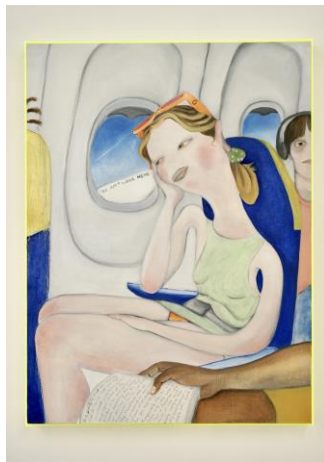


It's Really Like That

08.02.2024-05.03.2024

Exhibiting Artists: Will Harman, Jen Roper, Paula Parole, Bliss Coulthard

Opening Reception 8th February 2024, 6-8.30pm



Paula Parole, *Vision Above the Clouds* (2023), Oil on Canvas, Plexiglass, 90 x 70cm

It's Really Like That reveres the awkward, crude and comedic aspects of the everyday, with participating artists demonstrating an ability to confront and confess in equal measure. Whether found in the razor-sharp treatment of 'lad' culture in football or introspective portraits that reveal interpersonal dynamics, each painter's visual language bears the authenticity of a diarist. Whilst each artist draws upon personal experience, the fallibility of memory supervenes on observation: playful touches of the surreal and exaggerated run throughout. The exhibition beckons visitors to laugh, cringe and emote: to be unapologetic and unembarrassed by the less than perfect parts of our experience.



Will Harman, *E is for Engerland* (2020), Oil and Acrylic on Canvas, 180 x 180cm

Artist Biographies

Will Harman

Will Harman (B. 1996, London) is an artist based in South London. He completed his MA in Painting at the Royal College of Art (2023). Recent solo exhibitions include: *Freedom for the Suburbs*, Soka Art Tainan, Taiwan (2023) and *Meat Pie Sausage Roll*, Changing Room Gallery, London (2021). Recent group exhibitions include *Raising Boys*, Black White Gallery, London (2022), *Football Crazy, Football Mad*, Patterns of Play, London (2021). Humour is at the heart of Harman's practice. His sharp observations capture a chaotic world in bright technicolour, and yet just beneath the bright surface lurks a distinctive horror of urban life. Detailing his canvases with pockets of bright colour, his satirical scenes, filled with stiff and awkward characters, both seem familiar and of the everyday.

Jen Roper

Jen Roper (B. 1996, Lancaster) is an artist living and working in London. She is an MA graduate in Fine Art from City and Guilds of London Art School, funded by the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Award. She was shortlisted for The Contemporary British Painting Prize in 2022. Her current solo show, *Bunk Beds and Peeing Dogs* runs at Leeds Arts University until March 2024. Other recent exhibitions and residencies include Standpoint Gallery and Good Eye Projects. Revisiting moments of embarrassment in everyday life, Jen's paintings explore awkward encounters. The pictures take occupancy in reality, drawn from specific events and reconstructed from memory. They purposefully make a spectacle of the uncomfortable and exploit the shame endured. These moments of dilemma are likened to situational and cringe comedy, bringing together social awkwardness and the guilty pleasure found in watching them unfold.

Paula Parole

Paula Parole (B.1992, Germany) is a German artist living and working in London. She is a recent MA graduate with distinction of Fine Art from Central Saint Martins, where she was awarded the *Mona Hatoum Foundation* scholarship. She is the co-founder of Filthy Fox Auction Club. Recent Group shows include *Exploring Grief and Loss through Art* at Willesden Gallery, (2023-2024) and *Undone* at Hypha Studios, (2023). Drawing from self-fiction and auto-theory, her practice digests life, unpack relational behaviours and introspective patterns. Poetic humour weaves through vibrant, eclectic installations where memories and future projections are reflected through a range of styles and materials. Experiences are dissected, inspected and reassembled in the ultimate attempt to demystify them and dismantle internalised narratives around womanhood, destiny and fairy tale romance.

Bliss Coulthard

Bliss Coulthard (B. 1999, London) is London based Watercolour Artist. Coulthard finds her artistic inspiration in personal memories, having completed a BA in Fine Art at Brighton University and is studying an MA in Illustration at The University of the Arts London. She was recently honoured with the Young Artist Award from The Royal Watercolour Society, and her work will also be featured at the Mall Galleries for the Royal Society of British Artists exhibition. Painting from memory is at the core of Bliss's practice, and watercolour is employed for its versatility and unique ability to capture elusive emotions. Through her portraits, Bliss reinterprets memories in strange, awkward, and occasionally unsettling contexts, unravelling the complexities of recollection and inviting viewers to explore the intricacies of memory and identity.