

# Shifting Realities

Moyna Flannigan & Anne Wenzel

12 June – 17 July 2021

Opening Saturday 12 June, 1-6 pm

Saturday 26 June, 2-4 pm Book Launch by Anne Wenzel during Amsterdam Art Week.



Moyna Flannigan, *Untitled, 2020*, ink and gouache and collage on paper, 41.5 x 29.5 cm

In 'Shifting Realities', we are proud to bring together Moyna Flannigan's (1963, Kirkcaldy, Scotland) recent paintings and works on paper based on techniques of collage with Anne Wenzel's (1972, Schüttorf, Germany) newest series of sculptures, which attempts to capture the mystery of Francis Bacon's paintings.

Moyna Flannigan is known for taking inspiration from many sources, either directing her attention to classical art and mythological themes or getting inspired by dance choreographies of Pina Bausch or topics she comes across in the media. But, at a certain moment Flannigan felt the need to liberate her paintings from painterly hierarchies. Since four years she has been experimenting with collages of elements of drawings. By isolating the parts which supposedly belong together, she discovered the freedom of creating, or re-creating the image, by first pulling down all boundaries: 'A leg may be formed from a drawing of a leg or a scrap of paper which isn't a leg but which becomes one when it is placed in a certain position in relation to other pieces of paper.'

In her new series 'Quake' which she developed after her series of works on paper and paintings with the layered title 'Tear', she fully plunged herself into the adventure of liberation from painterly cohesion. Flannigan notes that throughout her career she had been driven by an enquiry into how an image manifests itself in a painting. 'Where is it exactly? Is it on the surface? Not really' she concludes. It seems to exist on a plane which is not on the surface but which exists somewhere not easily to be defined. The 'dependent relationships' of forms on the surface mark the space and time within a figurative image that avoids resemblance. Flannigan, while reading Herta Müller's 'The Hunger Angel', came across the physicist Hermann Minkowski's wire theory which receives a very personal interpretation in Müller's book. Minkowski introduced the idea of Spacetime which suggests that every object and every person has its own place and its own time. Flannigan discovered in this idea a clue she has always been aware of and which supported her concept of pulling together source material from utterly different reference points: it might be classical culture or an image of a woman whose house in Syria has just been destroyed and all that is left are a pair of shoes of her child she holds in her hands. Another new development concerns the paint, Flannigan is using in her new paintings. All elements in the image are held together under a velvet-like surface of distemper, a paint that Flannigan makes herself, using pure pigment combined with rabbit skin glue like ancient Egyptian or Medieval artists did. Bringing together materiality and temporality within her paintings and arranging things in a non-logical way which makes sense, might be concluded as the essence of her recent works.

Moyna Flannigan (1963, Kirkcaldy, Scotland) studied at the Edinburgh College of Art and received her MFA at the Yale University School of Art. Her work has been exhibited in galleries and museums in the United Kingdom and abroad, including the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (2018) and *GENERATION: 25 years of Contemporary Art in Scotland* (2014); *The Pizzuti Collection, Ohio (USA, 2012)*; *Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh (UK, 2010)*; *Mackintosh Museum, Glasgow (UK, 2012)*; *City Art Centre, Edinburgh (UK, 2012)*; *Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven (NL, 2011)*; *Andy Warhol Museum (USA, 2010) a.m.*

Works by Moyna Flannigan from the series 'Tear' have recently been acquired by the Museum of Modern Art Arnhem, the Netherlands (2020). Her work is further in the following Public Collections: Aberdeen Art Gallery Aberdeen Asset Management, UK Arts Council of England City Art Centre, Edinburgh City Art Collection, Munich Clifford Chance LLP, London Deutsche Bank, London Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, USA HBOS, Edinburgh Flemings Bank, London UBS Art Collection, London The McManus, Dundee Art Gallery and Museum Pallant House Gallery, Chicester Progressive Corporation, USA Saatchi Collection, London Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art Scottish National Portrait Gallery University of Edinburgh.

