

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information contact:
Clare Gormley at Pangolin London
020 7520 1480
clareg@pangolinlondon.com

GEOFFREY CLARKE RA

A DECADE OF CHANGE

13th September - 26th October 2013



GEOFFREY CLARKE, *Battersea II*
1962, Aluminium

A Decade of Change will explore a crucial period in Geoffrey Clarke's impressive oeuvre: from 1955 to 1965. This decade saw Clarke's style develop through an intense exploration of new materials, and in particular the ground-breaking use of polystyrene and cast aluminium in his work.

Geoffrey Clarke's work can be mapped by shifts in material, as he explored in turn glass, iron, bronze, aluminum, polystyrene, silver and wood throughout his career. The most fertile and significant periods of Clarke's career can be traced to these moments when a new medium was introduced to his practice and the intense exploration and engagement with material that would then follow.

PANGOLIN
LONDON

Kings Place
90 York Way
London
N1 9AG

020 7520 1480



LEFT:
Square World V
1959, Aluminium (open-cast)

RIGHT:
Test Piece
1959/1960, Aluminium cast
using expanded polystyrene

A Decade of Change focuses on one such period, tracking Geoffrey Clarke's transition from working with forged iron to cast aluminium. This period of prolific experimentation with aluminium, which at the time was uncharted territory in terms of a medium for sculpture, was to yield one of Clarke's most vital and captivating bodies of work.

Clarke initially began open casting aluminium in his studio foundry, impressing an image directly into the foundry sandbed and pouring the molten aluminium to fill the mould. A number of impressive graphic reliefs were produced using this technique, and works such as *Square World V* (1959) are demonstrative of the pure, raw quality the material and form took on when cast in such a way. The imprint of the sand allowed for a subtlety and shading in the aluminium, but Clarke was restricted to the two-dimensionality of the process.

The introduction of expanded polystyrene to his practice had a dramatic effect on the way that Geoffrey Clarke produced his work and the objects he was able to create. A material now taken for granted, polystyrene revolutionised Clarke's practice and his casting process. It appealed to Clarke in its directness, transforming a block of polystyrene, almost instantly, into a metal sculpture. In addition, polystyrene was easy to carve, not to mention cheap, and allowed for larger works to be produced with ease and for a level of experimentation with form that his reliefs had not granted.

Full mould casting, where the carved polystyrene original would be packed in sand with runners attached, vaporizing on contact with the molten aluminium, signalled a major change in Clarke's work. Sculptures from this time, such as his 'Test' pieces, demonstrate a new-found freedom and fullness of form, having moved away from the flat, surface qualities of earlier sculptures, to now making in the round.



LEFT:
Taunton Deane Crematorium: Test Panel
1963, Cast aluminium and stained glass

RIGHT:
Two Troughs and Flat Bar
1964, Aluminium

Clarke's ground-breaking combination of new materials and the modernity of his sculptural forms quickly won him a number of large public commissions at Suffolk College, Coventry Cathedral and Bishop Otter College in Chichester among others and enabled him to become the most commissioned British sculptor of the mid-twentieth century. During this period his once humble studio and small-scale foundry were soon transformed by a team of assistants and the addition of a polystyrene cutting room. One of the earliest large scale works made using polystyrene, the Battersea Park sculptures, will be a highlight of the exhibition at Pangolin London.

Geoffrey Clarke is the last surviving sculptor from the group of artists who were propelled to prominence following their participation in the 1952 Venice Biennale. Coined the 'geometry of fear' sculptors by Herbert Read, the eight artists, including Clarke, led a sculptural renaissance in Britain experimenting with materials and form in a new and radical way. A recently overlooked but intriguing sculptor, the ability of Clarke's work to reflect the sculptural 'zeitgeist' of the 1950's is highlighted by this major exhibition. *Geoffrey Clarke: A Decade of Change* is a long overdue celebration of his work and practice and cements Clarke's reputation as one of Britain's most revolutionary post-war sculptors.

In addition to Clarke's iron and aluminium sculpture a range of prints, silvers and stained glass pieces from the period will also be included in the exhibition. A fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by Judith Le Grove will accompany the exhibition.

For further information on additional works in the exhibition please contact us.

Gallery open Monday - Saturday 10am - 6pm

For further information contact:

Clare Gormley at Pangolin London

020 7520 1480

clareg@pangolinlondon.com