

# Dieter Roth

# Diaries

**Exhibition** 2 August – 14 October 2012

**The Fruitmarket Gallery is proud to present this exhibition of the work of Dieter Roth (1930–1998), one of late-twentieth-century art's major figures. Roth was an artist of astonishing breadth and diversity, producing books, graphics, drawings, paintings, sculptures, assemblages and installation works involving video, sounds and recordings. He was also a composer, musician, poet and writer. Art and life for Roth flowed readily into each other, and much of the material for his artistic output came from his everyday life.**

This exhibition is the first to focus on the theme of the diary in Roth's work. Roth kept a diary throughout his life, and saw all art-making as a form of diary keeping. His diaries were a space to record appointments, addresses, lists and deadlines but also ideas, drawings, photographs and poems. They teem with graphic exuberance, and proved a rich source for his work. The Fruitmarket Gallery is fortunate in being able to show Roth's diaries to the public for the first time, as well as the hand-produced, photocopied 'copybooks' he made from them to sell to favoured collectors and friends, and two major installation works.

Many of Roth's major works can be understood as kinds of diaries. In the mid-1970s, he attempted to record a year of his life through rubbish, collecting and preserving all rubbish less than one or two sixteenths of an inch thick. The resulting work, *Flat Waste*, celebrates and subverts the ordering principle of the diary. *Solo Scenes*, a vast video diary, records the last year of Roth's life on 128 video monitors.

Although Roth died in 1998, his work remains of interest to artists and audiences alike. He has a particular connection to Edinburgh, having been part of Richard Demarco's exhibition *Strategy: Get Arts* at the 1970 International Festival. This will be the first time his work has been seen in Scotland since.

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The  
Fruitmarket  
**Gallery**



The Fruitmarket Gallery has produced a major new publication to accompany the exhibition. The book includes essays by Fiona Bradley, artist Andrea Büttner, and writer and curator Sarah Lowndes. It also includes new texts by Björn Roth, the artist's son and long-time collaborator and Jan Voss, who worked with Roth on his book projects, as well as a selection of interviews with Roth, translated into English for this publication. The book also reproduces pages of Roth's diaries for the first time, alongside images of installation works which relate closely to the theme of the diary.

### Notes to Editors

Dieter Roth (21 April, 1930 – 5 June, 1998) was an Icelandic artist of Swiss German origin. He represented Switzerland at the 1982 Venice Biennale, and received a number of awards and prizes, including the Genevan Prix Caran d'Ache Beaux Arts in 1991. His work has been, and still is, hugely influential.

The Fruitmarket Gallery is a publicly-funded art gallery of national and international significance, which aims to make contemporary art accessible without compromising art or underestimating audiences. The Gallery is Foundation Funded by Creative Scotland for around 50% of its running costs and must fundraise to support its exhibitions, learning and publishing programmes.

From top to bottom:

**Dieter Roth** *Solo Scenes*, 1997–98, installation of 128 video films  
Dieter Roth Estate. Courtesy Hauser & Wirth

**Dieter Roth** spread from *Diary*, 1967  
Dieter Roth Estate. Courtesy Hauser & Wirth

**Dieter Roth** *Flat Waste*, 1975–76/1992,  
flat materials in transparent sheets in 623 binders  
Friedrich Christian Flick Collection, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin

# Workshops

## **Art Session: Ways to Document**

*Sunday 5 August, 5–7pm. Free. 15 places.*

Join artist Morag Macdonald for a mixed-media workshop inspired by the Dieter Roth exhibition. This event is part of Art Session, the Gallery's programme for 13–25 year olds.

# Tours

## **In the Loop**

*Wednesday 5 September, 2–3pm. Free. 10 places.*

A tour of the exhibition for visitors who are hard of hearing.

## **In the Frame**

*Wednesday 5 September, 6.30–8pm. Free. 10 places.*

Artist Emily Learmont leads a tour of the exhibition, specifically designed for visually impaired visitors, including detailed descriptions of Dieter Roth's work and practice.

**Friday tour**, 2pm. Free.

Drop in any Friday for an informal tour.

# Seminar

## **'An awfully dreadfully fearful drain he fell down into, wriggling there, at the bottom, in his wet pants\*': Dieter Roth and Art History**

*Thursday 4 October, 6–8pm. £10/8.*

Art historians Deborah Lewer (University of Glasgow), Luke Skrebowski (University of Cambridge), John-Paul Stonard (Courtauld Institute of Art, London), curator Daniel Herrmann (Whitechapel Gallery, London) and writer Sarah Lowndes (Glasgow School of Art) examine Roth's place in relation to art making in the twentieth century and his legacy for artists now.

\*The title of the seminar is extracted from an 'autobiography' that Dieter Roth included in the book he made with Richard Hamilton, COLLABORATIONS OF CH. ROTHAM in 1977.

## **Booking is recommended for all events.**

To book your place call **0131 226 8181** or email **bookshop@fruitmarket.co.uk**