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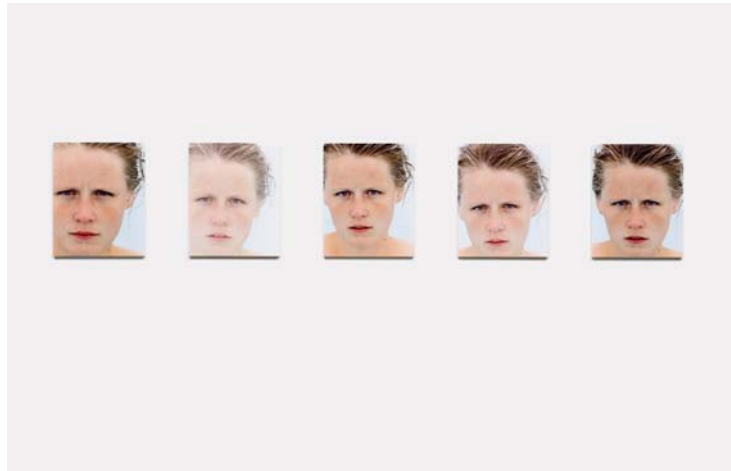
Tel. (212) 570-3633
Fax (212) 570-4169
pressoffice@whitney.org

Press Release

Contact:
Whitney Museum of American Art
Stephen Soba, Leily Soleimani
212-570-3633

THE WHITNEY PRESENTS THIRTY-YEAR SURVEY OF WORK BY RONI HORN

November 6, 2009-January 24, 2010



"I want to make the meaning of a work people's experience of it."
– Roni Horn

NEW YORK, July 21, 2009 – Jointly organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art and Tate Modern, *Roni Horn aka Roni Horn*, the most comprehensive overview of Roni Horn's work to date, integrates three decades of the American artist's sculpture, photography, installations, drawings, and books. Opening on November 6, 2009, the exhibition remains on view through January 24, 2010. Following the Whitney's presentation, it travels to The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, where it will be seen from February 19 to June 13, 2010.

Included in the exhibition are approximately seventy works, varying in scale from small drawings to room-sized photographic installations to sculptures weighing several tons. The curators, who are working in close collaboration with Horn, are the Whitney's Chief Curator and Associate Director for Programs Donna De Salvo and curator of drawings Carter E. Foster, and Mark Godfrey, curator at Tate Modern.

As De Salvo, Foster, and Godfrey write in their introduction to the exhibition catalogue, "One of the most compelling reasons to look back now at Horn's work is to see how she has consistently addressed ideas about subjectivity and multiplicity while giving profound attention to materials and creating works of great beauty. There is an unwavering intensity in Horn's ability to reconcile materials with personal experience. In a time of isolation and fragmentation, Horn's singular and unrelenting focus on an object or an image demands much from viewers, but her work equally offers ample rewards to those willing to take the time to become a part of it."

For more than thirty years, Horn has been developing work of concentrated visual power and intellectual rigor, often exploring issues of gender, identity, androgyny, and the complex relationship between object and subject. Because the artist chooses not to privilege any one medium, Horn's art defies easy categorization. Materials – often used with remarkable virtuosity and sensitivity – take on metaphorical qualities and relate key themes with great visual power. Horn's interest in doubling and identity, for example, is central to understanding her approach to the genres of portraiture and landscape. Image-specific photographic portraits and ethereally beautiful abstract cast glass sculpture relay aspects of both. Similarly, Horn's intricately cut and pigmented drawings suggest something of the elemental nature of the earth that relates in turn to how the landscape of Iceland, where Horn has traveled and made work since 1975, has informed her practice.

Iceland has been a place of continual inspiration to the artist. Since 1990 Horn has produced an extraordinary series of books titled *To Place* with photographs of lava, geysers, glacial rivers, and hot pools, which will be presented. As Horn is quoted in the catalogue, "As a mass produced, portable object...the book goes out into the world, ultimately locating itself into the world where it is most desired." Horn's interest in writing and language is also reflected in her sculptures in which lines from Emily Dickinson's writings are structurally embedded into aluminum rods. These machined, minimal pieces relate back in turn to sculptural installations like *Things that Happen Again, for Two Rooms*, which similarly uses an industrial process as a way to objectify language and give the viewer room for interpretation. Horn's work has an undeniable material presence, a seductive, sensual beauty. Her means may seem simple, but her basic concerns with the nature of representation and the role played by the mind and subjectivity are deeply philosophical.

Major photographic works illustrate the various ways in which Horn has explored the genre of portraiture. *This is Me, This is You* (1999-2000) encompasses two separated panels of forty-eight paired photographs of Horn's young niece as she plays with different identities and grows into adulthood. *Cabinet Of* (2001) comprises thirty-six photographs of a clown making expressions. In these works, the identity of the sitter is never fixed by the camera. *You are the Weather* (1994-95) is an installation of one hundred close-up photographs of a woman immersed in Iceland's hot pools in changing climatic conditions, her features responding to the weather.

