

HAUSER & WIRTH

Press Release

Roni Horn Butterfly Doubt

Hauser & Wirth London

5 June – 25 July 2015

Opening: Thursday 4 June 2015, 6 – 8 pm



'My drawings are influenced by the fact that I do make sculptures, but they are equally informed by my relationship to language, that is the doubling, pairing, and conjugation generally.'

– Roni Horn in a letter to Paulo Herkenhoff, 2003

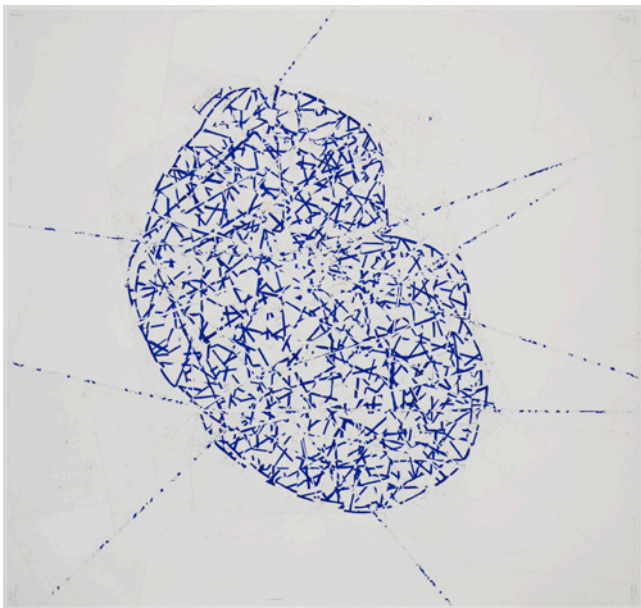
Hauser & Wirth is pleased to devote both its Savile Row galleries to a major presentation of drawings by Roni Horn. The exhibition is focused on three recent series; Or (2014), Hack Wit (2013 – 2014), and Remembered Words (2013). For Horn, drawing is a primary activity that underpins her wider practice. Her intricate drawings examine recurring themes of identity, interpretation, mirroring and textual play, which coalesce in this significant exhibition. Coinciding with 'Butterfly Doubt', Horn will also present an exhibition at the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, Arles, France (11 June – 20 September 2015).

The Or series of 2014 has evolved from Horn's unique, sculptural method of drawing. She begins with two drawings, or 'plates', which she cuts into pieces then reassembles into new, tessellating forms. Through this process, the original drawings are fused into a single mutated and fluctuating composition. The complex patterns that result from her incisions and intersections are discontinuous, without a fixed centre. Upon closer examination, shapes on the paper become increasingly undone and offer up multiple, fluid identities. The freedom of the Or drawings belie Horn's complex alchemy; the fervently dispersed shapes are in fact carefully constructed. Close inspection reveals pencilled annotations that cover the paper and mark time like a metronome as Horn carries out her exploration of the drawing's expansive surface. Horn's preoccupation with language permeates these works; her scattered words read as a stream of consciousness spiralling across the paper.

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The Hack Wit drawings employ a similar reconstructive method to the Or series, but here the subject matter is grounded in language and linguistic play. Horn reconfigures idiomatic turns of phrase and proverbs to engender nonsensical, jumbled expressions that thwart expectation. The themes of pairing and mirroring emerge as Horn intertwines not only the phrases themselves but also the paper they are inscribed on, so that her process reflects the content of the drawings. Words are her images and she paints them expressionistically, which – combined with her method – causes letters to appear indeterminate, as if they are being viewed underwater. Horn reinvents syntactic rules as she merges two expressions into one; she plays with the similarly plosive and alliterative qualities of ‘desire’ and ‘deserts’ to create ‘just desire burning deserts’, at once a poetic imagining and reminiscent of childish tongue-twisters.

Recalling lepidopterists’ cases displaying insect specimens, Horn’s Remembered Words series presents grid-like sequences of gouache samples on a sheet, each with a single word transcribed beneath. Horn’s system for grouping words is based either on a similarity of meaning, such as ‘enigma riddle question’, or on their phonetic malleability, rolled out in sequence: ‘toxic rustic tic tick luck sock’. Her word associations resonate with the experimental methodology of Gertrude Stein’s poetry. In some of the Remembered Words drawings, splashes of paint partially obscure the ordered blots of ink and chaos ensues.



About the Artist

Roni Horn was born in 1955 and lives and works in New York NY. In January 2013, Horn was awarded the Joan Miró Prize, which resulted in the solo exhibition ‘Roni Horn. “Everything was sleeping as if the universe were a mistake”’, shown at Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, Spain (2014) and Caixa Forum, Madrid, Spain (2014). Other recent solo exhibitions include: “Everything was sleeping as if the universe were a mistake”, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt am Main, Germany (2013); ‘Photographien / Photographic Works’, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany (2011), and ‘Well and Truly’, Kunsthaus Bregenz, Bregenz, Austria (2010).

In November 2009, Horn’s comprehensive survey exhibition ‘Roni Horn aka Roni Horn’ opened at Tate Modern and travelled to Collection Lambert in Avignon, France (2009); the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York NY (2009); and The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston MA (2010). Horn’s works are featured in numerous major international institutions and collections including the Guggenheim Museum, New York NY; Museum of Modern Art, New York NY; The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago IL; Tate Modern, London, England; Kunsthalle Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany; Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland; and Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France.

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In 2013, JRP Ringier published the first major publication to focus solely on Horn's extensive drawing practice. 'RONI HORN. HACK WIT', a new publication including the text 'Hack Gloss' by Anne Carson, is published by Steidl, Göttingen in June 2015.

'Roni Horn. Butterfly to Oblivion' is showing at Fondation Vincent van Gogh, Arles, France in parallel with the exhibition at Hauser & Wirth London.

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Gallery hours:

Tuesday to Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm

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Hack Wit - aching cheap
2014

Watercolour, pen and ink, gum arabic on
watercolour paper, cellophane tape
61.6 x 39.4 cm / 24 1/4 x 15 1/2 in

Hack Wit - fool's rainbow
2014

Watercolour, graphite, gum arabic on
watercolour paper, cellophane tape
61.6 x 39.4 cm / 24 1/4 x 15 1/2 in

Or 1
2014

Powdered pigment, graphite, charcoal,
coloured pencil and varnish on paper
234.3 x 248.9 cm / 92 1/4 x 98 in

Remembered Words - (Fat) (detail)
2013

Gouache, watercolour, graphite, Japan colour
and gum arabic on paper
38.1 x 27.9 cm / 15 x 11 in
each, 9 parts
Overall framed grid: 55.5 x 43 in / 141 x
109.2 cm

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Photo: Genevieve Hanson