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THIS **INSTEAD** **OF**
JVHLL

PRIVATE VIEW 6TH MARCH 2019

ARTISTS TALK & TEA 4 - 6PM SATURDAY 30TH MARCH

OPEN FROM 7TH - 30TH MARCH 2019

**HERMIONE ALLSOPP
MEG LIPKE**

**ALEXANDRA BARAITSER
TREVOR BURGESS**

**NELSON DIPLEXCITO
GEORGE WILLS**

**CATHERINE FERGUSON
TIM RENSHAW**

**OLHA PRYMAK
JULIE FOUNTAIN**

INFLUENCE | INSPIRATION

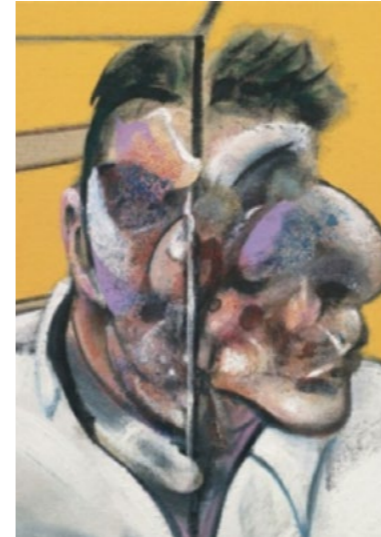
'Close friends', wrote Vincent Van Gogh, 'are truly life's treasures'. Vincent's intense and turbulent relationship with Paul Cezanne had a profound impact upon his work, and he dreamed of founding a larger brotherhood of painters who could all live and work together. The history of art has been shaped by such friendships: from Donatello and Brunelleschi in renaissance Italy, to the twentieth-century giants Picasso and Matisse. Alliances of this kind merge two sets of artistic DNA in works that have been indelibly influenced by the other.

The greatest artistic friendship to have shaped modern British art is that between Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud. The two painters met in 1945 and became very frequent companions in Soho's hard-drinking art scene for the next twenty-five years. Both men were notoriously ruthless, even callous, in their very different personal lives; indeed, Bacon claimed that all the love he had he gave to painting. Yet a profound mutual respect and admiration grew through their shared obsession with ceaseless artistic exploration.

The relationship between Bacon and Freud is represented most vividly in the numerous portraits that they painted of each other: works that express their mutual fascination – and their sense of rivalry. These portraits also exemplify the fact that creative dialogues can exist deep beneath the superficial appearances of artworks, transcending the most extreme differences in practice and style. The two portraits illustrated here could not present a greater aesthetic contrast. Freud's portrait of Bacon (a preparatory



Lucian Freud, *Francis Bacon*, 1952, Tate Gallery



Francis Bacon, *Three Studies of Lucian Freud*, (detail), 1969. Private collection of Elaine Wynn, on loan to the Portland Art Museum

study for a polychrome final version, stolen and now lost), is serene and contemplative. With meticulous care, Freud marshals the particular details of Bacon's face into a harmonious whole, surveying it like a dramatically lit landscape. Bacon's portrait of Freud, which forms part of a larger triptych, is tortured with distortion as the face flies apart into visceral abstraction. A fragmented double perspective that shows us the face both from the front and the side, combines with wildly gestural liquifying strokes to allow us to see within the head itself.

Underneath these extreme stylistic differences lie intersecting concerns through which Freud and Bacon challenged and emulated the other. Both men sustained an intense fascination with the human form and a desire to find new languages to represent it in a modern age. They also shared a deeply sensual engagement with the materiality of paint and an urgent drive towards exploring and evoking psychological intensity. In spite of the stark differences between the results of their explorations, these works manifest an essential kinship and mutual sense of inspiration. This exhibition explores the ways in which such reciprocal exchanges continue to enrich the work of artists today by presenting five dialogues between ten contemporary artists.

