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ART NEWS

Agnes Denes , Roger Hiorns ,Firstsite Colchester



Agnes Denes and Roger Hiorns Exhibitions Announced For Firstsite Colchester

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A retrospective exhibition of Agnes Denes work along with a sculpture installation by the Turner Prize nominated artist Roger Hiorns has been announced for Firstsite Colchester. It will include a selection of works from four major series of drawings undertaken by the artist from the late 1960s to the 1990s in addition to drawings, photographs and other documents from Denes' major sculptural projects from this period. Of key importance is *Wheatfield – A Confrontation* (1982), which saw the artist cultivate and harvest a crop of wheat on two acres of land within an empty lot in downtown Manhattan, New York. This symbol of food, energy and economics made a political point about waste, world hunger and ecological concerns.

The exhibition is the first to bring together over 50 works from private collections as well as major public holdings at the Museum of Modern Art and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Curated by Florence Derieux and conceived as a collaboration between firstsite and FRAC Champagne-Ardenne, it will be followed by a new monographic book on the artist's work edited by Florence Derieux and published by FRAC Champagne-Ardenne. It will be the first major survey of the artist's work in Western Europe and her first solo exhibition in the UK since 1979.

Also exhibited will be the Turner Prize nominated artist Roger Hiorns' *Untitled, 2010* will be displayed concurrently in firstsite's Entrance Space. The sculpture consists of two engines from a decommissioned military surveillance aeroplane. The Boeing EC-135c aircraft was part of a fleet of perpetually airborne planes that gathered intelligence as part of an ongoing US initiative codenamed Operation Looking Glass, begun in 1961. Contained within the engines is a measure of crushed anti-depressant drugs.

The work explores Hiorns' interest in the advanced technology involved in creating a powerful, aggressive symbol of war, alongside the physically small, yet no less powerful and aggressive pharmaceutical. Making reference to the creation and alleviation of anxiety on both a national and personal level, it addresses the connection between global security and individual well-being. This will be the first time that the work has been presented indoors.

Untitled, 2010 was originally commissioned by the Art Institute of Chicago, and has been generously gifted to the Arts Council Collection by the artist and Corvi Mora, London. The gift has been supported by The Henry Moore Foundation.

Agnes Denes A primary figure among the concept-based artists who emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, Agnes Denes is internationally known for works created in a wide range of mediums. A pioneer of several art movements, she is difficult to categorize. Investigating science, philosophy, linguistics, psychology, poetry, history, and music, Denes's artistic practice is distinctive in terms of its aesthetics and engagement with socio-political ideas. As a pioneer of environmental art, she created *Rice/Tree/Burial* in 1968 in Sullivan County, New York which, according to the renowned art historian and curator Peter Selz, was "probably the first large scale site-specific piece anywhere with ecological concerns." (b. 1931, Budapest) was raised in Sweden and educated in the United States. She has participated in more than 450 exhibitions at galleries and museums internationally, including exhibitions in the UK at the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham (1978) and the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (1979). Retrospectives of her work have been held at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York (1992); Samek Art Gallery, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania (2003); and Ludwig Museum, Budapest (2008). She has also participated in international surveys including the Biennale of Sydney (1976); Documenta 6, Kassel (1977); the Venice Biennale (1978, 1980, 2001), and more recently *The Last Freedom: From the Pioneers of Land Art of the 1960s to Nature in Cyberspace*, Ludwig Museum, Koblenz (2011); *Systems, Actions & Processes: 1965–1975*, PROA Foundation, Buenos Aires (2011); *Erre: Variations Labyrinthiques*, Centre Pompidou, Metz (2011–12); and *Light Years: Conceptual Art and the Photograph: 1964–1977*, Art Institute of Chicago (2011–12). She lives and works in New York.

Roger Hiorns (b. 1975, Birmingham) has held solo exhibitions at the Hepworth Wakefield; De Hallen Haarlem, Haarlem (2013); Aspen Art Museum, Colorado; Art Institute of Chicago (2010); Tate Britain, London (2003, 2009); Camden Arts Centre, London (2007); Milton Keynes Gallery (2006) and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2003). He has participated in significant survey exhibitions including the 55th Venice Biennale (2013); British Art Show 6

and 7 (2005, 2011); Busan Biennale (2008) and the 1st Athens Biennial (2007). In 2009 he was shortlisted for the Turner Prize for *Seizure*, a work that saw a condemned council flat in South London transformed by blue copper sulphate crystals. *Untitled* (2008) formed part of firstsite's 2012 exhibition *News From Nowhere*. He lives and works in London.