

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Roger Hiorns. *Depotenziare*.**

Solo show

Curated and Critical Essay by **Tom Morton**

With a contribution by **Alessandro Rabottini**

**C+N Gallery CANEPANERI** is pleased to announce *Depotenziare*, the second solo exhibition in Italy by the British artist **Roger Hiorns** (b. Birmingham, 1975, lives and works in London). Comprising paintings, objects and a film, the works in the show employ an apparently simple set of material and conceptual processes — anointment, containment, concealment, reversal — to explore how power acts on and through bodies, technologies, and systems of belief, and how it might be neutralized.

In Hiorns' new paintings, abstracted, vaguely insectoid human forms engage in instinctive acts of what might be sex, or a new and ambiguous form of movement. With its blotchy washes of soiled turquoise and bruised pink pigment, the environment they inhabit — a landscape, a skyscape? — feels dreamy, almost fantastical, a place where customary logics do not quite obtain. Here and there, the surfaces of Hiorns' canvases are corrupted by fleshy polyps of latex, or else obliterated by crystalline blooms of blue copper sulphate, a substance suggestive of authorless, inorganic and all-consuming growth. The artist refers to these works as 'trans' paintings, calling to mind the Latin prefix meaning variously 'across', 'beyond', 'through', and 'so as to change'. Notably, their colours echo those of the transgender solidarity flag.

A pair of found white polystyrene packing containers lie open on the gallery floor like cattle troughs, or perhaps empty sarcophaguses. The artist has treated their interiors with a wash of liquified bovine brain matter. Now dried into a stable skin of structural protein, this material is a residue of unknown — and indeed, unknowable — cognitive activity.

In a found photographic image reversed onto canvas and spattered with blue copper sulphate crystals, we see two fundamentalist Christian protestors brandishing placards outside an abortion clinic. The backwards text reads 'PRAYER IS NOT A THOUGHT CRIME' — an unwittingly ironic statement assuming the pair

**14.11.2024 – 14.01.2025**

Opening Reception **November 14<sup>th</sup>, 6 PM**

C+N Gallery CANEPANERI

**Foro Buonaparte, 48 – 20121 Milan**

believe that their acts of supplication will be noted and honoured by a supernatural power.

Hiorns' new black and white film revisits his major project, *A Retrospective View of the Pathway* (2016), for which he buried a military aircraft in a field in Eastern England. Footage of the plane's interment has been reversed according to the Sabatier effect, so that dark tones appear light, and light tones dark — an echo of the reversal enacted by the artist, when he removed this deadly piece of machinery from the sky and placed it in the earth. The film's soundtrack features both field recordings of the burial, and the rumblings of a human digestive system. The suggestion is that the aircraft is being processed — even perhaps assimilated — by an unseen body. What strange nutrients, we wonder, might it give up?

(Tom Morton)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Roger Hiorns**, born in 1975 in Birmingham, England, lives and works in London. He received his BA (Hons) in Fine Art at Goldsmiths College, University of London in 1996. His works have been shown in international solo and group exhibitions. These include the Venice Biennale, MoMA PS1, New York, the Tate Modern, London, the Armand Hammer Museum of Art at UCLA, Los Angeles, the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and De Hallen, Haarlem. Hiorns' works can be found in institutional collections such as the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, and the Tate Modern, London. In 2009, Hiorns was nominated for the Turner Prize..

**Tom Morton** is a writer and curator based in Rochester, UK. His forthcoming and recent exhibitions include 'A Room Hung with Thoughts: British Painting Now' at The Green Family Art Foundation, Dallas (2025); 'The Kingfisher's Wing' at GRIMM, New York (2022); and 'Äppärät' at The Ballroom, Marfa (2015). He is a regular contributor to frieze, ArtReview and Art Basel Stories, and is the author of numerous exhibition catalogues.

**Alessandro Rabottini** is an art critic and curator who lives in London, and artistic director at Fondazione In Between Art Film.