

Press Release

Rita Ackermann. Vertical Vanish

2 February – 30 April 2023

Hauser & Wirth Downtown Los Angeles

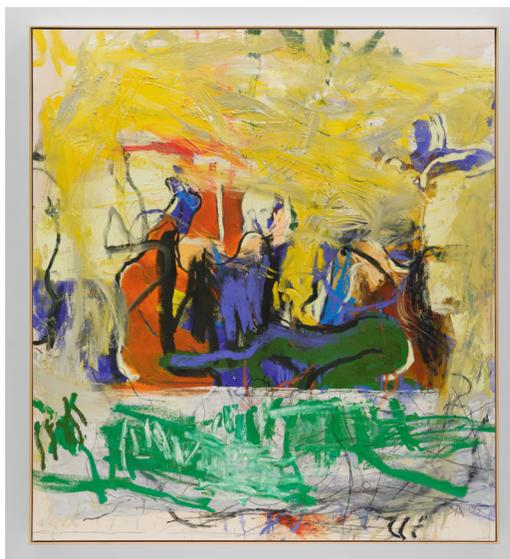
North B Gallery



Los Angeles...Hauser & Wirth presents 'Vertical Vanish,' an exhibition of recent paintings by Hungarian-born artist Rita Ackermann. 'Vertical Vanish' opens 2 February, and will remain on view in the North Gallery of Hauser & Wirth's Downtown Los Angeles Arts District complex through 30 April. This is Ackermann's first West Coast exhibition with the gallery.

Composed primarily of large-scale oil paintings that intuitively recast the interplay of line, color and form, 'Vertical Vanish' makes a game of repeated gestures, figures and motifs. Pre-drawn scenes obscurely emerge from the background, only to disappear into impasto fields of imbricated color. Through a series of gestural interventions guided by the artist's hand – an admixture of drawing, painting and erasure – oil paints, China markers and acrylics are heavily worked onto surfaces of canvas or raw linen. The lines constituting Ackermann's figures are lost to near total abstraction; thickly applied washes of paint are scraped away at, giving rise to revelatory compositions. In addition to the larger works, a selection of small, overpainted monotype prints on paper (all dating from 2022) will also be on view. These small paintings occupy a middle distance between the mindful reworking of available materials at hand and the unveiling of hidden motifs.

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In works such as 'Vertical Vanish' (2022), the painting from which the exhibition's name derives, underlying figures are overlaid with vivid detonations of color. The materialized afterimage of these colored saturations acts like a veil which seems to environ the viewer while falling just shy of articulating any precise narrative. The measured intensity by which pigments are worked over communicates the purposeful energy of a spatial calligraphy. Relative to the three erased figures at the foreground of the canvas, the ascending vertical spiral becomes the centerpiece of the painting, preserving the harmony of opposing rhythms.

The kind of dynamism Ackermann's paintings communicate at least partially derives from the sense of urgency that goes into making them. Working on a particular picture may very well involve entering into the uncertain arena of various rescue operations: unforeseeable problems or intended accidents that the artist has to work around or assimilate. As they move toward their final composition, Ackermann's paintings reflect the perpetual motion of these various survival missions. In this, her layered surfaces are haloed with the aura of many residual, activating gestures.

– Jeffrey Grunthaler

About the artist

Born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1968, Ackermann currently lives and works in New York. Ackermann's practice manifests in paintings and works on paper that propose a continuous shift between representation and abstraction. Employing a range of media, including oil and acrylic paint, pastel, wax pencil and raw pigment, her expression hinges on automatic gestures and opposing impulses of creation and destruction.

'Hidden,' a forthcoming solo exhibition of Ackermann's work will open at MASI Lugano, Switzerland on 12 March. Recent solo exhibitions include: 'Mama '19,' Hauser & Wirth New York, 22nd Street (2020), 'Brother Sister,' Hauser & Wirth Zurich, Switzerland (2019), 'Movements as Monuments,' La Triennale di Milano, Italy (2018); 'Turning Air Blue,' Hauser & Wirth Somerset, England (2017); 'KLINE RAPE,' Hauser & Wirth New York, 22nd Street (2016); 'The Aesthetic of Disappearance,' Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden (2016); 'Chalkboard Paintings,' Hauser & Wirth Zurich, Switzerland (2015); 'MEDITATION ON VIOLENCE-HAIR WASH,' Sammlung Friedrichshof, Burgenland, Austria and Sammlung Friedrichshof Stadtraum, Vienna, Austria (2014); 'Negative Muscle,' Hauser & Wirth New York, 69th Street (2013); 'Fire by Days,' Hauser & Wirth London, Piccadilly (2012); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami FL (2012); 'Bakos,' Ludwig Museum, Budapest, Hungary (2011); and 'Rita Ackermann and Harmony Korine: ShadowFux,' Swiss Institute, New York NY (2010).

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Gallery hours:
Tuesday – Sunday, 11 am – 6 pm

www.hauserwirth.com
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Caption and courtesy information:

All images:
Rita Ackermann
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Vertical Vanish
2022
Oil and acrylic on canvas
195.6 x 167.6 cm / 77 x 66 in
198.6 x 170.7 x 6.7 cm / 78 1/4 x 67
1/4 x 2 5/8 in (framed)

Touch Down
2022
Oil and acrylic on canvas
188 x 170.2 cm / 74 x 67 in
191.1 x 173.2 x 5.9 cm / 75 1/4 x 68
1/4 x 2 3/8 in (framed)

Golden Hour
2022
Acrylic, oil and china marker on canvas
213.4 x 193 cm / 84 x 76 in
216.4 x 196.1 x 6.7 cm / 85 1/4 x 77
1/4 x 2 5/8 in (framed)