

Exploring the poetic fragments of the human experience, the exhibition 'TORN' unveils the artistic mastery of ANNA VAN OOSTEROM and MARY NORDEN.

VIVIENNE ROBERTS PROJECTS is thrilled to announce the forthcoming exhibition, 'TORN', showcasing the captivating works of artists Anna van Oosterom and Mary Norden. Curated by Vivienne Roberts, this exhibition promises to immerse audiences in a world of enigmatic narratives, emotional depth, and artistic ingenuity.

'TORN' invites viewers to discover the unique artistic expressions of two exceptional women who employ the technique of tearing materials to fashion powerful images.

Anna van Oosterom, hails from the Netherlands, but having lived and worked across the world, she brings forth a sense of observation as an outsider, reflecting upon themes of aloneness and isolation. Her compositions, untitled and evocative, transport viewers into surreal landscapes of desolation and disquiet. From the depths of New York's subway to remote English railway stations, van Oosterom's torn pieces blend dissociated images to reveal seamless, thought-provoking images, evoking film scenes by Andrei Tarkovsky.

Similarly, Mary Norden's creative process revolves around collecting worn and faded textiles infused with the marks of time to create captivating pictures. She transforms tatters and old rags into enchanting works of art, each capturing a mystical moment reminiscent of Rothko's meditative colour field abstract paintings. Norden's small-scale works convey a profound sense of stillness, inviting viewers to immerse themselves in quiet contemplation.

The title of the exhibition 'TORN' carries multifaceted psychological connotations, evoking themes of conflict, destruction, and creation. Through the hands of these two artists, seemingly discarded

materials are refashioned into mysterious, contemplative images, inviting viewers to transcend the boundaries of conventional artistic expression.

"We are excited to present the works of Anna van Oosterom and Mary Norden in our upcoming exhibition, 'TORN'," says curator Vivienne Roberts. "Their ability to transform torn fragments into poetic narratives is truly remarkable."

The exhibition will open on April 3, 2024, from 2pm to 8pm at Vivienne Roberts Projects, located at The Bindery, 53 Hatton Garden, London EC1N 8HN.

The exhibition will run until May 9, 2024.

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"Torn"

The exhibition titled "Torn" showcases the unique artistic expressions of two talented women, Anna van Oosterom and Mary Norden, who both employ the technique of tearing materials to fashion powerful images.

Anna van Oosterom has lived and worked in places across the world, far away from her native country, the Netherlands. No matter how exotic and exciting that sounds, it can also be emotionally taxing and isolating. Anna reveals that she is always in a state of observation as an outsider, reflecting upon her own underlying sense of aloneness. It is also innate to her personality which conveys a quiet demeanour, her gaze attentive, unsurprisingly seeking expression in art. All of her works are untitled, leaving the viewer alone to perceive without suggestion.

The artist admits that she finds herself drawn to such desolate places as underground and railway stations. She's fascinated how, in unfamiliar surroundings, a person can seem cloaked in loneliness, trying to find a private spot to distance themselves from the other commuters. She notes that the same loneliness envelopes people on the move everywhere in the world. Her compositions portray surreal scenes of deserted streets, the enigmatic depths of the New York subway, remote railway stations in the English countryside. They evoke feelings of isolation and disquiet and, as in dreams, of disorientation. Some of the images bring to mind dream scenes by film maker Andrei Tarkovsky or perhaps one of Vermeer's paintings, 'The Little Street'.

Anna van Oosterom's artistic practice involves torn pieces. She tears paper to construct paintings made with collage, transfer and paint. With meticulous care, she blends various dissociated images to form a cohesive whole, utilising a technique that smooths down the surface to reveal a single, seamless image.

Mary Norden's creative process involves collecting fragments of worn and faded textiles imbued with the marks of time. Sometimes she alters and manipulates the colours to create a stormy mood. She says, *A new picture always starts with a single piece of fabric; it's the seed of the collage where the story begins. What can seem unpromising, well worn*

and stained, and not fit for purpose, can reveal wonderful surprises... This act initiates the narrative and transforms tatters and old rags into captivating works of art, each capturing an enchanting, mystical moment once glimpsed, somewhat reminiscent of Rothko's meditative colour field abstract paintings.

Mary Norden works on a small scale and on the flat. Her studio is a wonderful refuge away from the busyness and the noise of our stressful world. Here, time itself seems to vanish in an involuntary meditation of absorption in an emerging image. With these old materials, the artist "paints" scapes of land and sea - water red overcast by brown shadowy cloud, or the earth dark under a sky of vivid green. Colours are reversed to dramatic effect. One is looking out across the land to something perceived in the distance, perhaps a low wall with an opening leading to the immensity beyond. A way home? All of these works convey stillness, the depth of a quiet moment.

The word 'torn' carries multifaceted psychological connotations. One can be torn between conflicting desires or emotions, as in Hamlet's dilemma between being and not being. To tear is to rip apart or rent asunder, undoing what was once whole. Yet, from destruction or desolation emerges the possibility of creation. As when the shell of a seed cracks open and a tiny root emerges, something new is growing and taking shape; it may be unforeseen, unimagined, a thing of wonder.

In the hands of these two artists of great sensibility, seemingly discarded materials are refashioned into mysterious, contemplative images. The viewer is invited to discover the poetic narratives inherent in each fragment, transcending the boundaries of conventional artistic expression.

~ Vivienne Roberts 2024

The exhibition is curated by Vivienne Roberts

Exhibition: 'TORN'

Opening 3 April 2024 from 2pm - 8pm

The exhibition runs until 9 May 2024

Location: VIVIENNE ROBERTS PROJECTS, The Bindery, 53 Hatton Garden, London EC1N 8HN

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