



13 Jan – 17 Feb 2023

TOBY CHRISTIAN: NO ODONATA

Private view: Thu 12 Jan, 6–8pm

Moonlit glimpses, intruding shadows. Delicate moments rendered in dust.

Toby Christian's solo exhibition at Belmacz, *no odonata*, brings together a series of iPhone photographs taken by the artist while looking in through the window of his studio-garage in Lewisham. These small giclée prints not only chart the passing of days and weeks — a labour of stone carving — but hold within their grain multiple dimensions and points of view. Here looking — looking out, in, at and beyond — is produced with gestural sojourns of light and shadow.

Not speckled, but smothered in tiny flecks of almost - and white limestone and marble, Toby's window crops bare traces of an unknown presence tip-tapping across vertical sands. Perhaps a winged insect looking for light, for an escape, these choreographic markings imbue the black and white scenes with an exposed sense of lyricism. Indeed, set within capacious surrounds and brushed silver frames, shadowed impositions linger within each of the delicate compositional panes; fugitives conserved behind their own glass. And where do we stand as interlopers peering in here? This collection of frames not only holds a poetic intrigue for viewers but conveys a certain sense of Toby's artistic sensibility.

Elsewhere, drawn entangled forms show another aspect of Toby's current practice. Since early 2020, he has been developing a work called 'Stringer' — software which produces a unique, temporary, digital floating string sculpture in response to a user's speech. The ethereal drawings in *no odonata* are pencil studies of recent and unpredictable outcomes of Stringer; emerging after the artist spoke each photograph's title into the software, then witnessing and learning its translation.

Toby Christian (b. 1983 Boston, Lincolnshire), graduated from the Royal Academy Schools in 2012, where he was awarded the Gold Medal. His work has been shown and performed extensively internationally. Recent and current solo exhibitions, projects and readings include 'Stringer (bone behaviour)', Parrhesiades, London (2022); 'Lazy Bones', Casanova, São Paulo (2021); 'studioaudio' with Good Gear (broadcast), Resonance FM, AICA UK and PEER (2021); 'Old School New Body', Celine, Glasgow (2019), 'Trippy Scroller', PEER, London (2019); 'The News' curated by David Dale Gallery, Glasgow for Swimming Pool, Sofia (2017) and 'Railing' (reading), Whitechapel Gallery, London (2017). Recent group exhibitions include 'Interpolations II' curated by Hana Noorali and Lynton Talbot, Galerija Prozori, Zagreb (2022); 'I Dialogue, Kinch', Belmacz, London (2021); 'Preliminares', Casanova, São Paulo (2021) and 'Der Bote ist der Tote', Mauve, Vienna (2020). Toby Christian's books 'Commuters' (2021), 'Collar' (2017) and 'Measures' (2013) are published by Koenig Books. He is a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts, London.