

PRESS RELEASE

PATHWAYS
ROGER HIORNS

4 November – 24 December 2022

Pathways, Roger Hiorns' new exhibition at the Annet Gelink Gallery, is an aesthetic project that offers an alternative route to the limitations the present puts us under.

In his work, Hiorns investigates material and form in the widest sense, pushing forward the tradition of sculpture by re-using and transforming existing objects. His work often consists of opposites on a formal and conceptual level. In attempting to grasp the object as a pure version of itself, Hiorns separates the power from the object, de-fetishizes it. In so doing, he lays bare the way in which these objects impose a certain power onto us, while simultaneously proposing a way in which to fully comprehend our own conditions.



For his latest paintings, Hiorns returned to the use of copper sulphate dissolution. This material he famously used for his Turner Prize nominated work *Seizure* (2008), in which he cast an entire demolition-ready apartment in London in it, inciting a chemical process that filled the interior with sparkling blue and razor-sharp crystal formations. The new paintings also build upon Hiorns' so-called "sex paintings", large depictions of male-presenting erotica, however stripped of references to romance or lust. Rather, they reflect on the choreography of human beings and the way in which they express a certain level of [sexual] energy. The use of copper sulphate not only allows the paintings their own energy field, but also creates a tension between the manipulation of nature and figurative painting. As such, Hiorns proposes a reflection on the ambiguity and fluidity characterizing our contemporary conception of sexuality.

Hiorns' latest membrane sculptures reflect the artist's rethinking of the tradition of sculpting. As objects, the works are stripped of their authority. In 2010, however, Hiorns created similar sculptures for which he had members of a South London church, located next to his studio, pray to the works. In this way, the sculptures not only took on a transcendental quality, but Hiorns also questioned the ancient ritual of prayer. The sculptures in the gallery, thin, hollow, and nearly transparent as they are, express uncertainty rather than spectacle and give the viewer no direct signal on how to respond to it. Rather, they point to the time-intensive, layered, and unpredictable process of their creation. By making transparency into a sculptural property, Hiorns proposes an alternative function against the dominant function of the object.

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The video *Untitled (a retrospective view of the pathway)* features choristers of St Philip's Cathedral Birmingham singing Evensong whilst lying on their backs on the floor, instead of standing to sing in front of the altar. By breaking down this usually rigid formation, and therefore de-authorizing and transforming an ancient ritual, the work allows for a re-thinking of a revered institution that is usually an unchanging part of our society.

Roger Hiorns studied at Goldsmiths College in London. Some of solo exhibitions include Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam (2019 & 2016), Ikon Gallery, Birmingham (2017), Rudolfinum Gallery, Prague (2015), Corvi-Mora, London, (2015), Corvi-Mora, London, (2015), Luring Augustine, New York (2014), The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, (2013), MIMA, Middlesbrough (2012), Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2010), The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago (2010), the Tate Britain, London (2010), the Camden Arts Centre, London (2007) and the UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2003). In 2009 he was nominated for the Turner Prize with his installation 'Seizure', commissioned by Artangel. Hiorns also participated in several group exhibitions amongst others at the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham (2019), Keramiekmuseum Princessehof, Leeuwarden (2017), Hayward Gallery, London (2015), Columbus Museum of Art in Ohio, Ohio (2014), Garage Center for Contemporary Culture, Moscow (2014), Taipei Biennial, Taipei (2014), The National Gallery, London (2014), 55th Venice Biennale, Venice (2013), Marrakech Biennale 4th Biennale, Marrakech (2012) CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain, Bordeaux (2011) and many other.