Dr Jane Partner, 2019

Fellow and Director of Studies in English, Trinity Hall, Cambridge. MA, PhD, PGDIP



Hermione Allsopp *Pile up*, cement, clothes, 135 x 30 x 30cm, 2018



HERMIONE ALLSOPP | MEG LIPKE

Meg Lipke *Tongue*, Fabric dye and beeswax on muslin, thread, synthetic fiber stuffing, 48 x 23cm, 2016

ALLSOPP | LIPKE - IN CONVERSATION

Tongue Tied - A conversation about the processes of making a collaborative sculpture between two countries.



Hermione Allsopp. *Old Trusty*.
mattress, paint, canvas, shoddy, cable ties. 90 x 150 x 90cm. 2019

who may have sat on it, used it, played out banal or important moments of their lives on it. But then you deconstruct it- or reconstruct it into something less familiar in a new physical shape. My work has a similar pathos although it always starts from flat cloth that is painted, sewn and stuffed - given 'body' to.

HA That physical 'bodily-ness' was what we wanted to bring together. We both also work in a freely evolving way which has been important in this process.

HA We started with a decision about how to work together whilst in two different countries. I sent you an image of an unfinished piece that I thought we could work with and you responded by making a painted canvas to work with and sending a completed work called *Tongue* to exhibit and respond to. I enjoyed the bodily nature and painted surface of *Tongue*. Its stuffed ridges reminded me of the padding in the work I sent you.

HA I have wanted to work with you since we met and exhibited together in a group exhibition in California in October 2017.

ML I was completely intrigued when you wrote about the idea for this exhibition and I wanted to be part of it. When we met I had an immediate kinship with your sculptures.

HA Our work is very different yet formed a natural conversation. You are a painter, but your painting is stuffed. This upholstered 'padding' and materiality formed a strong link between our works. I was also excited by the boldness of your painting and its abstract yet referential nature.

ML There's something in each of our work about the absence of the body from a site that signifies the body. For instance your use of second hand furniture evokes all the people

ML The limitations of working from a flat image of your chair-based piece encouraged me in thinking about a two dimensional response. I wasn't sure exactly about the colours I was seeing: it turns out the greens I used are a lot more heightened. I unrolled a long thin piece of canvas and built up simple painted forms on it combining geometric shapes and organic shapes in greys, pinks and greens. I was trying to imagine it being rolled and stuffed and how the images would translate into a linear form. Along the way I sent you progress snaps on Whats App.

HA The work soon evolved away from the original starting point. After receiving your work, I found a different piece of furniture (a small similarly coloured chaise that I thought complemented your painting) that I cut up to alter its structure. This also linked with a work I had previously shown with you. The work then began to evolve through a combination of discussions and many images.

ML From this point on, I was watching your creative process and you were making decisions. Knowing this would be the scenario, I tried not to be attached at all to the painted cloth I sent, and encouraged you to cut up my work- even to destroy it if necessary. It must have been clear to both of us that we work in a similar way. And I am so into the final piece and how it turned out!! It's very dynamic, free-standing and spiral-like (most of my work remains on the wall like a painting). I am really proud of it and in awe of your artistic process. The burden of this collaboration definitely rested on you! Hopefully we will do it again the other way around.

HA It has been a challenging experience for me. I felt humbled and daunted to be allowed to involve myself in another artist's process.

My beginnings were somewhat timid and I wanted to honour your process more. Being bolder moved the work on. You have been generous and trusting. In making this work I have learnt and gained by this communal activity.



Hermione Allsopp and Meg Lipke. *Tongue-Tied*,
mattress, paint, canvas, shoddy, cable ties. 90 x 105 x 95cm. 2019



Alexandra Baraitser *Lightness and Vision*. oil on canvas, 94 x 94cm, 2019



Trevor Burgess. *A Place to Live L6*. oil on plywood, 67 x 122cm, 2013

BARAITSER | BURGESS - IN CONVERSATION

AB *Lightness and Visions* was a response to your painting from the series *A Place to Live*. I am drawn to the ethereal atmospheric urban space with its buildings and trees, ... I love the way the colours of the buildings are bounced around and reflected off the trees and vice versa. Everything is calculated, from the long landscape format of the board to the lines of perspective and the softness of the trees.