Anne Wenzel has been fascinated by the work of Francis Bacon for a long time, but all started with an overview exhibition of Francis Bacon she saw in 2019 in Paris. Besides admiration, some technical aspects within the paintings triggered her interest as a sculptor. She wanted to understand them. The lack of deadlines during the corona pandemic made her decide to experiment with something new and not directly connected to her own ceramic work. Wenzel gave it a name: 'The Bacon Project'. Within the span of one year she worked on a series of twelve smaller sculptures that translate Bacon's two-dimensional tormented universe into a three-dimensional quest about what goes on in between the dimensions. The physical law that crossed her path was gravity. Wenzel discovered that Bacon was actually 'sculpting' his world without having to pay attention to gravity. She had to find ways to shape contents that is reduced to the painterly plane into sculptural volume. She was confronted with the question as how one can bring agony, screaming, blood and moving flesh into a sculpture. But then she realised that she did not have to invent anything, but just 'translate' Bacon. Bacon had the 'lead', Wenzel followed.

With 'The Bacon Project' Anne Wenzel not only reflects upon one of the most extraordinary painterly expression that exists in art history, she also applies techniques she would never use for her own ceramic works. For this purpose she taught herself to make enamel objects, experimented with silicone, plastic and welding of thin metal. She had to find ways to express a bending of a brushstroke; or to give shape to an almost translucent podium on which a scenery of sexual ecstasy or battle takes place.

One of the works depict a naked man who stands in front of a pool, or is it just a void, which seems to be framed by thin lines as a cage – Wenzel masterly translates not only the image, but also the feeling of a man on the verge to jump. This new body of work by Anne Wenzel expresses the skill of an artist who glides under the skin of another artist, and at the same time it is full of modesty and joy of experimenting without fear to step on something new.

Anne Wenzel published a book about her 'Bacon Project' with articles by Sacha Bronwasser and Richard Leydier, who notes that this project is the most exciting artistic adventure he has ever written about. The book launch will take place during Amsterdam Art Week, Saturday 26 June 2 – 6 pm.

*Anne Wenzel (1972, Schüttorf, Germany) studied at the Academy for Visual Arts and Design in Enschede (NL). Her work is shown at leading art institutions throughout the world. Wenzel has a collection proposal presentation at Museum Het Valkenhof (2021) and had a solo show at Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen (2019). Previous solo exhibitions were o.a. in Princessehof Leeuwarden (2017); Rijksmuseum Twenthe (2015); TENT Rotterdam (curated by Daria de Beauvais, 2014); Villa Roth, Germany (2010); Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2010); Stedelijk Museum Den Bosch (2008) a.m. Wenzel was part of group exhibitions at a.o., Museum Jorn, Silkeborg (2018); Triennial for Contemporary Art, Duffel (2018); Rijksmuseum Twenthe (2018); 60th Faenza prize, Faenza (2018); Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam (2017); 9th Gyeonggi International Ceramic Biennale, Korea (2017); ARTER Istanbul (curated by Selen Ansen); Lustwarande, Tilburg (2016); Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht (2015); Hetjens Museum Düsseldorf (2015); Kunstmuseum Bornholm (European ceramic context, 2014); Stedelijk Museum 's Hertogenbosch (Collection Presentation, 2013); Stedelijk Museum Schiedam (Collection presentation, 2013); Carré St-Anne, Montpellier ('Sign of the time' curated by Richard Leydier, 2013); La Galerie des Galeries ('Into the Woods' curated by Daria de Beauvais); Fondation Ricard, Paris (2011); Shepparton Art Gallery award (2010); Stedelijk Museum for contemporary art, Ghent (2008) and Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2007).*

*Her works are included in many public and private collections, including Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Princessehof, Leeuwarden, Stedelijk Museum Schiedam, Vehbi Koç Foundation, Istanbul, Stedelijk Museum Den Bosch, S.M.A.K Ghent and Frac Auvergne. Wenzel is one of the artists filmed for the series 'Dutch Masters of the 21st Century'. She lives and works in Rotterdam.*



Anne Wenzel, The Bacon Project (Triptych, left panel), 2021, Ceramics, iron, 17x30x18 cm