

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Johnson, Ken, "Art Review; Ugo Rondinone— 'A Horse With No Name,'" *The New York Times*, April 5, 2002

ART IN REVIEW; Ugo Rondinone -- 'A Horse With No Name'

The extravagantly talented Ugo Rondinone has more creative energy than he knows what to do with. Here he follows up his last wildly heterogeneous show of video, painting and whatnot with a more focused but still disjunctive installation and an outdoor rooftop sign. Visible from the street, the sign spells out the show's title -- also the name of a Neil Young song -- in a rainbow arch of candy-striped letters.

Indoors, two long walls covered with curvy mirror fragments frame an open space where three life-size, fat, mannequinlike clowns sleep in various postures. Wearing fur or fabric garb, the clowns add a surrealistic note; but they distract from the most interesting aspect -- an elliptical dialogue between a man and a woman issuing from speaker holes in the walls. The conversation sounds like a brief encounter in a David Mamet film: "What do you want? What do I want? Yes, what do you want? I don't want anything. Really? Yes, really. Why? Why what? Why don't you want anything? Because I don't think anything is going to help." That's about half of the endlessly repeating loop.

Being entirely enclosed by four walls of shattered reflections with this maddening, flirtatious mirror-talk could be a powerful experience. As it stands, dramatic intensity is diminished by the installation's open format and the comparatively less interesting clowns. As for the outdoor sign, it suggests that Mr. Rondinone will not have fully realized his potential until he's made "Moulin Rouge 2." KEN JOHNSON