Alexandra Baraitser *The Perfect 50s Housewife*
oil on canvas, 75cm x 123.5cm, 2018

to avoid making safe and pre-planned work. I embrace the safety of controlled painting. There are various 'planned' stages of working that I go through, starting with cherry picking images from a range of vintage magazines and finishing with paint – the result is quite hyperreal. My painting *The Perfect 50s Housewife* is careful, minimal and pared down – as well as monochrome. I like to paint a subject (such as architecture or chair design), that I find to be beautiful and skilfully constructed, but see the painting as a particularly crafted object in itself. In my opinion the effect of painting or at least the process of painting can be calculated.

TB Of course there is an element of plotting and planning. But the thrill comes for me from what paint can do, when something in the process surprises me and gives me a glimpse of something I wasn't expecting and hadn't seen.

AB *A Place to Live* is about working from found photos and it explores the relationship between a found image and the sensuality of paint - which is something that I engage with in my work.

TB I am surprised that you find the effect of the painting calculated. It certainly didn't feel that way in doing it. It's one of a long series of paintings of houses in London, in which I was seeking to convey an atmosphere or effect that architecture creates - a feeling of how a certain environment can visually saturate your experience. The paintings derived from little estate agent ads cut from newspapers. But what I was seeing in them were my familiar memories of the everyday urban streets and houses in London that surround me and seep into my life.

AB Yes I see. Talking about calculation and control, you speak of how you want

TB For me photos are also a starting point. Usually they are my own photos. This series was an exception in using found images, but they were images of the built environment that surrounds me, so they were very familiar – the streets, the houses, the London light. In the process of making the paintings I am trying to recover a visual experience that has affected me. And that experience is what the painting leads me back to if and when it comes together successfully. I'm intrigued by *The Perfect 50s Housewife*, what were your thoughts behind it?

AB *The Perfect 50s Housewife* is concerned with issues surrounding gender identity, with a focus on the maternal and domestic space. It's based on a photo I found of an advert for an American fridge. Personality and identity is something I've explored throughout my career. In the course of a person's life, their interests, clothing, furniture form the building blocks of 'who they are'. The mother and daughter's relationship particularly interests me. It's telling - there are messages here. I like the ubiquitous lights and kitchen utensils and I tried to represent the slightly out of focus quality that was part of the original photograph. It was important to me to capture through my brush strokes, the movement of their body language. It's as if the girl is saying 'look what I have, you can have this too'.

TB When I was thinking about making a new painting for this exhibition in response to your work I had in mind some of your images of home and shop interiors. This painting, like yours, has a mother and daughter at its heart. I couldn't paint about the 1950s though, so I was looking for something from life around me today in the context of the streets in Deptford where I live, that might reflect back on the subjects you are painting. *Models for life* has emerged. It's gone through several stages of overlain layers that has brought out the layering in the image. This has reminded me that the structure of a painting is as delicate and subtle as a human relationship – and as hard to get right!



Trevor Burgess. *Models for life*
oil on board, 100 x 122cm, 2019



Nelson Diplexcito. *Portrait 25*. oil on paper, 65 x 60cm, 2018



George Wills. *Portrait*. oil on paper, 69 x 51cm, 2018

DIPLEXCITO | WILLS - IN CONVERSATION

ND George, we've been speaking a lot about the activation of paintings recently.

GW Yes, for me, there is no activation without an act. It's the pivot point in making a painting whereby a revision of sorts is often required, but always of great psychological consequence. It's the moment at which temper meets its maker for the first time, and they agree the road back is long and it's time to talk.



Nelson Diplexcito. *Carmen Amaya*
oil on canvas, 158 x 131cm, 2018

ND I know that in the way that we work there is always a form of optimism initially in setting down the marks. If there is a joyous moment in painting it is perhaps this moment for me of marking the surface. In setting down the mark, the surface very quickly establishes itself as a space. The painting then takes on an appearance and a presence. The channel is wide, the painting and you are travelling in the same direction. In time you believe yourself closer to the end than to the beginning but this is only blind belief because the painting starts to work against you. You show all the signs of knowing too much.

