

Rado Kirov

The Mercury Effect

18 May – 17 June 2018

Rado Kirov was born in 1955 in Bulgaria, where he trained as a coppersmith. He moved to South Africa in 1991 where he pursued a successful career crafting objects in precious metals, including a silver chalice presented to Pope John Paul II by President Nelson Mandela.

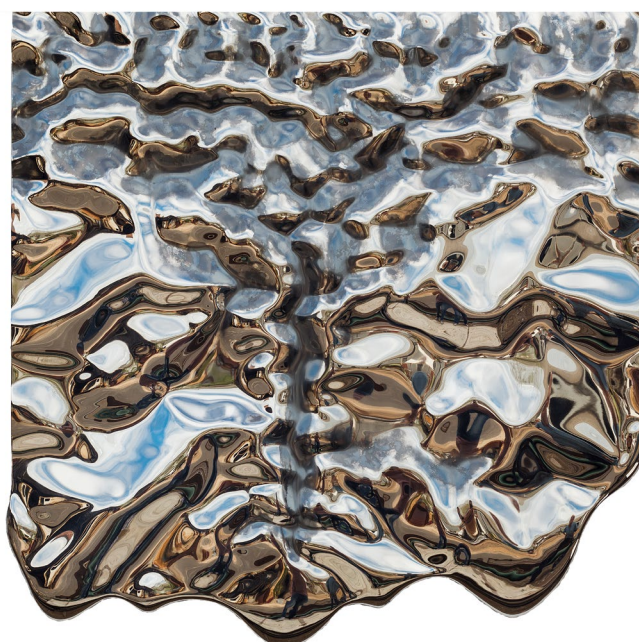
A burgeoning interest in sculpture saw him using his superior craft skills to grow and extend his practice. In 2012, drawing on his thorough knowledge of silversmithing, the artist perfected a technique of manipulating sheets of stainless steel by hand. Using the inherent physical properties of the metal, he creates a striking three-dimensional surface that dynamically mirrors its surroundings. These pieces look like quicksilver caught in midflow. Kirov refers to this technique as 'the mercury effect'.

His sculpture consists of wall-mounted reliefs and free-standing sculptures, all fabricated from stainless steel with highly polished surfaces. Some are geometric, some explicitly furniture-like, others are beads and droplets of formless matter; still more are glistening, reflective panels expressive of flowing landscapes. A new development is reliefs that reference the sensuous surfaces of the human body. The various pieces are subtly shaped by hand to yield complex, undulating forms from hard metal.

His art has its foundation in the transformation of base material into something mesmerising. It suggests something that is forever moving and unstable with a material that is hard and fixed. The artist makes distinct the effect of flow. He achieves a molten quality of form and an almost glacial, melting mutability. The visual impact of shimmering metal assimilating and distorting its environment – constantly changing as the viewer moves their viewpoint – speaks of possibility, potential and change. The work is a visual illusion, a trompe l'oeil, where stable forms are forever becoming. These are objects of desire – perpetually shifting, just beyond our grasp.



Balancing Cubes | 2018
Mirrored stainless steel
110 x 95 x 70 cm (43.3 x 37.4 x 27.6 in)



Blackmelt 2 | 2018 | Mirrored stainless steel | 115 x 120 cm (45.3 x 47.2 in)

