

## ***Between Bodies***

3 /11/18- 25/11/18

Assembly House Leeds

PV 3rd November, 6-9pm

Emma Cousin, Lewis Hammond, Mona Osman, Neena Percy, Ellie Pratt,  
Babette Semmer, Lucy Stein, Emma Talbot, Rose Williams, Tom Worsfold

Painting has often depicted the human figure as an image or surface, its exterior displayed in aesthetic form. Similarly today, much is seen to be presented on the outside. We wear our lives like clothing, a patchwork of events, photos and opinions displayed and performed online. As Amelia Jones writes, 'we don't know how to exist anymore without imagining ourselves as a picture.' But what really lies behind or beyond those chosen moments is much more complex. Painting, with its inherently selective process of exposure and erasure, has the potential to reveal the less perfect but far more intimate reality.

In *Between Bodies* the image of the body is distorted, doubled, fragmented and expanded through paint to probe what comes from within - to go beyond - the body.

In order to make sense of the self and its' place within its' environment, this exhibition explores the dichotomy between the image and the bodily experience. The artists exhibited depict disparate worlds in paint to create spaces that are sparse or intricately decorative, either way ambiguous settings for figures to inhabit. Be they placed within familiar domestic interiors, or moving fluidly through the sublime outdoors, the body is always framed within the canvas. Just as the experience of the self is morphed from both outer surroundings and inner consciousness, the works shown reflect this by fusing painterly tropes with depicted imaginings and figures that address their own and each other's existence.

*Between Bodies* presents works that build tension and relationships between depicted figures while also setting up potential dialogues between the paintings. The group of artists reveal the inner workings of human experience while testing the boundaries of figuration within contemporary painting. The body is explored as an image and vehicle for thought; through visceral skin and flesh; challenging pose and gaze; with poetics and feeling.

*A man lies diagonal, a white cloth bathing his eyelids in a gentle darkness. His limp thoughts wandering sadly through unknown objects. A parting with fingers tugging gently at the sides until they come across a flower unfurling in UV rays. Petals curling away from each other more like selves being shed in the morning light. But morning never lasts. The girl sits staring, vacant eyes darker than the glowing grass. Her body frozen against fluid moving air whipping around her. Suddenly flowers dry up, their rounded curves drying into pointed thorns. A holly leaf perched on bare cheek. Turn this way not that. You won't find it here. A heavy drop into blackness. Velvet bodies hiding, a molten tear suspended between skins, left behind, waiting to be caught by another. If we keep plunging further down maybe we fall off the earth. If it's not flat it could be vertical. Don't fall off the bottom of the ledge. But when he fell, an encompassing world of bulbous forms and humming colours enveloped, suffocated him. Now he lies in bliss.*

Curated by Neena Percy and Ellie Pratt