

Adrian Göllner

**small Trinity**

Master's of Fine Arts  
Department of Visual Arts  
University of Ottawa  
2016

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**Adrian Göllner: small Trinity**  
 Curated by Heather Anderson  
 15 – 28 August 2016

**Opening party:** Monday, 15 August, 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

**Adrian will give a brief tour of the exhibition at 6:00 p.m., after opening remarks by Dr. Wallace Clement, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.**

Presented in collaboration with the University of Ottawa's Department of Visual Arts MFA program.

*Adrian Göllner, Cast Explosion Day 5 Mk II (2015), bronze. Photo courtesy of the artist.*

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**cuag** Carleton University Art Gallery

St. Patrick's Building, Carleton University  
 1125 Colonel By Drive  
 Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6  
 (613) 520-2120  
 cuag.ca

Tuesday – Friday: 10 – 5  
 Saturday – Sunday: 12 – 5  
 Closed Monday  
 Free admission  
 Paid parking is available daily in the P18 parkade.










small Trinity, exhibition invitation, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa, 2016

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I have an interest in transposing elements of sound, time, and motion into other forms. The exhibition *small Trinity* presents my efforts to capture the essence of an explosion as a sculpture. The resulting objects provide viewers with the chance to examine an explosion in a stilled state, but also to consider the enormous powers we humans can unleash.

For the *Exploded Vases* (2014-15), I ignited firecrackers inside freshly-pulled ceramic vases, which allowed me to trace the path of the explosions as they ripped through an everyday object. For my next series, *Cast Explosions* (2015), I sought to cast the shape of the explosion itself by igniting bundles of firecrackers inside balls of soft, wet clay. Each explosion created a void within the clay that could then be cast in bronze using the lost wax technique. The resulting objects were, ostensibly, the fleeting shape of the explosion, made permanent. Specifically for this exhibition, I set myself the goal of casting an explosion  $1/1,000,000^{\text{th}}$  of the power of the first atomic bomb, but this proved easier said than done.

The Trinity test was a plutonium-based explosion conducted by the US Army in 1945, with a yield equivalent to 20 kt (20,000,000 g) of TNT (trinitrotoluene). From a conceptual standpoint,  $1/1,000,000^{\text{th}}$  is somewhat of a magical division, and one that maintains the mystery of the powers at hand. From a purely practical standpoint, however, it is still a substantial explosion. Wary of this, I started small and ignited a charge  $1/1,000,000,000^{\text{th}}$  of the power of the Trinity test in a ball of clay, and then carefully increased the charges by multiples of 5 and 10. Both the technique and the ability to safely create the artwork broke down at the  $1/1,000,000^{\text{th}}$  mark. Fortunately, the Canadian Explosives Research Laboratory at Natural Resources Canada provided assistance and the goal was achieved by blasting a crater in the ground and then casting it with an expanding resin foam.

The *small Trinity* (2016) sculptures are fractional manifestations of forces well beyond comprehension. Each is formed from an actual, measured explosion, and is therefore not an *image* of an explosion, but the terrible thing itself. This is true of all the works presented. Whether using a simple firecracker or evoking a nuclear blast, the processes I used allowed for the explosions to take form and be captured without manipulation. To consider the ramifications of these forms today is to see, perhaps, how precarious our existence continues to be.



small Trinity, exhibition view, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa, 2016



small Trinity, exhibition view, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa, 2016



small Trinity, exhibition view, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa, 2016



small Trinity, exhibition view, Exploded Vases series, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa, 2016



Exploded Vase 2, 2014, earthenware, 10.25x6x5.5 in



Exploded Vase 8, 2015 earthenware, 9.5x8.5x6.5 in



small Trinity, exhibition view, Cast Explosions series, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa, 2016



Cast Explosion Day 5 Mk V, 2015, bronze,  
11.75 x 4.75 x 4.5 in



Cast Explosion Day 2 Mk II, 2015, bronze, 9.5x4.5x3.5 in



An explosion 1/1,000,000,000th the power of the first atomic bomb, 2016, aluminum and steel, 5.5 x 2 x 1 in



An explosion 1/500,000,000th the power of the first atomic bomb, 2016, aluminum, 7.5 x 2.5 x 2.75 in



An explosion 1/100,000,000th the power of the first atomic bomb, 2016, aluminum, 6 x 5.5 x 8.5 in



An explosion 1/50,000,000th the power of the first atomic bomb, 2016, aluminum, 6 x 8.25 x 9.5 in



detail



full view

An explosion 1/10,000,000th the power of the first atomic bomb Mk I, 2016, aluminum and steel, 51.5 x 19.5 x 17 in



detail



full view

An explosion 1/10,000,000th the power of the first atomic bomb Mk II, 2016, aluminum and steel, 60.5 x 22.5 x 20.5 in



detail



full view

An explosion 1/10,000,000th the power of the first atomic bomb Mk III, 2016, aluminum and steel, 59 x 20.5 x 17 in



An explosion 1/5,000,000th the power of the first atomic bomb, 2016, concrete and dirt, 26.75 x 31.5 x 9 in



An explosion 1/1,000,000th the power of the first atomic bomb, 2016, resin and dirt, 41 x 46 x 46 in

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