ALMINE RECH

John Giorno
Welcoming The Flowers

Jun 12 — Sep 7, 2025 | Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France

Ten years after the exhibition presented as a declaration of love, 'Ugo Rondinone: I ✌✌ John Giorno' at the Palais de Tokyo, John Giorno's poetry returns to the heart of the art center with an installation specifically designed for the building.

Poet, artist, activist, figure of the New York underground from the 1960s until his death in 2019, John Giorno devoted his entire life to making the creative act more democratic by imagining new ways of thinking about how art, poetry, performance, music, spirituality and activism can intermingle and mutually enrich each other. In the spirit of his *Poem Paintings*,in which phrases or words from his poems are printed in large, colourful capital letters on various supports, the Welcoming the Flowers installation unfolds across the windows of the main landing in the publicly accessible area of the Palais de Tokyo.

Designed by artist Ugo Rondinone, the installation transforms a selection of paintings from the *Welcoming The Flowers* series (2007), based on the poem of the same name, into a stained-glass window illuminated by sunlight. In this new version, the theme of flowers is linked to natural light, creating a vertical garden of light, colour and words that humorously celebrates love, sexuality, spirituality, social and political engagement.

The exhibition 'Ugo Rondinone: I ✌✌ John Giorno' (2015) was the first international retrospective of the life and work of John Giorno. Long-time collaborator and husband of the late artist, Ugo Rondinone had imagined the exhibition as a work in itself, blending poetry, visual art, music and performance. The "I" in the exhibition's title referred to a collective "I", with Ugo Rondinone inviting everyone to share and feel the spiritual and political commitment of this emblematic figure of American counterculture.

Initiated by Giorno Poetry Systems (GPS), a non-profit organization founded by John Giorno in 1965 and still active today, the installation Welcoming The Flowers is part of a celebration of this exhibition through a two-part show at Galerie Almine Rech, with a portion of the proceeds going to GPS, and a series of collaborations with institutions across Paris and beyond, highlighting the scope and influence of Giorno's work at the intersection of poetry, art, activism and music.

The installation Welcoming The Flowers is supported by the galleries Almine Rech (Paris – Brussels – London – New York – Shanghai – Monaco) and Eva Presenhuber (Zurich, Vienna).