

If You Can Hold Your Breath

Preview Thursday 17 June 6-8pm

Exhibition runs from 18 June – 18 July 2010



Sarah Bowker-Jones, Karen Cunningham, Alex Farrar, Melissa Jordan, Pesce Khete, Elizabeth McAlpine and Rachel Niffenegger, curated by Lucy Johnston.

If You Can Hold Your Breath presents seven international artists examining the state of 'in-between'. All of the works exhibited suggest transformation, combining sculpture, painting, video and installation to challenge figuration, either by directly referencing the body or through deliberately abstracting, eliminating or obscuring it. Through editing, layering and re-shaping, found materials and forms become subverted into something more curious and ominous.

These artists range from painting with plaster, wax, ribbons and resin and casting with pigments and inks. Subtle relationships exist between sculptures displaying the start of an action and paintings that investigate the end of a form. These tensions gesture towards a point of fragility, reflected through the remains of process, through traces of touch on surfaces, re-workings and visible 'mistakes'.

A lyrical, narrative quality weaves these works together, haunting the viewer in the gallery: looming from a great height, creeping down walls and sprawling across the gallery floor. These suspended movements or 'beings' result in an odd and uncomfortable moment in time; somewhere caught between the beginning, the end and the potential.

Sarah Bowker-Jones links the ceiling's beams to the floor with cascading arches. Her process stems from an interest in the arches in caves, their formation, gestures and traces of humanity.

With *Cellini Jewellery, after Sol LeWitt, 2009*, Karen Cunningham subverts 1960s concepts of minimalism investigated by Sol LeWitt, by casting a gold chain through a concrete cube, interrupting the minimal form with a figurative gesture and references the first woman in space with *Valentina (Tereshkova), 2009*.

Alex Farrar will paint his self portrait directly onto the gallery walls, using manufactured paint colours which match the exact tones of his hair and eye colours. *Produced on Request, 2010* investigates institutions and businesses adopting specific colour schemes whilst also resembling shades used in military camouflage.

Melissa Jordan investigates the 'neck' of both the figure and a narrative to suggest both potentiality of movement and the result of an action. In combining temporal materials like fabric and wax, histories of a character are loosely woven throughout the form.

Pesce Khete adds paper to paper in his *Untitled* paintings/drawings, joining edges with masking tape to increase areas of background and overlapping corners and parts of the page to cover mistakes and allow space for art historical references, figurative marks and personal narratives to develop.



Elizabeth McAlpine's *LIGHT READING 1500 cinematic explosions* presents a collection of key action frames from a diverse range of films. McAlpine presents a performance, immersing the viewer into the screen through editing out characters and script and reducing them to elements of light and space.

Rachel Niffenegger's sculpture challenges the notion of the figure by using processes of layering, gathering, dripping, sticking together and draping to subvert the mass of the body and turn it into something abstract and uncanny.

Artist Biographies:

Sarah Bowker-Jones, Born 1978, lives in London, UK

Sarah graduated from the Slade in 2008 and recently completed residencies at KUBE, Poole, 2009 and Leeds Met Gallery, 2008. Group exhibitions include 'Interplay', Nolia's Gallery, 2009, London; 'Games People Play', Home Meadley, 2009 Milan and 'Learned Pigs and Fireproof Women', 2009 The Bear, London.

Karen Cunningham, Born 1976 and lives in Glasgow, UK

Karen graduated from MFA, Glasgow School of Art in 2003. Recent solo show: 'OUTPOST', Gallery Norwich, 2009. Group exhibitions include 'Being is what it is', 2010 (curated by Matthew Richardson), London, 'Lobby Group Exhibition', CELL Projects, 2009, London.

Alex Farrar, Born 1986 and currently studying at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam, NL. He recently graduated from Leeds Metropolitan University, 2008. Solo shows include 'Sammelbände' East Street Arts, 2008, Leeds and 'Make/Shift', S1 Artspace, Sheffield. Group exhibitions include 'A Latento: works by Alex Farrar, Harry Meadley, Iona Smith', Henry Moore Institute Archive, 2010 and 'Ex & Interim', 2009, Leeds College of Art.

Melissa Jordan, Born 1984 and lives in London, UK

Melissa graduated from MA Sculpture at the Royal College of Art, London 2009. Recent group exhibitions include 'Umbraculum', no 97-99 Clerkenwell Road, London, 'Basement Projects', Fred Gallery, London, 2009; 'Factory', 2008, James Taylor Gallery, London and 'Ex/Ceal', 2008, Shoreditch Town Hall, London.

Pesce Khete, Born 1980 and lives between Rome, Italy and Zurich, Switzerland.

Recent solo show 'You've caught me in a bad mood' in 2008 at the Massimo Carasi Gallery, Milan. Group exhibitions include 'Impressa Pittura', CIAC Museum, Rome, 2010 and 'Je t'aime Skye Boutin', Galerie van der Stegen, Paris, 2009. Pesce has been featured in several articles in Flash Art and is represented by the Flat-Massimo Carasi Gallery, Milan, Italy.

Elizabeth McAlpine, Born 1973 and lives in London, UK

Elizabeth studied at Goldsmiths College and the Slade. Solo exhibitions include 'Flatland', 2009, Laura Bartlett Gallery and 'Imaginary Solution', 2007 Spacex, Exeter. Group shows include 'Goodbye 20th Century', 2009, Harbour Front Centre, Toronto; 'Cui Prodest?', 2009 and 'Double Object', 2009 Thomas Dane Gallery. Elizabeth will be showing at *Art Statements*, Art Basel, 2010 and is represented by Laura Bartlett Gallery, London

Rachel Niffenegger, Born 1985 and lives in Chicago, USA

Rachel recently graduated from the School of Art Institute of Chicago. Solo exhibition includes, 'Trichotillomania', 2009, The Post Family, Chicago, USA. Recent group exhibitions include 'Big Youth', 2009, Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago and 'Now that's What I Call Painting', 2009 Scott Projects, Chicago, USA

For more information about the exhibition and the artists please contact Lucy Johnston, Ceri Hand or Leila Aitken at info@cerihand.co.uk, Tel. 0044 (0)151 207 0899 or visit www.cerihand.co.uk

