

WORKPLACE

Transmission

Simeon Barclay
Marcus Coates
Jennifer Douglas
Louise Giovanelli
Laura Lancaster

17 July – 5 September 2020

WORKPLACE, 34 Ellison Street,
Trinity Square. Gateshead
(c.2007)

Workplace is pleased to present Transmission, a group exhibition of new and recent work by gallery artists Simeon Barclay, Marcus Coates, Jennifer Douglas, Louise Giovanelli and Laura Lancaster.

This exhibition is presented online inside a detailed virtual rendering of our first gallery space: Workplace, 34 Ellison Street, Gateshead, which opened in 2005 within the British Brutalist masterpiece Trinity Court designed by Rodney Gordon for Owen Luder Partnerships, and which was demolished in 2009. For this exhibition we have relocated the gallery to the coast - in both a nod to the sublime (an echo of Gordon's vast, elemental architecture) and because the original street outside the gallery was demolished before 3-dimensional photography or google street-view crawled it's way to this part of Northeast England.

Simeon Barclay's black and white photographs were made during his tenure as artist in residence at Girton College, University of Cambridge. The images have a stark formality that has been accentuated via acid green or blue laser cut vinyl decals applied to the glass of their frames. The material qualities of glass: translucent, reflective, a mirror, a barrier - betray the conditions of the institution and of institutionalisation, both architecturally and sociologically.

Marcus Coates' works attest to humanity's complex relationship with the natural world. 'The Last of Its Kind', made during a residency in Fogo Island, Newfoundland presents the artist as the last human, manically declaring the great achievements of civilisation to a disinterested iceberg-laden seascape. 'Humpback Whale' inverts this dynamic as the artist attempts to 'become' whale, connecting to such primordial leviathans from his bathtub.

'A Tacit Understanding (Slate)' by **Jennifer Douglas** is part of a series of large-scale canvasses painted in flat industrial floor paint, then scratched, rubbed, dragged and punctured in delicate yet assertive acts. Painting as private sculptural performance. These works operate at the intersections of oppositional forces: the sublime and the beautiful, physicality and fragility, monumentality and intimacy.

Louise Giovanelli's new paintings depict light - absorbed, softened, reflected and emitting from close-ups of hair. Light is modelled in thin translucent layers of oil paint. Evocative of cinema, the seeming informality of her imagery belies an ongoing analytical enquiry into painting. In 'Ether', the bright X like glint of a jewel reveals a recurring structural motif, whilst the smouldering honeyed warmth of 'Axis' exemplifies optical colour mixing techniques connecting her work back through time to the early Renaissance.

Laura Lancaster's new works 'Far From' and 'Remainder' depict solitary women both emerging from and swallowed up by the surrounding landscape. Lancaster's work has become increasingly concerned with the silent exchange between the viewer and the subject, and in these works there is a heightened sense of confrontation. Liminality, halted movement and dislocation is accentuated by their proximity to 'Untitled' (2013) a seemingly abstract monochrome that is in fact painted from a tiny found photograph of a funerary wreath.

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*And we would go on as though nothing was wrong, And hide from these days we remained all alone, Staying in the same place, just staying out the time, Touching from a distance, further all the time. Dance, dance, dance, dance, dance, to the radio**

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www.workplacegallery.co.uk/transmission

For further information please contact:
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* Joy Division, 'Transmission', 1979. Songwriters: Bernard Sumner / Ian Kevin Curtis / Peter Hook / Stephen Paul David Morris