

Press Release

## Ellen Gallagher New Work

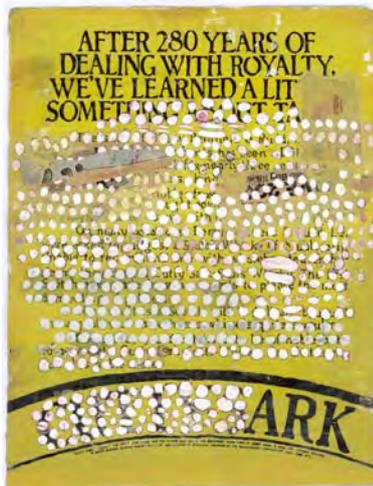
Hauser & Wirth London, North Gallery

14 March – 3 May 2014

Opening: Thursday 13 March, 6 – 8 pm

Hauser & Wirth presents a collection of new work by Ellen Gallagher, encompassing painting, collage and film.

The exhibition brings together paintings that, with Gallagher's unique approach, combine paper and canvas, stretched and bleached and incised. Striated areas, mimicking machine-printed lines, contrast with expressive accumulations of ink-



stained printed matter. Using slivered cuttings of found fragments to extend rambling seascape-like abstractions which read like pictographic texts, Gallagher isolates individual brutalist forms within an otherwise diaphanous expanse: a cartoonish visage hovers against double barred lines in 'Dr. Blowfin's Black Storm' (2014); and in 'Stabilizing Spheres' (2014), sooty medusas stand against blocks of stretched arcs forming a hieroglyphic language breaking over and under the undulating web of Penmanship paper. In 'Untitled' (2013), Gallagher draws us to the ocean floor where the textured fragments suggest multiple versions of a single event gravitating together within the components of her phantom creatures, constantly pulling forward and retracting with the ocean's tide. Gallagher's synergistic painting process extends to the titles of her works. 'Dr. Blowfin's Black Storm Stabilizing Spheres' is a single track from Harnessed The Storm, the 2002 EP by the experimental musical duo Drexciya. Here, Gallagher divides the title into two interlocking but discreet works.

A similar process of de-multiplication is found in 'Ark' (2014), a double-sided paper construction made up of layered magazine pages, which are glued together to form a dense accumulation of sealed pages. One side is painted over in heavy white gouache and the printed pages underneath bleed through to produce an uneven pinkish tone. The other side originates in an advertisement for Cutty Sark whisky. Using a scalpel, Gallagher removes small paper forms, before turning them back-to-front and re-inserting them into the absent spaces. The configuration of the painted side depends on the amnesia of its opposite side, with the effect that both sides of the work are interdependent – coactively making and unmaking each other.

In another series of paintings, Gallagher foregrounds the symbiotic feeding habits of certain birds she has observed into the apprehension of the painting's surface. Gallagher's birds are embedded in a swirling mass of distended, intestinal coils buried deep within layers of paint. Her painted layers are incised and repeatedly re-applied and scratched away, releasing the buried needle incisions

## HAUSER & WIRTH

to the surface of the painting as oblique passages that recall snail trails. Garbled vowels are revealed from within the bird's wings, or used to create speckled backs.

Edgar Cleijne and Ellen Gallagher's new film projection explores what the artists call 'different aspects of representation', drawing its title from Sun Ra's 1970 album and poem 'Nothing Is ...'. A line from the poem, 'The nothing and the air and the fire are really the same' describes Sun Ra's



thoughts on origins and elements teetering on the brink of multiple states – simultaneously being and not-being. The mutability of elements is also a source of inspiration for science fiction writer Samuel R. Delany, who figures in the film on either side of Sun Ra's poetry; the two men converge in a state of transition, possessed by light as the film moves from one frame to the next. The finely detailed work combines manual dexterity with technological mastery: the film itself is threaded through a hand-made harp tuned to the key of Ra.

### About the Artist

Ellen Gallagher (b. 1965, Providence, Rhode Island) lives and works in New York and Rotterdam. Gallagher's touring exhibition 'AxME' will be on display at Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany, until 13 July 2014, following presentations at Sara Hildén Art Museum, Tampere, Finland and Tate Modern, London, England in 2013. Other recent solo exhibitions include: 'Ice or Salt', SCAD Museum of Art,



Savannah GA (2013); 'Don't Axe Me', New Museum, New York NY (2013); 'An Experiment of Unusual Opportunity', South London Gallery, London, England (2009); 'Coral Cities', Tate Liverpool, Liverpool, England travelling to Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, Ireland, 'DeLuxe', Whitney Museum of American Art, NY (2005); 'Murmur and DeLuxe', MOCA, Miami (2005); and 'Ichthyosaurus', The Freud Museum, London (2005). In 2000 she was awarded the American Academy Award in Art and in 2003 was selected for the Venice Biennale.

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## Event

**Ellen Gallagher in Conversation with Naomi Wallace: Ports, Portals and Portrayals**  
**Saturday 15 March, 5.30 pm**  
**The Royal Institution, Library and Georgian Room**

Naomi Wallace, acclaimed American playwright, speaks to Ellen Gallagher about projection, transmutation and the influence of Sun Ra on her practice.

Admission free but booking recommended. Please email [rsvp@hauserwirth.com](mailto:rsvp@hauserwirth.com) to book.

## Current & Forthcoming Exhibitions:

'Re-View: Onnasch Collection'  
Curated by Paul Schimmel  
7 February – 12 April 2014  
Hauser & Wirth New York, 18th Street

Mira Schendel  
4 March – 26 April 2014  
Hauser & Wirth New York, 69th Street

'Dieter Roth, Arnulf Rainer – Collaborations'  
14 March – 3 May 2014  
Hauser & Wirth London

'Lines'  
Curated by Rodrigo Moura  
22 March – 31 May 2014  
Hauser & Wirth Zürich

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## Full Copyright and Courtesy Credits:

Ellen Gallagher  
Ark, 2014 (recto / verso)  
Gouache and plasticine on cut paper  
2-sided work on paper  
33.3 x 25.5 cm / 13 1/8 x 10 in

Edgar Cleijne / Ellen Gallagher  
Nothing Is..., 2013  
16 mm Film and Harp  
Dimensions variable

Ellen Gallagher  
Racketeer, 2012  
Oil, ink, gold leaf and paper on canvas  
61 x 61 cm / 24 x 24 in

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