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Rona Pondick

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When Rona Pondick's sculptural installations first appeared in the mid-1980s, their raw expression of abjection, feminist rage, infantile greed, and intimations of mortality was startling. Roughly made, her unsettling works were ambivalent, psychological, and completely uncanny: elongated lead beds, beds protruding baby bottles like teats, weird agglomerations of children's shoes and pillows, mounds of pink skull-like balls with casts of the artist's biting teeth that might have emerged from a catacomb.

Then, just before the turn of this century, her work morphed into equally uncanny metal hybrid beings—as sleekly polished and precisely modulated as her former work was grungy. Melding casts of her own face and hands with the forms of trees or small animals, she began to make polymorphous half-human mutants. In 1997, she planted her first aluminum tree outdoors and surrounded it with a scattering of fallen apple-teeth. With *Dog* (1998–2001), she sculpted herself as a sphinx-like creature, part human, part dog.

In her first New York solo since 2006, Pondick continued to refine these mutant sculptures. A painted bronze tree sprouts minuscule gilded self-portrait heads as buds, while a stainless steel *Ginko* grows from a shiny steel globe to blossom as a cluster of outstretched human hands, her own. Balanced on a swirl of roots, Pondick's life-size head nestles in the branches of another steel tree. The animal mutations are even stranger. A hunched, painted bronze *White Beaver* sports Pondick's head, while a chrome-like prairie dog with a tiny head is supported by life-size



Rona Pondick, *Ginko*, 2007–12. Stainless steel, 57.75 x 33.75 x 41 in.

human fingers that serve as legs. A sleek, shiny *Wallaby* with a long tapered tail has the clawed feet of a bird and one heavy dangling human arm. Made with the latest 3-D computer scanning technology and the utmost attention to detail, these works are eerily beautiful, pristinely perfect, and quite monstrous. Their shape-shifting forms, material transformations, and contrasting surfaces—sliding suddenly from matte to shiny, from skin-like to preternaturally smooth—are unnerving and inscrutable, yet somehow make perfect sense.

Most powerful are two deceptive, white-painted bronzes: *Pillow Head*

and *Navel*, which seem as soft as balloons yet as fragile as porcelain. The first gathers itself into a tiny head strangled by billowing folds, while the latter has a miniature head that protrudes neckless from the globular navel like a tit. Squeezed to bursting, these two pieces are visceral metaphors of birth, death, or something equally intolerable and narrowly escaped.

Also, for the first time, Pondick showed drawings: a series of delicately colored, collaged works on mulberry paper, titled "Small Heads." Each one is made up of layered tissue-thin drawings pulled, stretched, and glued together,

superimposed invisibly one atop another. Their recurrent image is a strange pointy-nosed head, alluding perhaps to *Commedia dell'Arte*, Pinocchio, or Giacometti's *Nose*.

Formal and primal, tactile and personal, the contradictory metaphors and symbolic subtleties of Pondick's oeuvre can suggest Neolithic artifacts, the hybrid creatures of Greek mythology, Hieronymus Bosch's demons, Gregor Samsa's transformation, Brancusi's streamlined bird, or the latest genetic manipulations of experimental science. They also manage to look excruciatingly unique.

—Kim Levin

(以下內容摘要自本篇報導)

When Rona Pondick's sculptural installations first appeared in the mid-1980s, their raw expression of abjection, feminist rage, infantile greed, and intimations of mortality was startling. Roughly made, her unsettling works were ambivalent, psychological, and completely uncanny: elongated lead beds, beds protruding baby bottles like teats, weird agglomerations of children's shoes and pillows, mounds of pink skull-like balls with casts of the artist's biting teeth that might have emerged from a catacomb.

當羅娜·龐迪克 (Rona Pondick) 的雕塑裝置於1980年代中期首次亮相時，眾人對於作品中生動表現出拒絕、女性憤怒、嬰兒般的貪婪以及對死亡的暗示，感到震驚。她那粗製且神秘到令人不安的作品使觀眾產生既矛盾又困惑的心理：拉長的鉛床、床上伸出像乳頭的奶瓶、童鞋與枕頭奇異的結合、堆積的粉紅色顛骨狀球體上有藝術家牙模，彷彿是從地下墓穴中冒出來似的。

Then, just before the turn of this century, her work morphed into equally uncanny metal hybrid beings – as sleekly polished and precisely modulated as her former work was grungy. Melding casts of her own face and hands with the forms of trees or small animals, she began to make polymorphous half-human mutants. In 1997, she planted her first aluminum tree outdoors and surrounded it with a scattering of fallen apple-teeth. With *Dog* (1998-2001), she sculpted herself as a sphinx-like creature, part human, part dog.