GW I know exactly what you mean, it is a channel. But also sometimes it feels as if the painting knows too much. When this happens, I've gone too far - I meddle with the real - I realise it's foolish and pull back; but the exchange is vital to 'true' painting. You know, painting which speaks most often says very little, painting balanced in precision and ambiguity. Of course the psychological impact of a painting relies on the logic the image proposes, but it's crucial not to falsify; I'm suspicious of invention.

ND Yes, but the channels that once were wide are now narrower and so also is the margin for error.

GW Definitely.

ND But, knowing that the way back is longer you sign a treaty of sorts and the deeper you go down this road, the less you appear to be able to see. The work slows down for me because I no longer recognise what I have painted. The initial transmission of energy has led to a form that is more antagonistic than co-operative and you begin to realise you no longer call the shots or possess the measure of the work. Then, there is a moment when you cannot stand the silence, its unfamiliarity and the inactivity any longer. I know I have to do something radical to regain a connection to the work.

GW Yes, I agree. But I think this is made doubly difficult when working with photography. The photographs are at once abundant and hollow. It's often said they mediate the real, but it's not at all the case. They're seductive, yes, but lack exactly what it is the painter desires most. And what the painter desires most can only be trapped at its most alive in paint. To activate a painting is to act quickly, there's one chance, perhaps two, three and you're dealing with a different kind of painting.

ND You're absolutely right. What begins is a series of activations that need to take place, I agree. There is always a risk of losing the painting but you have to take it. Often only your instincts provide a guide. What you hope is to bring it back into your consciousness and keep it alive.

GW Absolutely!

ND For me, painting is about an arrival, where the space acts simultaneously as seeing point and revealing/appearance point. This arrival can act both as a point of coalescence and of division. If division, it is the divide between what can be described and what cannot be measured or known. One without the other is a form of closure that works against arrival.



George Wills. *Void*
oil on canvas, 180 x 100cm, 2018



Catherine Ferguson. *Heft*. acrylic on plywood, 35 x 41cm, 2019



Tim Renshaw. *Notebook YC*. oil on aluminium, 18 x 14cm, 2018

FERGUSON | RENSHAW - IN CONVERSATION



Catherine Ferguson.
Reflections on Black.
acrylic and conte crayon
on canvas,
170 x 120cm, 2011

Having been familiar with each other's work over many years, the formal nature of this project has given Tim and I the opportunity to make some new work in the context of a developing conversation. The nature of Painting remains an open question for me and it goes without saying that how an other's work, contemporary or historical, becomes assimilated into one's own is no simple matter. For a long time now, I have explored the invisible forces and rhythms which animate certain works of art in an effort to find a future for myself in painting. My response to *Notebook Sliding* is such an exploration in the context of an on-going interest in Caravaggio's painting of Salome in the National Gallery. Through this exchange I have come to understand that the challenge I face is to create a system in my own work which is capable of allowing something in from Caravaggio's figurative painting; one that unlocks something of its mystery whilst getting closer to inhabiting that gap between comprehension and admiration.

The overlap between our work relates to a shared concern with systems that organise the relations between forms.

TR What I was most struck by in the recent work you exhibited at Drift was a quality of lightness and one that animated and passed through the other parts of the painting. This was particularly evident where the white ground of the painting was almost indistinguishable from the white wall that surrounded it. Partially dissolved onto the wall the painting seemed to hover. As though to ground the surface but also with the effect of exaggerating the sense of animated hovering were thick black lines that formed a square. It alludes to a Mondrian painting, it is a focal point but one that is swept up in the delirious expansive gestures that circulate around the left hand side of the painting. Porosity and the translucency within colour resist the hold of the black square and set form in motion. The painting swells from the wall to create a sensation of perceptual instability. Perception wrapped around by the painting rather than occupying a place outside the work.

