

Diana*

Anna McCarthy

Volatile

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At first sight, these drawings enact an opposition between exceedingly organic anthropomorphic figures on the brink of losing their contours, and the pylon's geometric clarity of structure. There is a play on the solid and the soft when figures seem to melt or spill onto the bars of the pylon like cracked eggs. But with further observation, a more elastic relationship unfolds. In one drawing, several figures seem spell-bound by the pylon: Have they traveled here to see it? A power cable snakes its way towards a socket, seemingly animated by its encounter with a vine. A figure with a smoking match in her mouth dwarfs the tower and her surroundings by her staggering magnitude, a cable car or hut is balancing on her head, as if she had suddenly expanded into mountain-like proportions.

The amorphous people gathering in the drawing mentioned above, and populating this exhibition, generally belong to a canon of not-quite-formless, protean beings in fiction, comic books, cartoons, cinema, and advertising whose indeterminacy makes them ideal sites of projection. Their mutable features could easily transform into our own. Their simple, unelaborated quality immediately suggests all kinds of baroque or even grotesque possibilities. Their baby-like sexlessness is the cornerstone of a polymorphous perversity or gender fluidity. This is not even to mention the image of plasticity in artistic work their appearance evokes, like that of a sculpture in its earliest stages. As for our specific examples; What could they be made of? Judging by the rendering of their rounded volumes, both wax and dough seem to be likely candidates. The drips and splashes tending towards wax, but their slightly textured surfaces pointing towards dough. One figure seems to be made of water in zero gravity, she encompasses some carrots and a plant in her feet. Heat has various effects on these materials, liquifying, hardening, evaporating. So, the effects of the spontaneous combustion we are referred to in another drawing on these figures cannot really be known. But what is truly plastic in the situation of spontaneous human combustion is not the human, but the fire, whose form is ever changing, and who changes the form of all that it touches. Perhaps these beings are made of fire, and the question is not what will they change into, but what in their world they will change.

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