed clowns). Meanwhile, in Kukje Gallery's Busan and Seoul spaces the artist is exhibiting a

series of five works from his *nuns + monks* series (2020), a group of totemic sculptures that explore the embodiment of the physical and the mystical within the titular forms, and once again, the transformation of humble stones into something more than stones (while retaining, one hopes, a certain sense of humility). And with humility in mind, you'll be off to explore the **Venice Biennale**, the international artworld's first big semi-post-COVID jamboree. There you'll be able to decide for yourselves whether it's all an expression, an invitation into the unreal or a useful meeting point for the exchange of views and viewpoints and useful propositions for a world to come. *Nirmala Devi*