Pontone

GALLERY

RADO KIROV

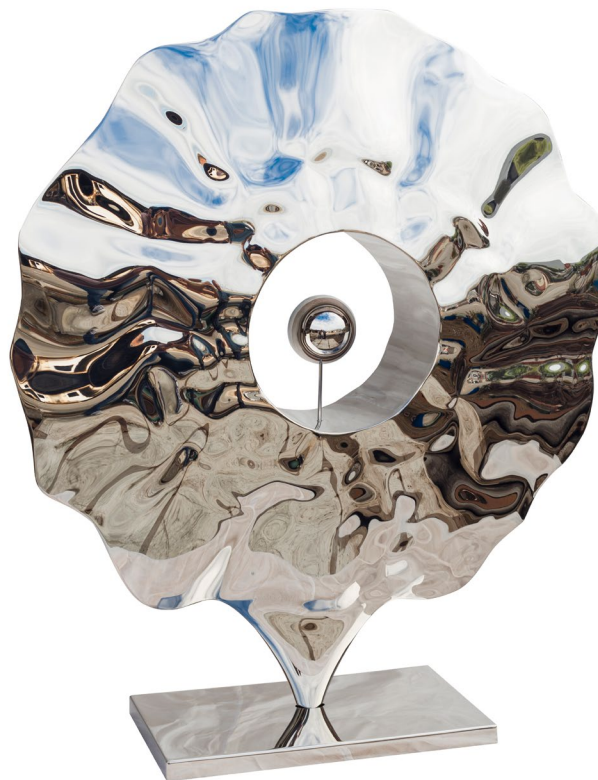
- 2012 ~ Focusing exclusively on sculpture and functional art present in stainless steel using the unique "Mercury Effect".
- 2006 Designed and fabricated the Rhino Rhyton, a traditional Bulgarian wine vessel in the shape of a rhinoceros, hand crafted using 1250g of 22 carat gold
- 1995 ~ Various commissions related to product design and functional art, working extensively with interior designers and architects
- 1991 ~ Silver- and goldsmith at Pagliari Group, South Africa. Works include a silver chalice presented to Pope John Paul II by former President Nelson Mandela on behalf of the South African Government in 1998; a silver Rose Bowl presented as a wedding gift to the Japanese Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako by the SA Government; the Alfred Dunhill Challenge Cup Trophy for golf; the parliamentary People's Mace and the Black Rod Mace of the South African Parliament in 18 carat gold
- 1991 Head Coppersmith at the Old Dobrich Ethnographic Complex, Bulgaria
- 1980 Coppersmithing apprenticeship under the tutelage of Alexander Raev, Bulgaria

EXHIBITIONS

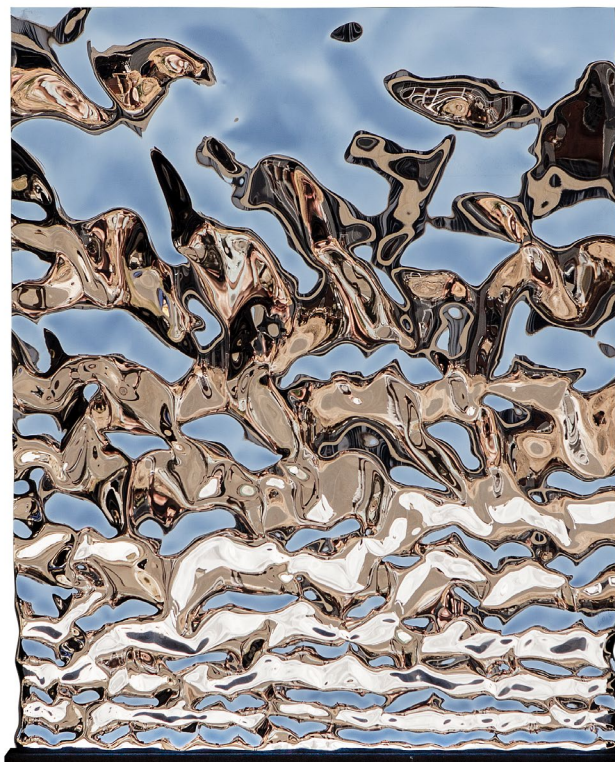
- 2016 The Brothers Kirov, Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2016 Art 16 London, Rep. Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2015 Art 15 London, Rep. Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2015 Liquid Steel, Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2015 Guild Design Fair, Cape Town
- 2014 Rado Kirov, Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2014 Art 14 London, Rep. Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2014 Reflections, Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2013 Albemarle Collective, Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2013 Spring Collective, Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2013 Solo Exhibition, Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2013 London Art Fair, Rep. Albemarle Gallery, London
- 2012 Rado, Galerie de l'Exil, Paris

SIGNIFICANT COMMISSIONS

- 2018 Gibbs Farm, New Zealand:
Organised Chaos, 5 columns, 11 m
- 2016 Christian Dior, Cannes: River Wild, 34 x 150 x 105 cm
- 2016 Christian Dior Boutique Store, London:
Mercury Landscape, 1.5 x 3.2 m



Expansion | 2016 | Mirrored stainless steel | 100 x 82 cm (39.4 x 32.3 in)



Gravity | 2016 | Mirrored stainless steel | 115 x 93 cm (45.3 x 36.6 in)