

Oliviero **Rainaldi** | Biography

Born in the town of Caramanico Terme in 1956. From 1975 to 1978 he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice under Emilio Vedova, and he then graduated at the Academy of Fine Arts of L'Aquila, in Abruzzo, under Fabio Mauri. His first solo exhibition was in Venice in 1976. His work is largely focused on the human figure, analyzed through the various mediums of drawing, graphics, painting and sculpture. His earlier works are vague narrative compositions, but in the '90s he started producing isolated figures and fragments of bodies, with a linear approach that emphasises their most ideal and essential qualities, as well as revealing subtle hidden connections with archaic and medieval art. This can be seen in the following works by Rainaldi: *Gisant*, 1990; *Battesimi Umani*, 1992; *Caduti*, 1993; *Santo*, 2000; *Conversazioni*, 2004; *Vergine*, 2006; *Malebolge*, 2007; *Copia*, 2010; and *Naiadi*, 2012.

Over the years Rainaldi's work has often been associated with historical locations that are not part of traditional exhibition spaces, and he has created installations in the following prestigious sites in Rome at the Complex of Bernini's Church of San Andrea al Quirinale, with a work entitled *Dono del Mattino*, 2000; at the Sala Vanvitelli at the Avvocatura Generale dello Stato, with *Antigone*, 2012; at the Tempietto del Bramante, with *Nada y Todo*, 2014 and at the church of Pio Monte della Misericordia in Naples, with the work *The Eight Works of Mercy*, 2018.

Important solo exhibitions have been dedicated to his work at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna of Bologna in 2003 at the Palazzo Venezia of Rome in 2006, and his exhibition of sculptures using water at the gardens of the Villa Aldobrandini of Rome in 2010 was then shown at the National Museum of Villa Pisani in Venice in 2011 and at the Venice International University on the island of San Servolo, on the occasion of the 55th Venice Biennale of 2013. This was followed in 2015 and 2016 by a series of solo exhibitions in Asia at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Shanghai, at the Petronas Gallery in Kuala Lumpur and at the Partners & Mucciaccia Art Gallery in Singapore. In 2017 the Dubai International Financial

Centre (DIFC) invited Rainaldi to exhibit his outdoor sculptures in Dubai, together with the British sculptor Sir Tony Craig. In 2019 Oliviero Rainaldi was invited to participate at the 2nd Biennale of Anren in China. In the late '90s Rainaldi explored his interest in the relations between art and the Christian liturgy, attending a two-year course at the Pontifical Atheneum of St. Anselm in Rome followed by a three-year course of theology for laics. He was then entrusted with several ecclesiastical commissions and he created the liturgical furnishings for several churches in Rome, Terni, Prato and Warsaw. During the Great Jubilee of 2000 Pope John Paul II awarded him the title of Academic of the Pontifical Academy of Fine Arts and Letters of the Virtuosi at the Pantheon. In 2010 he received the European Personality Award at the Campidoglio in Rome, in 2015 the Brand Personality Award from the Asia Pacific Brands Foundation (APBF) and in 2017 the Franco Cuomo International Award, with a ceremony at the Italian Senate. In 2016 he was given an honorary degree by the Roma Tre University of Rome.

Oliviero Rainaldi has also created artworks for the Robert F. Kennedy Foundation of Europe; the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park at Grand Rapids, Michigan; various monumental works for the Grimaldi Group; a portrait of the Queen of Malaysia and in 2011 the controversial sculpture of Pope John Paul II that now stands in Rome's Piazza dei Cinquecento. In 2015 the Maserati automobile company celebrated their 100th anniversary by commissioning Rainaldi to create the work Neptune in the Wind, a large bas-relief of the Roman god Neptune made of a piece of backlit marble. Some of the artist's artworks are present in permanent collections of national and international public institutions: *Human Baptisms*, 1995, at the Stockholm City Hall (the Nobel Prize Award Ceremony location); *Human Baptisms*, 1998, at the UN Building in Geneva; *Vergine*, in the Collection of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome; *Santo*, 2012, at the Pontifical Council for Culture, Vatican City; and *Caduti*, at the Soumaya Foundation, Mexico City 2015.