

ArtReview

Navid Nuur at Dundee Contemporary Arts

by Martin Herbert

May 2011

Previewed

Vivian Suter
Kunsthalle Basel
through 1 June

Rina Banerjee
LA Louver, Los Angeles
9 May – 28 June

Navid Nuur
Dundee Contemporary Arts
through 15 June

Maria Eichhorn
Kunsthau Brezgenz
10 May – 6 July

Rebecca Horn
Sean Kelly, New York
10 May – 21 June

Wu Tsang
Isabella Bortolozzi Galerie, Berlin
2 May – 31 July

Allen Ruppersberg
Wiels, Brussels
16 May – 17 August

Yann Sérandour
GB Agency, Paris
through 31 May

Go-Betweens:
The World Seen Through Children
Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
31 May – 31 August

Prix Pictet
V&A, London
22 May – 14 June



In 1982, in her early thirties, the Buenos Aires-
 1 born, formerly Basel-based **Vivian Suter** arrived in Panajachel, Guatemala, while travelling through North and Central America, set up home in a former coffee plantation surrounded by grevillea, avocado and mango trees, and established two studios. In one she painted the village, its lake and nearby volcanoes: in the other, closeups of encroaching banana plants. At least that's a partial, benign-sounding summary: Suter, about whom information is scant and who doesn't seem to have had a solo show in a decade, appears to be a painter of inner volcanoes as well as real ones; twisty, dexterous landscapes, labyrinthine abstractions and hybrids of the two in a blazing palette and self-possessed modernist style. Here, Bice Curiger once wrote, "painting" ultimately becomes the building block, the matter of a new, living organism,

and one which seems to provoke that laconic remark at the end of a song by Vivian Suter: "good grief, this is me". Showing in a classy corner of former home turf, with her aesthetic current again, this could be Suter's moment.

2 Make a colourful segue to **Rina Banerjee**: the New York-based, Indian-born painter and sculptor (who lived in the UK in between) leverages a fundamental restlessness that manifests diversely, from iconography partaking of both Indian miniature painting and Victoriana to canvases strung with disruptive objects, from taxidermy alligators to amber vials and icons of multiple faiths. As her first LA show ought to demonstrate via new paintings, drawings and sculpture, Banerjee's rootless cosmopolitanism, her fruitful scorning of geographical and historical dividing lines, inevitably has sociopolitical undercurrents: it refuses the limitations

of religious dogmatism as a matter of course. And while her work's variety outwardly serves aesthetics, you're invited to think past that towards the process as allegorical of the global social, of issues of identity and ecology: as Banerjee said in a 2012 interview, 'when the powerful world presses hard, people get more oily, inventive and what was a terrible itch can become a triumphant molting'.

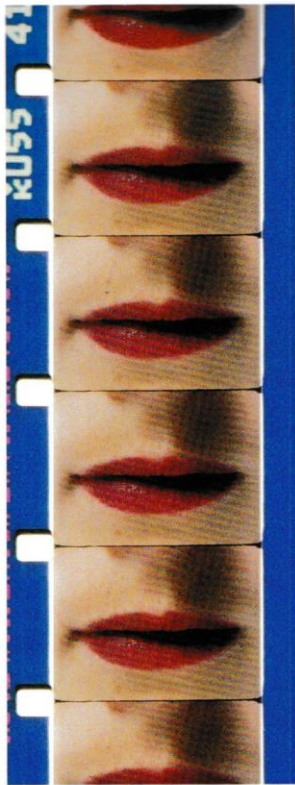
3 Now is when *ArtReview* leaps catlike into the big time. In **Navid Nuur's** exhibition at Dundee Contemporary Arts, writing about the exhibition, 'no matter what opinion is included', is to be included in the show itself, 'as an artwork', provided the following phrase is included: 'When you end and I begin. 2008-2014'. Presto: this is art. We're now intimidated to go on, naturally, but feel duty-bound to mention that Nuur's biggest UK



