



Body Language
9 June - 15 July 2023
Private View: 8 June, 6 - 8 PM

Body Language is a group show exploring the fragmentation and abstraction of the body across the practices of three artists; Kim Booker, Hanna Hansdotter and C. Lucy R. Whitehead. Working in painting, drawing, and glass, these artists investigate the relationship between the physical and emotional body.

Using the language of abstraction, these artists investigate how emotions and psychological states are closely interwoven with the body. Playing with a sense of malleable bodily borders and movement, these works suggest a continual state of becoming and ever-shifting emotional dynamics. Fragments of the physical meet the abstract, resulting in bodies that are detached from any set narrative or identity.

Large abstract paintings by Booker employ figure, gesture, and colour to express the psychology of the female experience. Her canvases are filled with layers of mark-making, from energetic scratches to sweeping swashes of colour and sections that are scrubbed out, over-painted or obscured. Her use of varied strokes and scrawls of colour creates a dynamic visual landscape suggestive of conflicting emotional states, from anguish to joy. An expression of the artist's innermost emotional and psychological impulses, these works are semi-autobiographical. However, they revel in their abstraction, not tied to any place, time, or narrative. Booker's artworks serve as portals, allowing us to navigate the intricate labyrinth of our own consciousness.

Paintings and drawings by Whitehead further explore similar themes of embodiment. She is interested in moments where one becomes aware of how the physical self is not something that is possessed or controlled, but rather something inhabited. Her paintings feature bodies that bruise, bloat, swell, and sag in an emotional fleshy-toned palette. In a magnified view, limbs and torsos - separated from any discernible identity or gender - extend to the canvas edge. Whitehead's bodies are cropped to the point where figuration transcends into the abstract. With her use of the physical body as material, Whitehead questions whether a body can be just a body, a vessel removed from personal emotion.

Hansdotter's sensual glass sculptures offer a three-dimensional perspective on this theme. Within their abstraction her objects take on a distinct human character, resulting in what the artist describes as "fleshy, glass bodies". Taking inspiration from centuries of glass blowing in Sweden, Hansdotter blows molten glass into custom moulded iron frameworks, where the glass is then left to settle into varying and

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unexpected shapes. Similarly to a body in motion, the glass stretches, twists and expands in reaction to the heat. As the glass rapidly cools and becomes less pliable, Hansdotter makes final adjustments to the piece, before it freezes into its final position. Just as the human body, glass is brittle, precious and organic, adapting with age and constantly changing with time.

To coincide with the opening, we are pleased to present *Sonic Archetypes (2020)*, a performance by interdisciplinary artists Hollie Miller and Craig Scott. Through the use of sound, movement and costume, this powerful performance investigates the limitations of our human body, metamorphosis, and becoming.

About the artists

Kim Booker (b. 1983) lives and works in Margate. She graduated with a BFA from City and Guilds of London Art School in 2019 and has since exhibited widely in the UK, and abroad, including Paris, Barcelona, and South Korea. Most recently, she has relocated to the TKE Studios in Margate. Recent solo exhibitions include 'No-man's-land' at Jari Lager Gallery in Cologne (2023), and 'June is the Saddest Month' at Annka Kultys Gallery in London (2022). In July 2023, she has a solo exhibition 'I Want to Live Twice' at Bo Lee and Workman Gallery in Somerset.

Hanna Hansdotter (b. 1984) is a Swedish artist specialising in glass. She holds a BFA from Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm, Sweden (2017), and received her glass-blowing qualifications from Kosta Glass Center, Sweden, in 2010. Recent solo exhibitions include 'Rabbit Hole' at Kalmar Konstmuseum in Kalmar, Sweden (2021), 'Ornamental Abstractions Of Industrial Memories' at Ronneby Kulturcentrum in Ronneby, Sweden (2020), and 'Fading Prints' at Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde in Stockholm (2020). Recent group exhibitions include 'The Collection' in Sweden (2022), and two shows, *Once Twice* and *East Hampton Hole*, at The Hole in New York (2021).

C. Lucy R. Whitehead (b. 1991) lives and works in London. After graduating from Camberwell College of Arts with a BA (Hons) in Drawing, she obtained an MA in Painting from the Royal College of Art (2021), where she received the school's Basil H. Alkazzi Scholarship for 2019-2021. Recent solo exhibitions include 'When The Hammer Breaks' at Incubator (2022) and 'Stranger' (2022) at the Grove Collective, both in London. She has also shown in the recent London group exhibitions 'SKIN DEEP' at Studio West (2023), 'Inverted Corneum' at Split Gallery (2023), and 'Positions' at Alma Pearl Gallery (2023).

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