A large range of Horn's drawings are included in the exhibition, from her 1982 series *Bluff Life* to more recent works made from cutting and reconfiguring lines of pure pigment on expansive surfaces. Approaching them, their initial appearance shifts as one begins to look at the details of Horn's cuts and pencil marks.

Writing about the exhibition in its earlier, critically acclaimed incarnation at Tate Modern, Rachel Campbell-Johnston noted in the (London) *Times*: "Horn's work moves (rather than develops) in a way that we can never quite predict. She never allows us

to feel too familiar or certain of our assumptions...To walk through this show is to walk into a world of constant reflections...Horn's art is to show you something that you cannot see." And in *The Guardian*, Adrian Searle wrote, "The complications multiply; the paradox is how simple Horn's art at first appears...For all the airiness and feeling of space, the show still gives us Horn's breadth and range."

Throughout the exhibition's installation at the Whitney, the integration and cross relationships among the mediums in which the artist works will be fluid and the presentation on two floors will explore structurally the crucial concept of doubling in Horn's work.

The accompanying publication was conceived collaboratively by the artist, the publisher Steidl, and the organizing museums. The book is a two-volume hybrid: part catalogue and part index. The catalogue includes an introduction by curators Donna De Salvo, Carter E. Foster, and Mark Godfrey, and an essay by Briony Fer. In the Subject Index, a second volume that is in the form of a glossary, the entries are devoted to important ideas in Horn's practice (such as *double*, *Iceland*, *Emily Dickinson*) or relate to individual works. Many of the entries include Horn's own writings, published here for the first time. Other contributors include a number of prominent artists, critics, curators, and cultural figures, including Matthew Barney, Hélène Cixous, Tacita Dean, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Douglas Gordon, Collier Schorr, Nancy Spector, Ann Temkin, and Neville Wakefield, as well as the show's three curators.

About the Artists

Roni Horn was born in New York in 1955, and lives and works in New York and Reykjavik. She received a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and an MFA from Yale University. Horn's work has been exhibited widely in major museums and galleries throughout the US and Europe. A retrospective was presented at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in 1999. Her work has been shown at the Whitney in *Landscape* (2005), as well as in the 1991 and 2004 Biennials and in the 2000 exhibition *Roni Horn: Still Water (The River Thames, For Example)*. Horn has

received the CalArts/Alpert Award in the Arts, several NEA fellowships, and a Guggenheim fellowship. She has had one-person exhibitions at the Art Institute of Chicago; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Dia Center for the Arts, New York, among others. Group exhibitions include Documenta (1992) and the Venice Biennale (1997), among many others.

Major support for this exhibition is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

Generous support is provided by the Lannan Foundation, The James R. Hedges, IV Family Foundation, Donald R. Mullen, Jr., The Glenstone Foundation, and the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation.

Additional support is provided by Louise Bourgeois, Agnes Gund, Jennifer and David Stockman, Nina and Michael Zilkha, The Fifth Floor Foundation and Elizabeth A. Sackler – JCF, Museum Educational Trust.

About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art is the leading advocate of 20th- and 21st-century American art. Founded in 1930, the Museum is regarded as the preeminent collection of American art and includes major works and materials from the estate of Edward Hopper, the largest public collection of works by Alexander Calder, as well as significant works by Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, Bruce Nauman, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, Kiki Smith, and Andy Warhol, among other artists. With its history of exhibiting the most promising and influential American artists and provoking intense critical and public debate, the Whitney's signature show, the Biennial, has become the most important survey of the state of contemporary art in America today. First housed on West 8th Street, the Whitney relocated in 1954 to West 54th Street and in 1966 inaugurated its present home at 945 Madison Avenue, designed by Marcel Breuer. The Whitney is currently moving ahead with plans to build a second facility, designed by Renzo Piano, located in downtown New York at the entrance to the High Line in the Meatpacking District.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art:

Oldenburg/van Bruggen	Through September 6, 2009
Sadie Benning: Play Pause	Through September 20, 2009
Photoconceptualism, 1966–1973	Through September 20, 2009
Dan Graham: Beyond	Through October 11, 2009
Georgia O'Keeffe: Abstraction	September 17, 2009–January 17, 2010
Steve Wolfe on Paper	September 30–November 29, 2009
Roni Horn aka Roni Horn	November 6, 2009–January 24, 2010
Alice Guy Blaché: Cinema Pioneer	November 6, 2009–January 24, 2010

The Whitney Museum is located at 945 Madison Avenue, New York City. Museum hours are: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., closed Monday and Tuesday. Admission is \$15 for adults; Members, children (ages 11 and under), and New York City public high school students free. Senior citizens (62 and over) and students with valid ID: \$10. There is a \$6 admission fee for a pass to the Kaufman Astoria Studios Film & Video Gallery only. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 6–9 pm. For information, please call 212-570-3600 or visit whitney.org

Image: Roni Horn, *You are the Weather* (detail), 1994–1995. Thirty-six gelatin silver prints and sixty-four chromogenic prints 10 x 8 in. each. © Roni Horn