

Jaume Plensa

Private Dreams

Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago
June 12 - September 27, 2014

1004 Portraits

Millennium Park, Chicago
June 18, 2014 - October 2015
Artist Talk at AIC: June 16, 6-7pm



Digital rendering *Looking Into My Dreams, Awilda*
Millennium Park, Chicago

Richard Gray Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of recent sculpture by Jaume Plensa in a new range of media at their Chicago space. The exhibition coincides with a new public art installation of works by the artist in Millennium Park on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Plensa's acclaimed *Crown Fountain*. Both projects continue Plensa's continued focus on the human figure, specifically the head as a sanctuary for dreams and hope. Plensa will give a lecture at the Art Institute of Chicago on June 16 at 6pm; the event is free and open to the public.

Millennium Park, Chicago

Plensa's solo exhibition *1004 Portraits*, celebrating the 10th anniversary of Millennium Park, will be on view June 18, 2014 through December 2015 in two locations in the park. The four sculptural portraits, ranging from 23 to 39 feet tall, continue the story of Plensa's original 1000 video portraits of local Chicago residents that have illuminated the Crown Fountain since 2004.

Looking Into My Dreams, Awilda, stands at the entrance to Millennium Park (Madison Street at Michigan Avenue); its surreal and majestic presence bridging the frenetic energy and distractions of city life with the tranquility of the park. Magnificent in scale, *Awilda's* beauty, power, and serenity encourages people to stop and join the moment of quiet contemplation. In the tree-lined outdoor South Boeing Gallery, located behind the Crown Fountain, three new cast iron heads *Laura*, *Paula*, and *Ines* will be exhibited. Despite their great materiality, the sculptures appear like a hologram, with shifting perspectives and illusion rendering the work in perpetual visual motion. Plensa's serene portraits provide a peaceful counterbalance to the children's boisterous play in the Crown Fountain.

The installation of the works, which are on loan from the artist, is co-presented by Millennium Park Foundation with the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, and is sponsored by The Boeing Company, with support from the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation

Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago

Private Dreams, is on view at Richard Gray Gallery June 12 – September 27. The exhibition will feature eight new sculptures from Plensa's iconic series of heads in a range of materials including bronze, glass, and for the first time, volcanic basalt. An illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition with an essay by Clare Lilley, Director of Programme, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK.



Paula, Rui Rui, and Awilda (2014)
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago

Standing six feet tall, the basalt sculptures *Paula*, *Awilda*, and *Rui Rui* emerge from stone as Plensa retains sections of the material in their natural, unfinished state. Installed as a group, imposing yet peaceful, the works create a meditative, even spiritual space. Bronze sculptures *Rui Rui in Shanghai* and *Sanna in Umeå* are some of the artist's first mid-scale works that explore perspective and illusion through the flattening of form, a concept Plensa premiered in his 2013 series of monumental cast iron heads. The sculptures shift from realism to flattened relief depending on the viewing angle. The physicality of the basalt and bronze works is juxtaposed with the remaining two sculptures in the exhibition; small portraits made from Murano glass that are fragile and intimate in both scale and material.

In all of the portraits, the girls have their eyes closed--Plensa's conceptual metaphor for dreaming. In her essay, Clare Lilley states "In a world of visual and aural noise, silence is rare and its prominence within world faiths clearly indicates it as a human necessity. Certainly for Plensa it is central: "One of my obsessions is silence, silence as a key need. And in a very noisy world, silence should be produced, must be 'made', because it does not exist; an inner silence so that people return to be with themselves." Through a kind of tangible transubstantiation Plensa's girls offer such silent connection to the self and to a wider humanity."

The Artist

Jaume Plensa (Spanish, b.1955), one of the world's foremost sculptors working in the studio and public realm over the past 30 years, has presented over 30 projects spanning the world in such cities as Chicago, Dubai, London, Liverpool, Nice, Tokyo, Toronto, and Vancouver. The winner of many national and international awards, including the 2013 Velazquez Price awarded by the Spanish Cultural Ministry, Jaume Plensa has had solo exhibitions at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; Galerie National du Jeu de Paume, Paris; Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, UK; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas; the Musée Picasso, Antibes, France; and Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Helsinki, Finland among many others. The artist lives and works in Barcelona. www.jaumeplensa.com

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