就在這個世紀之交際，她的作品轉變為同樣具有神秘色彩的金屬混合生物體 — 不同於先前作品粗糙的質感，現在的作品皆是光滑且精雕細琢的。她開始將她自己的臉和手的模型與樹木或小動物的形體融合，製作出半人類突變的多形體。1997年，她首次於戶外種植一棵鋁樹，周圍散落一地的「蘋果牙齒」。作品〈狗〉(1998-2001) 則呈現類似於人面獅身的雕像，她將自己帶入其中，既有人類的形體，也有狗的形體。

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在她自2006年以來的紐約首次個展中，龐迪克繼續完善這些突變的雕塑。一棵塗漆的青銅樹冒出微小的鍍金自畫像頭部，如芽蕾一般，而一棵不鏽鋼的銀杏樹從閃亮的鋼球生長到開花，成為一簇伸展的人類手，她自己的手。在根的漩渦上平衡著，龐迪克的真人大小的頭部紮根在另一棵鋼樹的樹枝間。動物的變異甚至更奇怪。一隻彎腰的塗漆青銅白海狸頭戴龐迪克的頭，而一隻鍍鉻般的土撥鼠帶著一個微小的頭，由真人大小的手指支撐，充當腿。

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光滑閃亮的作品〈小袋鼠〉，有著細長的尾巴，爪子似鳥的腳，以及沉重搖晃的人類手臂。羅納的作品皆使用最新的3D電腦掃描技術展現最細緻的細節。這些作品既怪異

美麗，又完美無瑕，甚至如怪物般。它們變幻莫測的形態、多變的物質和對比鮮明的表面 — 突然從啞光變為閃亮，從如肌膚紋理般變為超自然的光滑 — 令人不安和難以捉摸，卻又不知何故顯得道理十足。

Most powerful are two deceptive, white-painted bronzes: *Pillow Head* and *Navel*, which seem as soft as balloons yet as fragile as porcelain. The first gathers itself into a tiny head strangled by billowing folds, while the latter has a miniature head that protrudes neckless from the globular navel like a tit. Squeezed to bursting, these two pieces are visceral metaphors of birth, death, or something equally intolerable and narrowly escaped.

最為強烈的兩件作品非〈枕頭頭〉和〈肚臍〉莫屬了。這兩件作品為白色漆面青銅作品，展露出虛幻的意象，它們看起來像氣球一樣柔軟，同時又像瓷器一樣脆弱。前者有一顆被蓬鬆褶皺纏繞的小頭，而後者則是一顆微小的頭，從球形的肚臍中突出，像極了乳房。這兩件作品緊縮到幾近爆裂，隱含生死的意象，抑或是其他同樣令人難以忍受或幾乎難以逃過的事物。

Also, for the first time, Pondick showed drawings: a series of delicately colored, collaged works on mulberry paper, titled “Small Heads.” Each one is made up of layered tissue-thin drawings pulled, stretched, and glued together, superimposed invisibly one atop another. Their recurrent image is a strange pointy-nosed head, alluding perhaps to *Commedia dell’Arte*, Pinocchio, or Giacometti’s *Nose*.

同時，首次展出的還有羅娜的繪畫作品〈小頭〉：一系列在桑葉紙上製作的精緻彩色拼貼。每一件作品都繪製在極薄的紙上，多層次的拉伸、拉扯，並黏合在一起，看不出是否有所交疊。其中反覆出現的有：一個奇怪的尖鼻頭，或許暗指《喜劇面具》、《皮諾丘》或者賈柯梅蒂（Giacometti）的鼻子。

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羅娜的作品以形體展現原始，以觸感牽涉個人。她的作品的獨特性來自於矛盾的隱喻和象徵意味，或許讓人聯想到新石器時代的文物、希臘神話中的混種生物、赫羅尼穆斯·博世（Hieronymus Bosch）的惡魔、葛雷戈·桑薩（Gregor Samsa）的變形、布朗庫西（Brancusi）的流線鳥，或是最新的基因工程實驗。