CF In TR's painting there is a system that organises relations of surface, edge and depth. So, for example, in *Notebook YC* there is a tension between the painting as object and the painting as pictorial surface. The suggestion of illusory or inscribed spaces on the surface paradoxically amplifies our perception of the materials of oil paint and aluminium. Attention moves toward the edge of the picture plane and, instead of a frame that might separate illusion from the reality of the external world, there is the sensation of thickness. Although, this suggests a stack of pages underneath this thick-ness is not illusory but it is a 'conceptual' depth. We might think of it as the infra thin spaces between those pages before or after this one opened before us, or the depth of the written content that we cannot see but imagine to be there.

The memory of turning, reading or writing on the pages of the notebook in hand infuses the depth signified by the conventions of figuration which, having lost their illusionistic function, bring painting's history into view.



Tim Renshaw. *Oblique turning wall*
oil on aluminium, 18 x 14cm, 2019



Olha Pryymak. *The Beloved*, oil on canvas, 40 x 50 cm, 2019



Julie Fountain. *Passing Through*, gouache on paper, 29.7 x 42cm, 2019

FOUNTAIN | PRYYMAK IN CONVERSATION

We start by looking at small watercolours and gouaches by Julie Fountain.



Julie Fountain. *In the Future*
acrylic on linen, 50 x 40cm, 2019

JF Gardening is a way of controlling nature. You can shape nature, create your own nature. For our last exhibition at Lewisham Arthouse I made work about gardening as my parents are keen gardeners. I also made work about our local community garden here in Bethnal Green. The community garden is more in line with the idea of sharing cultures and communicating with others as it is a social enterprise as well as being about growing plants and food.

OP You made a painting of Ingrid who leads the community garden project. I would like to meet with her and make some work about the garden. I could make a kind of artistic 'preserve' from the plants.

JF A lot of my work is about class and being working class

OP How is that different to another class?

JF I suppose the edge of the world seems to be a lot closer for the working class – there are more limitations than for the middle classes.

OP Is the closeness of the 'edge' a kind of defence?

JF Yes it's a form of control, like owning a property or piece of land is so important.

OP I own not through the physical but by living somewhere, experiencing and communicating with others, immersing myself in the culture. Nature doesn't have borders.

JF Yes that would extend and develop the images I already painted.

We look at some of Olha's paintings.

JF I love this one '*Calm Unicorn*', the colours are very striking.

OP It's based on a portrait of a Young Woman with a unicorn by Raphael but in my portrait the woman is holding a dog. It's about herbs (malva) and making tea ... the ceremony and calmness of it.

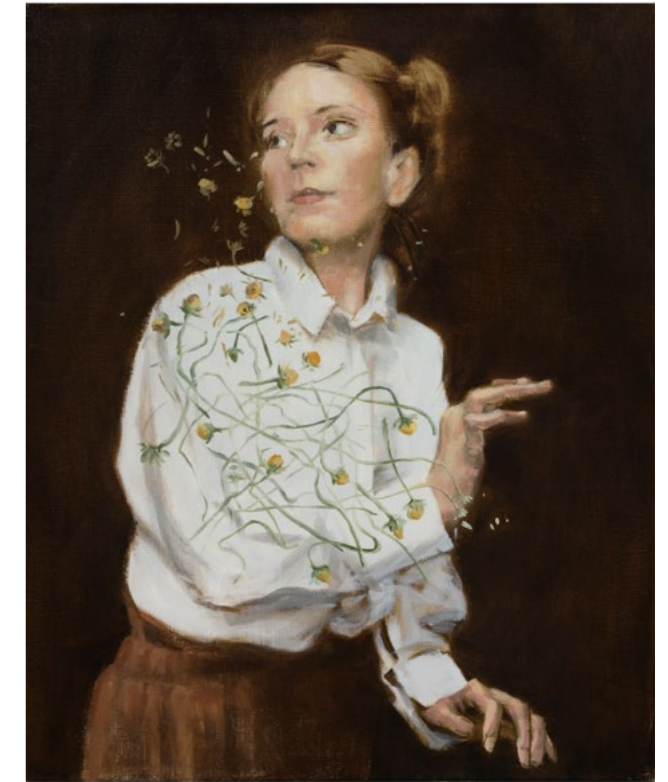
JF And this one I love too - *Chamomile*, it seems to be a self portrait.

