



Media Release

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RONE in Geelong

Geelong Gallery
27 February to 16 May 2021



RONE
Powerhouse Geelong 2014
Photographer: Rone
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Geelong Gallery is proud to announce the rescheduling of **RONE in Geelong** following nationwide gallery closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The exhibition will now open on 27 February 2021.

Acclaimed for his major transformations of abandoned spaces worldwide and his sell-out installation, *EMPIRE*, at Burnham Beeches in 2019, RONE returns to his hometown of Geelong with his first survey exhibition and a unique and immersive experience set to delight audiences.

Over the last two decades, RONE has built an exceptional reputation for large-scale wall paintings and entrancing installations that explore concepts of beauty and decay. Geelong Gallery's presentation will include the first comprehensive solo survey of the artist's career from early stencil works and street art, to photographs that document his transformation of abandoned spaces (one of which will be brought to life in a 3D recreation, commissioned for this exhibition).

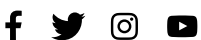
The exhibition will also take visitors on a journey through a unique commissioned installation, with RONE transforming one of the Gallery's most significant rooms in response to the architecture and history of the building, as well as the Gallery's permanent collection. A multi-media experience will connect visitors back into the urban environment where the artist's works have been painted in abandoned properties.

For the commissioned installation, RONE has taken inspiration from the architecture of the Douglass Gallery, one of the most historical rooms in the building's evolution. This room's scale and architectural and ornamental features—such as ionic pilasters, horizontal dado, and ceiling skylights—have led RONE to consider the beauty and grandness of the architecture of earlier eras, and the inevitable decay of spaces (when not valued and cared for).

Additional inspiration has come from the highly decorative interiors of Baroque grand palazzos in Venice, and the traditions of *trompe l'oeil* painting employed to simulate architectural details. Working with interior stylist Carly Spooner, RONE's transformation of the room from a grand reception venue to a now derelict site, will incorporate his signature painted murals and a haunting new soundtrack by composer and collaborator Nick Batterham.

The project has also seen RONE's re-engagement with a collection he visited in his youth. Works such as the Gallery's iconic *A bush burial* by Frederick McCubbin (1890) and several portraits are referenced in the installation, as are a number of early landscapes of Geelong. The decorative arts collection—and particularly the work of local early 20th century china painter Florence Royce—has inspired the general colour palette of the installation.

Artist, **RONE** says 'Working in my home town is special. I had to leave to come back, but Geelong Gallery has given me the recognition to further my career; my first institutional solo exhibition. Geelong has done that for me.'





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RONE
Photographer: Peter Tarasiuk

My show is an ode to abandoned spaces and a reminder to value the original treasure they once were. Influenced by the architecture of the building and the toll of time, the central installation preserves an imagined moment of the space adorned at its finest and left to slowly deteriorate. Featuring a push and pull between light and dark, viewers may be compelled to either end of the experience but are united in the same recognition of overall decay. The damage has been done and my installation invokes a longing for what is lost and cannot ever return.'

Geelong Gallery Director & CEO, **Jason Smith** comments '*RONE in Geelong* is an ambitious exhibition and audience experience that will celebrate the integral connection between an internationally acclaimed artist and the city in which he was born and raised. We hope to see RONE devotees continue to celebrate his career and new audiences visit the Gallery to experience this exhibition and installation.'

Geelong Gallery's Senior Curator, **Lisa Sullivan** has been working closely with the artist on this project, facilitating his unique engagement with the collection and in developing the survey exhibition. Sullivan says 'In a room transformed by the ravages of time and neglect, 'copies' of iconic paintings and decorative arts from Geelong Gallery's collection will populate RONE's constructed environment. A number of the original works that RONE has been inspired by will appear in our permanent collection display just beyond the site-specific installation, acting as aide-mémoires of the visitor's experience of the installation. This exhibition will deliver a very different encounter with our collection blurring the line between reality and fiction, whilst also celebrating the outstanding career of a Geelong-born artist.'

City of Greater Geelong Mayor, **Stephanie Asher** says 'This exclusive Geelong Gallery exhibition is expected to attract over 25,000 people to the region and contribute approximately \$3 million to the local economy adding greatly to our Clever and Creative City.'

City of Greater Geelong Arts, Culture and Heritage portfolio chair, **Trent Sullivan** says 'It's exciting RONE is returning to his hometown for what will no doubt be an eye-opening experience for local fans and new audiences.'

Ahead of Geelong Gallery's presentation of *RONE in Geelong*, Thames & Hudson Australia will publish the first survey of the artist's work, titled *Rone*, in June 2020. Tracing his career from the early days of street art, stencil and screen-printing through to his larger-than-life murals and immersive installations, the publication will include essays analysing the works and anecdotal notes from the artist himself.

RONE—the artist

Born and raised in Geelong, RONE has gone from spearheading Melbourne's fledgling street art movement in the early 2000s, as a member of the Everfresh crew, to being a celebrated fixture on the international street art scene. An inveterate traveller, his distinctive female muses have followed him around the world, and can be found—in various states of decay—peering out from beneath overpasses and emblazoned on walls everywhere from New York to New Zealand and many places in between.

These days, RONE's work is found as often in galleries as it is on the streets. His work has been acquired by the National Gallery of Australia, the State Library of Victoria and Geelong Gallery, he has been commissioned by the National Gallery of Victoria to work with Jean Paul Gaultier and an image of his Geelong Cement Works was acquired and gifted by the Governor of Victoria to TRH The Duke and Duchess of Sussex on their royal visit to Victoria in 2018.

To view a full artist CV:
r-o-n-e.com/about





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Saturday 27 February to Sunday 16 May 2021

Tickets—Adult \$16 | Concession \$12 | Members \$10 | Child \$7 | Family \$40

Tickets on sale now:
geelonggallery.org.au/RONE

RONE in Geelong

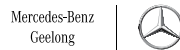
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