

THE SCHIRN KUNSTHALLE IS PRESENTING A PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERVENTION IN PUBLIC SPACE BY THE AMERICAN ARTIST RONI HORN

RONI HORN. PORTRAIT OF AN IMAGE

December 12, 2013–January 26, 2014

Preview for the press: Wednesday, December 11, 2013, 11:00 a.m.

In collaboration with the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, the American artist Roni Horn (*1955) is presenting an extended form of a photographic work she developed in 2005, "Portrait of an Image (with Isabelle Huppert)": sixteen striking interventions comprised of selected motifs from the serial work are distributed in Frankfurt's urban space, while the complete one-hundred-part series of portraits is being shown in the walkways of the rotunda of the Schirn. This is the very first staging in public space of this kind within Roni Horn's artistic oeuvre. The two-part series "Portrait of an Image (with Isabelle Huppert)"—each of which consists of fifty photographs in sequences of five motifs each—is based on a collaboration between Horn and the French film and stage actress Isabelle Huppert. Together they selected earlier roles Huppert had played that the actress then performed again for the camera. For these photographs, Huppert visualized her repertoire solely on the basis of her memory, without the aid of the scripts or the films themselves.

Setting out from the Schirn, Horn places a selection of these motifs in public space in a way that does not reveal that they are part of her work or an artistic project: no mention is made either of the artist or the exhibiting institution, and there is no title that would indicate that it is a work of art. Sixteen motifs appear in places in Frankfurt's urban space in which advertising is usually displayed—advertising that in our society for the most part relies on the impact of faces. However, in Horn's work the portraits are not furnished with commentary and therefore raise questions, for example how and whether we can read the face we are looking at even without a prescribed context. The confrontation with these faces in the cityscape provides an opportunity for unexpected, random encounters and recurring meetings, such as they take place in our everyday social coexistence. Selected motifs from the series were visible in Frankfurt's public space from late September to early October 2013, so that the images can now in part produce an unconscious sense of recognition.

Even before the official start of the exhibition, Isabelle Huppert's face will be visible in places on posters in subway stations and cars as well as on large surfaces. The density of these posters will increase over several days. Some places will be provided with images of the actress over an extended period of time, for example a revolving advertising space below a large urban clock at Frankfurt's Allerheiligentor or the Holbeinsteg over the Main River, over which a banner will be spanned with a photograph of Huppert. On the first day of the exhibition as well as at another date, motifs on 110 digital advertising spaces will appear and disappear again in Hessian train stations, such as Frankfurt, Offenbach, Wiesbaden, Kassel, Fulda, Giessen, Darmstadt, and Hanau. This is a key feature of the work, which not only examines the art of acting through its concept and the protagonist but becomes visible itself in the realization, in the performance as it were, by means of an exhibition and can only be experienced temporarily, much like what occurs on a stage. Unlike other photographic works by Roni Horn, "Portrait of an Image" only exists in this form. It has not been recorded in a publication that includes all of the individual images.

The exhibition is being made possible by the SCHIRN ZEITGENOSSEN.

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According to Max Hollein, director of the Schirn: “The Schirn has set itself the task of continuously implementing large-scale and complex artistic interventions in public space. We are all the more delighted that we have the opportunity to work with Roni Horn, with one of the most outstanding international artists, and that we can make one of her important photographic works—which time and again deal with questions of identity in a very subtle way—accessible to and able to be experienced by a broad public in Germany.”

Kristin Schrader, curator of the exhibition: “Roni Horn’s oeuvre is singular. “Portrait of an Image” is a comprehensive reflection of the content of her creative approach. By relocating parts of her work to Frankfurt’s urban space, Horn sets up various levels of dialogue with viewers, who for her are immensely important as an integral part of her work.”