OP This is also about my relationship to nature, to the herb chamomile and fertility. It is based on the character of Chloris in Botticelli's *Primavera* painting. The hand gestures are important because Chloris is attempting to escape the Zephyr wind who is chasing her.

JF So it's about being vulnerable?

OP Yes, it's about danger.

JF I like the movement and the hand gestures in this piece. I would like to make work that is influenced by this painting. The element of vulnerability appeals to me too as I have made work about my daughter recently as I see her as fragile and vulnerable. This time I may decide to make work about my mother, who is vulnerable for different reasons. I would like to make the hands important too, so they tell a story.



Olha Pryymak. *Chamomile*
oil on linen, 40 x 50cm, 2018

THE CURATORS - ALEXANDRA BARAITSER & TREVOR BURGESS

This Instead of That is a show about artistic exchange. It aims to foreground and shine a light on the dialogues between artists that lie behind their work. Making art is often perceived as a solitary activity, but contrary to this belief, artists greatly value contact with other practitioners. Such dialogues are intrinsic to most artists' practice – they take place in the studio, socially, through professional networks and educational institutions and, increasingly, through social media.

Art history seeks to categorise these relationships between artists as a succession of 'influences' that are passed down through schools and styles. And numerous contemporary exhibitions and galleries draw, more or less consciously, upon this model when they invite established artists to select and show with emerging talents. However, Harold Bloom's concept of 'the anxiety of influence' candidly expressed the danger that influence can represent to the idea of the individual creative artist – of being derivative, a follower.

More recently post-modern perspectives over-turned the notion of aspiring to creative originality, by positively valorising the idea of 'appropriation', as if the exchange between artists was simply a matter of nicking bits of other artists' styles. But for many artists, exchange of ideas with their peers is not such a cynical transactional process. It is an organic two-way flow of responses that mutually provokes, supports, challenges and feeds the work.

Alexandra Baraitser's idea for *This Instead of That* was to explore how artists respond to each other's work. It was informed by the insight that artists derive energy from their peers. She first explored it on a small scale, with Julie Fountain and Olha Pryymak, artists she had known from college, and an artist, Trevor Burgess, whose paintings she was drawn to and identified with. In many ways, there was nothing unusual about a show bringing together a group of artists who were inspired to respond to each other. Where it was distinctive was in proposing that the artists pair up and engage in a dialogue to create new work for the exhibition. Thus began a series of conversations, visual and conceptual responses that have germinated new artworks for Arthouse1.

An initial version of *This instead of That*, featuring these four artists, showed at Lewisham ArtHouse in 2018 and a small catalogue was produced, in which Baraitser proposed the idea that 'embracing new ideas from other artists about their own work can divert work in a new direction, transforming artistic development and allowing for extended collective discussion and understanding.'

There was clearly scope to extend this proposal to other artists. At this point Alexandra Baraitser invited Trevor Burgess to join forces and co-curate with her a larger version of the show, which rapidly evolved into this exhibition at Arthouse1. Nelson Diplexcito and George Wills, two painters who have been in dialogue around their practice for several years, were invited to take part. Rebecca Fairman also invited artists with whom the gallery already had a relationship – Catherine Ferguson and Tim Renshaw; Hermione Allsopp and Meg Lipke. The latter two artists have collaborated to produce a new sculpture specifically for the gallery, in which all the energy of the conversation is contained within a single work. Although they live in different countries the artists are close friends and have worked together before. Their collaboration demonstrates how technology is enabling artists to transcend international boundaries not just in extending dialogues of exchange but also in the co-creation of physical objects.

The exhibition puts a strong focus on artists' practice. Curatorial processes of selection have been devolved to the artists in inviting them to make new work, rather than the curators selecting from existing work. And the artists have each offered insights into their processes through writing up and publishing the conversations which feature in this catalogue. For the viewer, the exhibition creates an intense visual conversation of affinities and differences across the pairs of works that can be seen side by side.

And what next? This engaging process of dialogue and exchange between artists could evolve into an ongoing project, touring into regional spaces, introducing new collaborations and conversations on route.