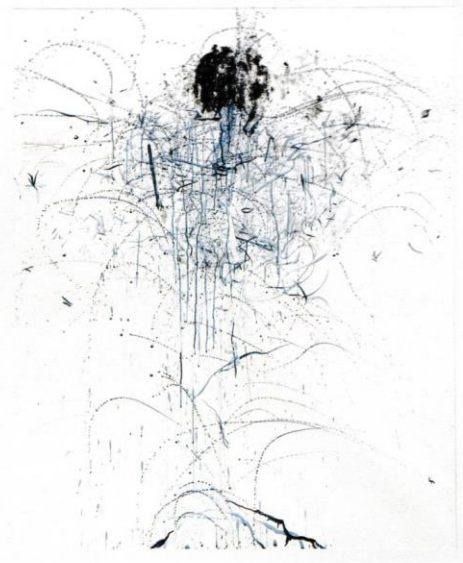
1 Vivian Suter, *Untitled*, undated, acrylic on canvas, 204 × 170 × 20 cm. Courtesy the artist, Stampa, Basel, and Gaga Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City



2 Rina Banerjee, *Her captivity was once someone's treasure and even pleasure but she blew and flew away took root which grew, we knew this was like no other feather, a third kind of bird that perched on vine intertwined was neither native nor her queens daughters, a peculiar other* (detail), 2011. © the artist. Courtesy LA Louver, Los Angeles



4 Maria Eichhorn, *Film Lexicon of Sexual Practices*, 1999/2005/2008, 11 16mm films (colour, silent, each 2 min 38 sec), performance. Film strip © Bildrecht, Vienna, 2014. Courtesy the artist



5 Rebecca Horn, *Der Untertan*, 2013, acrylic on paper, 207 × 168 × 5 cm (framed). © the artist. Courtesy Sean Kelly, New York

show to date also includes the equally reflexive *City Soil* (2009–14), a 1,100-litre bin filled with incinerated rubbish generated during the show's making, and *When Doubt Turns into Destiny* (1993–2011), a surveillance video in which Nuur dodges the security lights in Berlin's alleys and courtyards – two examples of what the Dutch-Iranian artist calls 'intermodules', evocations of the in-between, the transient.

Invited to participate in Documenta 11, 4 in 2002, **Maria Eichhorn** used her fee to found *The Maria Eichhorn Public Limited Company*, a corporation complete with real shares. Producing standalone artworks is not the German artist's thing: the economic context of art is. (See her raffle, during a 1995 show at Leipzig train station, for roundtrip tickets to nearby destinations; purchase of a plot of land for 1997's *Skulptur Projekte Münster*; and 1998 video

The Social-Historical Background to the Artist's Contract from Her Project The Artist's Reserved Rights Transfer and Sale Agreement by Robert Projansky and Seth Siegelaub). This time, the Fluxus- and Conceptualism-inspired, serially collaborating Eichhorn is producing works specific to the host institution, as well as documents relating to her Documenta work and its continuation. Additionally, in a related questioning of the social and behavioural normative and what is appropriate material to show in a gallery, she's presenting short 16mm-films from her series *Film Lexicon of Sexual Practices* (1999/2005/2008). Expect this mix of erotics and bureaucracy to be the rare show that bridges nipple-licking and stamp-licking.

Eichhorn, Einhorn, Horn: never let it be said we don't apply some stringent criteria to our 5 selection of shows here. In 1968 **Rebecca Horn**

produced her first body-related sculptures following an earlier yearlong spell in a sanatorium – recovering from lung poisoning after sculpting using glass fibre without a mask – during which time her parents died. The relationship between the fragile body and the environment became her theme, via her well known 'body sculptures' featuring prosthetic extensions (most famously *Einhorn*, 1971, featuring the artist with an enormous unicornlike horn jutting from her head). And bodies, their vitality and their imperfections, have been central to her diversifying oeuvre (installations, sculptures, performative works, paintings and films) ever since. In her last solo show at Sean Kelly, in 2011, Horn showed skittering abstract paintings and sculpture using auxiliaries for the body, including an arcing riding crop and copper piping;