

ART REVIEW

Chill out with Roni Horn's simply lovely works at the Nasher



Photos by Nan Coulter/Special Contributor

The Roni Horn exhibition concentrates on recent glass "sculpture," which is installed in the beautiful natural light of the Nasher Sculpture Center. The result is deceptively simple, encouraging quiet meditation.

So cool, they're hot

By RICK BRETTELL
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With the summer heat settling in for a prolonged stay, art museums are a wonderful place of escape — not only are they amply air-conditioned (with someone else paying the bills), but they have many works of art that are as aesthetically cooling as the air around them.

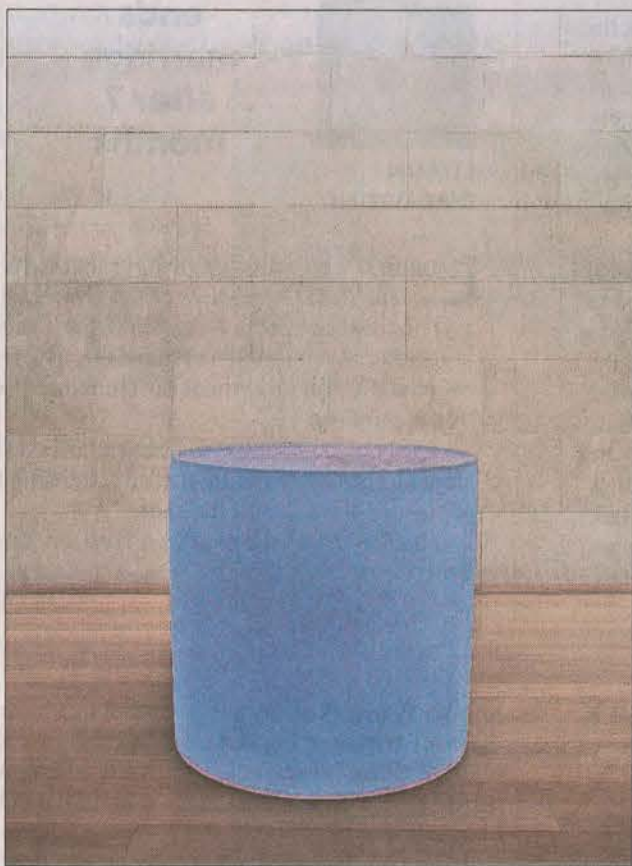
For me, the best museum exhibition for a summer day — or, when it's open, evening — is the Roni Horn exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center. It lasts through Aug. 20, so don't put it off too long.

Plan your life

"Roni Horn," exhibition continues at the Nasher Sculpture Center, 2001 Flora St., through Aug. 20. nashersculpturecenter.org.

Horn is a sculptor in full maturity. The New York native graduated with an MFA in sculpture from Yale University in 1978 and has had an active career in many mediums — drawing, photography, book arts, installation and, more traditionally, sculpture — the latter

defined as static artist-designed objects occupying space. The Nasher exhibition concentrates on recent glass "sculpture," which is installed in the beautiful natural light of the Nasher's main-floor gallery by the artist, working with the Nasher's curatorial and installation



Horn's works are glass embodiments of warm water, cold air and ice.

CONCERT REVIEW

John Mayer shared great solos, weird stories

He channeled Stevie Ray Vaughan, other guitar greats

By THOR CHRISTENSEN
Special Contributor

If nothing else, give John Mayer credit for trying to put chops back into pop.

Mayer had barely walked onstage Saturday night at American Airlines Center when he launched into a long electric guitar solo, the first of 20 or so solos he'd uncork during the two-hour concert. The message was clear: Mayer is a serious musician, not just some serial celebrity dater who writes songs about his exes and talks explicitly about his sex life in interviews (although, of course, he does that, too).

Late in the show, the affable Mayer thanked longtime fans who've "stuck it out" and stayed focused on his music, not his personal exploits. That's all well and good, but it's too bad Mayer's work onstage wasn't nearly as provocative as his offstage pursuits.

As a vocalist, Mayer got mixed results whenever he tried to push his bland, wispy tenor outside its comfort zone. The jazzy scat flourish at the end of "Daughters" was a nice touch; the high, strained pseudo-soul singing in "Vultures" was not.

Mayer's guitar soloing was hit and miss. He did a fine job of parroting other guitarists: You could hear snippets of Eric Clapton, B.B. King, Jeff Beck, Jerry Garcia, and of course, Stevie Ray Vaughan, his all-too-obvious main influence.

But Mayer rarely sounded like himself. Ninety-five minutes into the show, he finally found his teeth and bit hard into his guitar during

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Jason Janik/Special Contributor

Flanked by a top-notch band. John Mayer started his show Saturday at American Airlines Center with songs from his latest CD, *The Search for Everything*, and also played a solo acoustic

Show is a perfect escape for hot summer days

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The result is deceptively simple, encouraging quiet meditation and transforming the viewer almost into a dancer who moves about the ample spaces among the eight cylindrical glass sculptures.

Each is made of cast glass in a German fabrication studio used for years by the artist. Each is its own color; each the height of an average adult human torso, so that only our heads can look down into their ample centers.

The colors are cool and, although the outsides of the cylinders have a slightly grainy texture, the tops are shiny with circular depressions that suggest that the cylinders were rotated at high speed when molten. The shiny tops have the apparent wetness of water, and Renzo Piano's patterned ceilings make fabulous reflected patterns as if in revolving colored pools.

What is fascinating for us in summertime Dallas is to know that much of Horn's aesthetic derives from her numerous trips to Iceland, a geologically young landscape with a unique combination of fire and ice. This sense of blue and greenish pools of hot water in the frozen landscape is captured perfectly

in several of the cylinders at the Nasher.

The Nasher's label suggests that these sculptures link the generation of minimalist sculptors like Donald Judd, with whom Horn once collaborated, with the post-Minimalist generation like Felix Gonzalez-Torres, who dedicated work to Horn. While reassuring to art historians, such notions have little interest to the rest of us, who will find these sensuous, simple objects at once reductive and suggestive.

Pale lavender, the iciest of blues, the white of fallen snow, the pale gray of clouds, the yellowish green of glazed Chinese porcelain. The colors of the eight cylinders are so seductive and so difficult to name that they become mysteries in themselves. The shapes are so simple that we can know them easily as they float on the Nasher's floor.

The fact that they are at once massively heavy and fragile never occurs to us. They are glass embodiments of warm water, cold air and ice.

Rick Brettell is the founding director of the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History at the University of Texas at Dallas and a former director of the Dallas Museum of Art.



Nasher Sculpture Center

American artist Roni Horn, with Nasher Sculpture Center director Jeremy Strick, has works on display at the Nasher through Aug. 20.