

PLATFORM FOR EMERGING ARTS #22

15 May – 25 May

PV 14 May 18.30 - 21.00

Platform #22 is a mixed-media exhibition showcasing the work of an exciting group of home-grown and International talented emerging artists selected by the curatorial team at Leyden Gallery. Held in one of East London's most vibrant independent art spaces, the Platform for Emerging Arts exhibitions are comprised of emerging artists selected for their innovation and skill; previous participants have gone on to receive both critical acclaim and commercial success.

For Platform #22 Leyden Gallery is proud to present the art of seven exceptional artists. For some it is their inaugural exhibition, for others the first time their work is exhibited in London.

With the development of each of Leyden Gallery's Platform shows there is an opportunity for the public to both see and purchase art from emerging artists at a critical early stage of their careers.

MATHILDE LEBRETON

Mathilde Lebreton is a French artist and architect, who has been developing the *Sans Titre* series since 2014. Lebreton's paintings are a succession of personal moments and accumulated stories, one giving rise or crashing into the other until mingling and starting to have their own existence. These paintings are lacerated, scratched and written into in an abstract language. Lebreton has a sensual relationship with the canvas; needing to touch the surface, to feel the marks and wounds in the paint, to see the light that manages to make its way through the carved passages. The colours take their time to reveal themselves, the dark tones bringing a sense of silence and deep intimacy.

EVANGELINE BALDWIN

Evangeline Baldwin looks at the possibility of communicating the 'in-between' stages of categorisation; between humans, the man-made and nature, and the shapes, forms and colours that exist within these spaces. Baldwin's paintings explore how objects and lifeforms interact. Baldwin looks outside of the theme of 'objects', and instead observes how they affect reality and how we affect theirs. The artist considers philosopher Maurice Blanchot's statement; "Language is murder. When we name something, we attach to it a meaning, purpose and function that is relevant to us; disallowing the object to just 'be'". Baldwin disrupts this system, refusing to name any of her artworks and letting them speak for themselves, believing objects to have their own identity, history and individuality. Baldwin abstracts the subjects of her paintings, removing their 'objecthood', altering their scale, context and colour. This process removes the purpose and function of the objects, rendering them unidentifiable, and therefore free.

JO KIMMINS

Jo Kimmins creates images that are a contemplation and connection with something beyond the norm of everyday life. Kimmins searches for the hidden or unnoticed in nature. These images cannot be deciphered with an explanatory narrative, but instead they create an aesthetic upheaval that resists any attempt to diminish them to some practical understanding of tidy justification. Kimmins latest series *Cetacean* is the documentation of a decomposing whale, which provided an endlessly changing canvas to capture. The artist became impervious to the corporeal reality of the carcass and instead found great beauty in it. On each visit 'she' presented something new, and Kimmins' camera provided the power to solicit from her decaying cadaver underlying forms of a more magnificent transformation. The whale was resurrected into a language of visual poetry. The work is more about life than death as sinews, skin and blubber are reborn as planetary landscapes and mythical animals with an inexplicable beauty of emotional resonances that find new form within Kimmins photographs.

STEFANIA PINSONE

Stefania Pinsone has developed a painting style that combines strong figurative imagery with the elegance of new contemporary Impressionism of the digital age. The artist explores the distortion of images as seen through a video screen. Pinsone's work is a critique of contemporary times and the way in which we see, pursuing new figurative art with a new language and new materials, including Plexiglass, LED lights, rhinestones and resin. Pinsone usually uses a very fine brush and a digital image as the model, looking at the subject directly on a screen. In reference to the practice of the Impressionists, Pointillists and Divisionists, Pinsone keeps individual colours divided, so that they remain bright and evoke the feeling of looking at a glowing screen. Pinsone was born and raised in Rome, and now lives in Switzerland where she paints full time.

YASMIN NOORBAKHSH

Yasmin Noorbakhsh is an Iranian artist based in London, whose work responds to the politics and history of Iran. Noorbakhsh's recent works exist as a protest against restrictions, describing the duality and contradictions contemporary women face in an Islamic society. *SHAH RAFT*, translated to mean 'King is gone', investigates how we can look at a social reality that has happened in the context of the masses from an abstract point of view. The artist questions how images that have flooded visual literacy by right or left propaganda devices can be utilised, in response to the Iranian Revolution in 1979. *SHAH RAFT* is an interdisciplinary project that includes installation, collage, mono-prints, performance and video art. This work is not intended to provide an answer or to be a mourning picture, instead it is a window for the artist to explore questions that three generations of Iranian people have faced since that day.

CLAIRE MONT SMITH

Clare Smith works with threads of storylines that may arise from everyday activities, events or news and follows them through different processes and materials. Whilst centered around observation and reflection, Smith's procedures embrace the accidental, the contingent, even the arbitrary. The artist explores the possibility of 'error' and 'mistake' and to incorporate unexpected occurrences. Smith's drawn attention to process and context, to the corporeal action of mark-making and to traces of the particular moment in which the work was produced. The process of multiple plate printing offers the possibility of developing several elements separately and putting them together, perhaps randomly, in the final printing process, leaving the final interaction open and unexpected. This performative process could be analogous to writing a play where the scene is set the characters are written but the interaction and development are still to come via actors, directors, designers, audience. The elements are known but their final juxtaposition is not, and when revealed has multiple consequences which can be acted upon.

KENDRA MCNICHOLS

Kendra McNichols is a West Indian-American multidisciplinary artist based in London. She is currently pursuing a Masters of Art in Photography at Royal College of Art. McNichols' photographic practice explores the aesthetic of Blackness focusing on its various aspects through identity, spirituality and sexuality. Her practice is immensely experimental, fusing varied mediums: print, painting, installation, sound, performance, video, textile and jewellery/metal. Hailing from a West Indian-American background, she is inspired to produce artwork that captures the urban cultural aesthetics of Blackness authentically and unapologetically. McNichols utilises research of race and social politics on Black culture to bring awareness about discrimination and colourism.