Roni Horn’s creative work is characterized less by a specific artistic medium than by her concentration on significant issues and ideas. Labels such as ‘sculptor’ or ‘photographer’ are therefore not applicable to or fall short of describing Horn, in particular in view of the fact that she expresses herself by means of photographs, objects, and drawings as well as through writing. What is decisive is her interest in the concepts of identity and difference. Against this background, her examination of the art-historical genre of the portrait seems natural. “Portrait of an Image (with Isabelle Huppert)” presents close-up images of the French actress and in doing so challenges viewers to intensely confront the emotions being depicted, which on the basis of the chosen medium alone, photography, are naturally perceived as authentic and not staged. The arrangement of five motifs each into a sequence undermines the popular notion of the photograph at the ‘decisive moment’, which is presumably capable of capturing the essence of an event or an elementary aspect of someone’s personality in the fraction of a second. By reproducing this decisive moment, Roni Horn addresses the diversity and instability of identity. The artist always works with an arrangement of at least two objects or images, which reflects aspects such as similarity, correspondence, and deviation. By leaving viewers in the dark about whether the motifs being shown are identical or only slightly deviate from one another, Horn’s works prompt an element of uncertainty. For Horn, those works that possess the character of incompleteness are the most meaningful.

Roni Horn lives and works in New York, the city of her birth. She studied at the Rhode Island School of Design and Yale University. She has become known to an international public for her multifaceted exhibition activity, for example her participation in documenta IX (1992) and in the 47th Venice Biennale (1997). In 2009, the retrospective “Roni Horn a.k.a Roni Horn” presented her work at the Tate Modern, London, the Collection Lambert, Avignon, as well as at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and in 2010 at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. Works by Roni Horn are included in the collections of the Guggenheim Museum, New York, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Tate Modern, London, the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

The exhibition is being made possible by the SCHIRN ZEITGENOSSEN, a circle of private patrons of young art at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt. The Schirn thanks Jan Bauer, Michael Fabich, Andreas Fendel, Hartmuth Jung, Sunhild Theuerkauf-Lukic und Andreas Lukic, Shahpar Oschmann, Vasiliki Basia and Jörg Rockenhäuser, Katharina and Lars Singbartl, Antonie and Heiner Thorborg, as well as Vera and Stefan Wallrich for their commitment.

EDITION: As a continuation of her exhibition project, Roni Horn designed an edition consisting of the sixteen motifs distributed throughout Frankfurt that have been assembled as an A2-format postcard page. When separated, they playfully invite one to carry on the dialogue with Huppert’s faces and likewise allow others to join in.

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CATALOGUE: The catalogue will be published several weeks after the opening of the exhibition and includes extensive documentation of the staging of "Portrait of an Image" in the public space of the city of Frankfurt.

Edited by Kristin Schrader and Max Hollein. Foreword by Max Hollein, essay by Kristin Schrader, as well as a letter by Roni Horn. German / English, 64 pages, ca. 50 illustrations, 21 x 27 cm (vertical format), Swiss soft cover, Heimann & Schwantes, Berlin; Hirmer Verlag Munich, ISBN 978-3-7774-2098-1. Price: €16.80 (Schirn).

VENUE: Rotunda of the SCHIRN KUNSTHALLE FRANKFURT, Römerberg, D-60311 Frankfurt, as well as in the public space of the city of Frankfurt. **DURATION:** December 12, 2013–January 26, 2014. **INFORMATION:** www.schirn.de, email: welcome@schirn.de, tel.: +49.69.29 98 82-0, fax: +49.69.29 98 82-240. **ADMISSION:** Free of charge in the lower rotunda; €7.00 in the upper rotunda in combination with a ticket for the exhibition "Géricault. Images of Life and Death"; reduced €5.00; family ticket €14.00; children under 8 free of charge. **ADVANCED TICKET SALES:** Tickets can be purchased online at www.schirn.de/tickets. **GUIDED TOURS FOR THE PUBLIC:** Wed 6:00 p.m., Sat 6:00 p.m., Sun 4:00 p.m. **CURATOR:** Kristin Schrader. **SPONSORED BY:** SCHIRN ZEITGENOSSEN.

SOCIAL MEDIA: The Schirn will be communicating in the social web with the following **HASHTAGS:** #ronihorn #schirn **ONLINE MAGAZINE:** www.schirn-magazin.de **FACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/Schirn **TWITTER:** www.twitter.com/Schirn **YOUTUBE:** www.youtube.com/user/SCHIRNKUNSTHALLE **INSTAGRAM:** @schirnkunsthalle

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