

Faena Art Center Buenos Aires is pleased to present *Thresholding (En el Umbral)*, a solo exhibition by 2016 Faena Prize for the Arts winner Roger Hiorns.

After reviewing over 400 entries from more than 70 countries, Roger Hiorns was selected as the winner of the 2016 Faena Prize for the Arts by an international jury coordinated by Ximena Caminos, Artistic Director and Chair of Faena Art, that included Carlos Basualdo, Keith L. and Katherine Sachs Senior Curator of Contemporary Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art; Achim Borchardt-Hume, Director of Exhibitions at Tate Modern; Caroline Bourgeois, curator of the Pinault Collection; Curator XIV Bienal de Cuenca Jesús Fuenmayor; and Victoria Noorthoorn, Director of Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires.

While the prize has always done away with traditional rules of engagement, encouraging artists working in any medium, of any age and career trajectory to apply, this year, in collaboration with curator Pablo León de la Barra, Hiorns has pushed beyond the only remaining definitions and limitations of the prize—its site-specificity to the Sala Molinos. Hiorns has now, for the first time, broken with this tradition and the boundaries of interior exhibition space by reworking his proposal to take it outside, to the streets, and into the public sphere.

Exploring the history and context of Buenos Aires and the neighborhood of Puerto Madero, Hiorns reimagines experience of the urban landscape in his reclamation and reuse of abandoned or forgotten elements of the industrial, mechanized world and appropriation of an unused plot of land. The audience is presented with not only a new way of experiencing contemporary cultural production but with a new framework for seeing artifacts from our social and historical narratives and resignifying our relationship to them.

Much as he once buried a plane that was no longer in use as a performative earth work, Hiorns hints here to an excavation of sorts, an unearthing of the forgotten social, political, consumer, industrial, mechanical elements of our society and resignification of these elements vis-à-vis the presence of the bodies of naked youth. These young men put into stark relief the innocence and potential perversion of the youthful body as it confronts the man-made elements of a post-industrial society. These bodies brim with potential as they undress and dress again; and ultimately they come to occupy and hold ‘thresholds’ of space between artworks. The very act of their sitting upon or standing with an artwork in effect conjures the artwork into existence and in so doing, we, as the audience, are prompted to consider new potentials for our own lived experiences.

*Thresholding (En el Umbral)* is the spaces and pauses between works and between moments as well

as the promise of a becoming. The works are temporary and temporal, performative and sculptural, both architectonic as well as entirely of the landscape; they exist across disciplines and within time; and exist in the becoming, a process contingent upon ephemeral performance as well as the viewing and the presence of the audience.

The first edition of the Faena Prize focused on Argentina, the second on Latin America, and the third opened up to the world. The prize is now biennial and very international, seeking to generate dialogues across geographical boundaries. This is the first time that a British artist has won the prize and the work itself contains whispered references to the historic and military relationship between Argentina and the United Kingdom. Out-of-service jet engines that once flew in the Malvinas here serve as stark backdrop to youthful and naked bodies—haunting relics that cannot help but remind us of the ghosts of those lost in that campaign—the very earth beneath us revealed to be a cemetery of emotional and political detritus.

The process of working with Hiorns has allowed for a new development in his own personal trajectory towards a unique visual language that responds to the local neighborhood, the community, and the country. The proposal enriches our own experience of our oft-traversed and well-known landscapes to reveal forgotten histories—the traces of which Hiorns allows to take shape and reformulate upon a previously empty site—and ultimately inhabits our greatest hopes for what the Faena Prize can and should be.

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