

Dürst Britt & Mayhew

Exhibition title: my shadow chases the butterfly to another flower

Artist: Alejandra Venegas & Willem Hussem

Venue: Dürst Britt & Mayhew, The Hague, The Netherlands

Date: 18 February – 20 April 2023

Photography: Gert Jan van Rooij / copyright the artist & Dürst Britt & Mayhew, The Hague

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1. my shadow chases the butterfly to another flower, 2024, exhibition view, Dürst Britt & Mayhew, The Hague
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3. Alejandra Venegas, Jardín Irradiante, 2023, carved parota and cedar wood, gouache and wax, 42 × 30 × 5,4 cm
4. Willem Hussem, Ontvangen, 1924, woodcut on paper (edition of 25), 27 × 18 cm (print) / 50 × 40 cm (passe-partout)
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8. Willem Hussem, Bladeren, 1924, woodcut on paper (edition of 25), 25,5 × 20,6 cm (print) / 50 × 40 cm (passe-partout)
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10. Alejandra Venegas, Viento nocturno, 2023, carved parota and cedar wood, gouache and wax, 42 × 27,5 × 5 cm
11. Alejandra Venegas, Viento nocturno, 2023, carved parota and cedar wood, gouache and wax, 42 × 27,5 × 5 cm
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13. Alejandra Venegas, Agua que pudre, 2023, carved parota and cedar wood, gouache and wax, 46,5 × 46,5 × 5 cm
14. Alejandra Venegas, Agua que pudre, 2023, carved parota and cedar wood, gouache and wax, 46,5 × 46,5 × 5 cm
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16. Alejandra Venegas, Bosque de Febrero, 2023, carved parota and cedar wood, gouache and wax, 39 × 26 × 5,3 cm
17. Alejandra Venegas, Bosque de Febrero, 2023, carved parota and cedar wood, gouache and wax, 39 × 26 × 5,3 cm
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28. Alejandra Venegas, Huacalxochitl, 2023, carved cedar wood, gouache and wax, 66,5 × 28,7 × 6,5 cm
29. Alejandra Venegas, Huacalxochitl, 2023, carved cedar wood, gouache and wax, 66,5 × 28,7 × 6,5 cm
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32. Willem Hussem, Grassen I, 1924, woodcut on paper (edition of 25), 25,5 × 12,7 cm (print) / 50 × 40 cm (passe-partout)
33. Alejandra Venegas, Alejandra Venegas, Sotobosque, 2023, carved parota and cedar wood, gouache and wax, 46 × 27,7 × 5,3 cm

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34. Alejandra Venegas, Alejandra Venegas, Sotobosque, 2023, carved parota and cedar wood, gouache and wax, 46 × 27,7 × 5,3 cm

The duo exhibition 'my shadow chases the butterfly to another flower' presents a transhistorical dialogue between recent woodcarvings by **Alejandra Venegas** and woodcuts from 1924 by **Willem Hussem** (1900-1974).

Alejandra Venegas hand carves landscape scenes and natural motives from various sorts of wood native to Mexico, after which she colours them with gouache or oil. Uniting the natural, warm tones of the wood with stridently bright shades is a contrast she actively seeks for. Incorporating the natural irregularities of the wood makes it much more than just a panel to paint on and gives the work a definite sculptural character. For Venegas, these works have therefore become a meeting place between painting, sculpture and drawing, but also between nature and culture, the exterior and the interior.

Willem Hussem is commonly known as a modernist painter and poet, but the first half of his life he worked in a figurative way. In 1924 he experimented with a style that could be described as stylised symbolism. This resulted in a series of woodcuts that mainly depict abstracted floral and landscape motives. Several of these illustrated the poetry publication 'Zilveren Paarden' by Hussem's childhood friend Hugo van Mens and were presented the same year by Haarlem-based art dealer De Bois. Because this series remained the only time Hussem engaged in abstraction until 1936, it can be considered as a unique preliminary to his later work.

This show is the first iteration of a series of presentations in which Dürst Britt & Mayhew highlights the occasion of 50 years having passed since Willem Hussem's death. In the first half of 2024 we will exhibit his work at TEFAF Maastricht, Vitrine Bermondsey in London and Billytown in The Hague, followed by a soloshow in the gallery.

Alejandra Venegas (1986, Mexico City) studied Visual and Plastic Arts at La Esmeralda in Mexico City. Recent solo and duo exhibitions were mounted at Proyectos Monclova in Mexico City, Madragoa in Lisbon (with Alex Farrar), Kubikulo in Porto, Dürst Britt & Mayhew (with Paul Beumer) and at Casa Santa Maria de Fundación Casa Wabi. Her work has been presented by Dürst Britt & Mayhew at Art Basel Miami Beach, ARCO Lisboa, Zona Maco and LISTE Art Fair Basel.

Recent group exhibitions were mounted by the AkzoNobel Art Foundation in Amsterdam, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Querétaro in Santiago de Querétaro, Mexico and at Karen Huber Gallery in Mexico City. Work by Venegas is held in private and public collections, including Roche collection, Akzo Nobel Art Foundation, Tequila 1800 Colección, Fundación ARCO and Museum Voorlinden.

During his lifetime **Willem Hussem** (1900-1974) had solo exhibitions at Gemeentemuseum in Den Haag, Museum Het Prinsessehof in Leeuwarden and Stedelijk Museum in Schiedam and participated in major group exhibitions in Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam, Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven and Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. In 1960 he represented The Netherlands at the Venice Biennial.

After Hussem's death in 1974 retrospectives were mounted at Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam, Centraal Museum in Utrecht, Rijksmuseum Twenthe in Enschede, Museum Dordrecht and Museum Belvedere in Oranjewoud. Willem Hussem's work has recently been shown at Proyecto Paralelo in Mexico City, Artissima in Turin, Museum Jan Cunen in Oss, PS Project Space in Amsterdam and Art Cologne. In 2021 Dürst Britt & Mayhew mounted a retrospective at Pulchri Studio in The Hague with loans from museums, corporate and private collections.