

Upon reaching the gallery one is immediately struck by the festive golden yellow and white colors of the flags outside on the facade of the building. These flags are part of the project *Flag of Compassion* which was presented this summer in the Sonsbeek exhibition Arnhem. Other major works in the exhibition are the film *Blossom*, 2006, and the more recent work *Homeland, Part IX*, 2008. From the ongoing series *Pieta*, *Pieta 2007* will be shown.

***Blossom*, 2006 :**

This film juxtaposes photographs of dead young men with images filmed by the artist in the animated markets of Iran. The dead men are shown in a small glass case, a symbolic bridal room, in which relatives have placed memorabilia and flowers as well as transparent curtains, which sometimes look like veils. The colorful textiles in the market become symbols of a hidden life. They are like flowers, referring to the pain of missing and loss, but also to the joy of their beauty. From among the noises of the market, there slowly rises the reverberation of a procession passing through.–The critic Janneke Wesseling writes about *Blossom** “Hurkmans strives to express the unspeakable. Of all that cannot be expressed in words or be comprehended, this is most true of death. Hurkmans’ art works represent loss, emptiness, the absence of a loved one... In *Blossom* Hurkmans creates a fascinating reversal of things. The living talk, gesticulate, and negotiate, but we never actually get to see them. The dead ones however we do see, they even look straight at us. Death is present, while life is absent”

* AMC Magazine, February 2008

***Flag of Compassion*, 2002-till now :**

This project was presented to the public this summer by means of an 18 meter high pole on the spot in the Sonsbeek park where the art exhibition met the social life of the city. The *Flag of Compassion* consists of an undulating golden yellow horizontal bar centrally placed on a white field. The colour white symbolizes purity, non-violence and peace. The colour golden yellow symbolizes the energy of life, (human) warmth and compassion, positive forces of the human being. The *Flag of Compassion* is not the symbol of a nation, institution, society, political party or religious conviction but expresses an abstract concept of universal human value. It is a means for every individual to express compassion. See [HYPERLINK "http://www.undafoundation.nl/" \t "_blank"](http://www.undafoundation.nl/)

***Homeland, Part V*, 2002-2007 :**

Homeland, Part V, is closely related to the *Flag of Compassion*. One sees two older men, each in his own way expressing a form of compassion. One man is active, a worker, and the other seems to have a more reflecting, philosophical personality. Because the two monitors used face each other, a dialogue between the men is created. On one monitor, a man uses traditional means. He is a flag twirler and performs a flag pattern with the *Flag of Compassion*. He comes from the village where Hurkmans grew up and he expresses a pattern, 'a prayer of the flag'. This is a traditional and historical flag performance expressing symbolically how good conquers evil. In the accompanying video, *Endeavour*, an older man sits motionless on a chair under an oak tree. In his arms he holds a piece of golden yellow textile, similar to that from which The *Flag of Compassion* is made. It seems he wants to comfort the piece of textile.

Homeland, Part IX, 2008 :

The work *Homeland, Part IX*, 2008 is composed of small pieces of different red textiles. On each piece, embroidered by hand in white thread, is the name of a white flower. In many different ways this relates to other works of Hurkmans, for example, *Blossom* and the earlier film *Dear Son*.

Pieta 2007, 2007 :

Pieta 2007 is one of the ongoing series of self portraits entitled *Pieta*. Started in 1993 the series consists of black/white photographs in which a woman (the artist) sits on a pedestal in the middle of a space. She holds a shape on her lap. With each new *Pieta*, the surrounding space and the shape on the woman's lap is different. The shape adds a mysterious element to the work which symbolizes distorted human emotions. The work originates in the form and meaning of the *Pieta*, a religious image in which love and sorrow come together in great compassion as the Virgin Mary holds the lifeless body of Christ on her lap. MB

Rini Hurkmans (The Netherlands) had solo exhibitions in Lumen Travo Gallery, Amsterdam; Huis Marseille, Amsterdam; Holly Solomon Gallery, New York; Museum De Paviljoens, Almere; Noordbrabants Museum, 's-Hertogenbosch; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Galery M. & R. Fricke, Düsseldorf; De Zaak, Groningen, and many others. Her work has been shown in group exhibitions in the Netherlands like Sonsbeek 2008 in Arnhem and abroad.

At the moment she participate in the exhibition 'Breeze' (together with Fiona Tan and Nan Hoover) in the Phillippe Nelson-Peter Freeman Gallery in Paris. Hurkmans is professor at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam.

Lumen Travo gallery presents

RINI HURKMANS

From October 15th till November 15th

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From wednesday to saturday 13-18 pm, sunday 14-17 pm