BROGNON ROLLIN

TEMPLATES OF CHANCE





the arts council an chomhairle ealaíon
funding the arts

Comhairle Contae
Átha Cliath Theas
South Dublin County Council

Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme

Kultur | lx Arts Council Luxembourg

BROGNON ROLLIN

TEMPLATES OF CHANCE




TEN YEARS
SOBER

Templates of Chance, 2023 – 2024
3 colour videos, sound
10 minutes and 41 seconds

Overcoming addiction is a slow and personal process, involving all our strengths and vulnerabilities. Relapse is not a failure, but a necessary part of the long journey towards change.

During a series of conversations with the Drug & Alcohol Task Force in Tallaght, it became clear that people needed a physical symbol for this journey, to visualise and hold in their hand on the path they've travelled. These tokens represent victorious moments: 10 years, 5 years, 1 year, 6 months, and perhaps most importantly, the first day—the day of decision and action ("Take the risk or lose the chance").

Five tokens were designed, each stamped with symbolic figures and mantras collected from meetings with those on their journeys to recovery. The lighthouse, the anchor, the mirror... These tokens are now given in exchange for significant personal achievements in Tallaght's communities.

In a video installation, these tokens are entrusted to Rua, a magician and Dubliner who excels in manipulation and deception. With his sleight of hand, he plays with our expectations; the time-charged metal vanishes at his will. When his hands are bound, gravity takes over. Appearing and disappearing from the world, becoming present or fading away.

Anthony Van den Bossche


ONE YEAR SOBER

BROGNON ROLLIN

RUA RED 2024

TEXT BY MARC DONNADIEU

ONE STEP AT A TIME
1
CÉIM ÁR CHÉIM

ONE STEP AT A TIME
5
CÉIM ÁR CHÉIM

For the artist duo David Brognon and Stéphanie Rollin, contemporary reality seems paradoxical and open to all kinds of interpretations. At times, they observe and analyse it from perspectives rarely seen, beyond conventional viewpoints. At other times, they push its logic to the extreme, challenging the very notions of obstacles, barriers, or limits. Sometimes they treat it as if it were a malleable and porous material. And sometimes, as in this project, they introduce an external element that gradually transforms its nature, its narratives, and above all, its social relationships.

In 2011, the artists collected drawings of fate lines on the palms of drug addicts they met at Toxin, a legal injection centre in Luxembourg. Under the title *Fate Will Tear Us Apart*, these fate lines - enlarged to the size of the exhibition space and reproduced in white neon lights - appeared on the wall like lightning bolts during a storm. This unique form of a 'Human Lightning Field' illustrated how what tears them apart also tears us apart, with their fractures becoming as terrifying as they were dramatic, as blinding as they were dazzling.

Thirteen years later, in Dublin, the artists have turned their attention to the rehabilitation processes at a harm reduction centre for drug addicts; looking at the inverse of the predetermined fates they had seen in Luxembourg.




10
CÉIM AR CHÉIM

To achieve this, they introduced the concept of a token, allowing each person undergoing the rehab programme to have a physical symbol for every step of their journey, 'one step at a time', from entering the programme to achieving nearly ten years of sobriety. The token is more than an honorary medal, it is a symbolic coin. The kind of coin kept in one's pocket for a rainy day - used for a final phone call, to get the last bus, or to buy one more slice of pizza. It also evokes the mythological coin the dead must give to Charon to cross the Styx, one of the rivers of the underworld. This coin was placed under the tongue of the deceased before their ritual burial, so Charon could easily collect it.

But, as in life, every coin has its flip side, and every situation has its shadow. Here, this is represented by the magician, who might also symbolise Fortuna, the mythological goddess of luck. Her main symbols were the sphere, the wheel, and the helm. People invoked her to change their fate. But here, it's not the wheel of Fortune that turns; it's the tokens that appear and disappear in the magician's fingers, as if fate - our fate, their fate - was in his hands. While his hands possess the magical power of agility, they also look worn out, injured, and hastily patched up, like an old makeshift boat. Even deities have a hard life! So, the symbolism here is not the untouched

and eternal part of reality, but its avatar in a parallel world. The world of art and creation? The world of time and memory?

David Brognon and Stéphanie Rollin's projects isolate and unravel the complex threads of what is both real and human, to better represent what they observe and identify, of what they have seen, experienced, and felt. As a result, they condense each event or situation into gestures, devices, objects, forms, or patterns that almost hold the value of a parable or myth, without losing their depth and complexity. Especially in situations where, voluntarily or involuntarily, one is compelled to be or become other than oneself, or to embody something beyond oneself.

"It's not just my pride,
It's just 'til these tears have dried"
Amy Winehouse, Rehab, 2006








FIVE YEARS SOBER


RUD ÈIGIN
N COS AR SIUL


GHEIBHEANN





Rua Red would like to thank artists' David Brognon and Stéphanie Rollin, for their deeply considered response to this commission. We would also like to thank Marc Donnadieu and Anthony van den Bossche for their insightful texts in response to the work. Special thanks to Distinctive Repetition designers Rossi McAuley and Jenny Leahy for this publication.

Exhibition Acknowledgments
Artists: David Brognon and Stephanie Rollin
Curator: Maolíosa Boyle
Production Manager: Joyce Dunne
Technical Manager: Hugh McCarthy
Assistant Technician: Paul Heary
Technical Development: Radek Pater and Agnieszka Kozioł, Eidotech

With special thanks to collaborators:
Participants from Jobstown Assisting Drug Dependency (JADD); Cllr. Mick Duff; Senator Lynn Ruane; Jacqueline Sheehy, Tallaght Drug and Alcohol Task Force (SDCP); Tom Jenner, Róisín NicCana and Luke Ryan, Technical University Dublin – Tallaght Campus.

Project supporters and sponsors:
This commission is possible due to the support of our funders: The Arts Council of Ireland, Kultur | lx – Arts Council Luxembourg, South Dublin County Council Arts Office and Creative Ireland. The support of the Rua Red Board of Directors is gratefully acknowledged. The tokens, designed in collaboration with participants from JADD, will be produced and adopted by the addiction recovery services in the Tallaght community due to a generous private donation in memory of Seán O'Donnell.

Rua Red Staff:
Jordan Van Staden, Siobhan NicChumhaill, Órla McGovern, Kimberly Griffith Walsh, Anna Douglas, Cillian Johnson, and Mollie Donnegan

Videographer
Eamonn Murphy

Photographer
Juliette Rowland

Performer
Paul Gleeson aka Rua

Token Design
Nynke Tynagel

Token production
Des Hurley

Screen Design
Hugh McCarthy

Translations
Fatoumata Gandega and Eabha Doherty

the arts council an chomhairle ealaíon
funding the arts

Comhairle Contae
Átha Cliath Theas
South Dublin County Council

Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme

Kultur|lx Arts Council Luxembourg






SIX MONTHS SOBER


10



ruared.ie