

Ayn Foundation Presents
Arnulf Rainer

For their inaugural exhibition at Mana Contemporary, Ayn Foundation presents a selection of paintings from Austria's most famous contemporary artist.

Media reception: October 16, 2015, from 11AM–1PM

Public reception: October 18, 2015, from 1PM–6PM



Arnulf Rainer, *Kreuz, 'Cranachkreuz II'* (Cross, 'Cranach Cross II'), 1999/2000.

JERSEY CITY, NJ, October 13, 2015—Mana Contemporary is pleased to announce a solo show of 19 paintings by Arnulf Rainer. The exhibition, entitled *Arnulf Rainer*, opens to the public on October 18, 2015, and is on view through August 1, 2017.

Born in 1929 in Baden, near Vienna, Austrian artist Arnulf Rainer was a nonconformist from the beginning: he dropped out of art school twice after only a few days, preferring instead to follow his intuition. Now internationally-acclaimed, with retrospectives at the Georges Pompidou

(1984) and the Guggenheim New York (1989), his body of work is immense, his singular, provocative influence uncontested.

Using a variety of media and materials, and mostly recognized for his “overpaintings,” in which he blocks out artworks, Rainer’s impulses have been fueled by obsession, the subconscious, dreams, Surrealism, primal forces, and mythology. Using unconventional methods such as painting in altered states, using passport photo booths for self-portraits, painting blindfolded, or with his

feet—sometimes with his entire body—Rainer manipulates form, composition, and perception to capture extreme emotions. He searches for the limits of an image, in order to push past them and release hidden energies.

The works, ranging from 1985 to 2000, are a core selection of his cross and angel paintings. Beginning in the 1950s, Rainer was drawn to the feelings and states that accompanied religious devotion and practice. He approached the subject from theological art historical and personal viewpoints, desiring to re-contextualize the symbols. “None of these works claims to have been intended specifically for a sacred context,” he said in 1980 (*The Menil Collection catalogue, 1992, p.5*). “They arose from very personal roots. They were inspired by a subjective emotion regarding both the person of Christ and the event but also the idea of the cross.” Concerning the angels, he wrote in a 1992 essay (*The Menil Collection catalogue, 1992, p.113*), “Angel’s robes, to my mind, are the transcendental fulcrum, the much-sought missing link on the formal chain between spiritual and temporal aesthetics... For my own part, I have always been inspired by William Blake’s idiosyncratic visions of angels but also by those of Giotto and Fra Angelico, which encouraged me to become involved with the visual splendor of these beings. But this has been limited to shy, covert glances at their attire. I do not dare look at them in the face.”

In 2000, to commemorate his 70th birthday, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, the Kunstforum Bank Austria, Vienna and the Neue Galerie der Stadt Linz held exhibitions in his honor; in 2004, he was granted an honorary doctorate from the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Münster; two years later he received an honorary doctorate in theology from the Katholisch-Theologische Privatuniversität Linz. The Arnulf Rainer Museum opened in September 2009, in his hometown of Baden.

This exhibition is curated by Dr. Corinna Thierolf from the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, Germany.

About Ayn Foundation

Ayn Foundation was founded in 1993 and is dedicated to presenting comprehensive, large-scale installations by major international artists to the public. This is the inaugural presentation by the Ayn Foundation at Mana, installed in a 5,000-square-foot gallery on the art center’s first floor. Other current projects include Andy Warhol’s *The Last Supper* and Maria Zeres’ *September Eleven*, located in Marfa, Texas. Past projects include the establishment of the Arnulf Rainer Museum in Chelsea, New York, from 1993-1995; as well as projects by Joa Baldinger, John Chamberlin, and Dan Flavin.

About Mana Contemporary

Founded in 2011, Mana Contemporary is a leading arts destination dedicated to celebrating the creative process. Headquartered in a former tobacco warehouse in Jersey City, Mana unites artists’ studios, exhibition spaces, and ancillary services in a single location, facilitating conversation and collaboration among its burgeoning creative community. Together with its sister campuses in Chicago and Miami, Mana serves as a lively center for all members of the art world. Mana Contemporary is home to the Richard Meier Model Museum, Ayn Foundation, the International Center of Photography, The Florence Academy of Art, Gary Lichtenstein Editions, Eileen S. Kaminsky Family Foundation, Armitage Gone! Dance, Keating Foundry, Shen Wei Dance Arts, Mana Urban Arts Project, and many others. For additional information, please visit manacontemporary.com.