

THE ARTIST ROOM

SITUATIONAL ATTEMPTS

Curated by Billy Parker

11–27 September 2024

Private view: Wednesday 11 September, 6–8pm

'These drawings, are not the representation or figuration of an object, of a state of mind or heart, of an element or an event of a psychological kind, they are purely and simply the reproduction on the paper of a magical action that I have performed in true space with the breath of my lungs'.

Antonin Artaud, '50 Drawings to Murder Magic', 1948.

The Artist Room presents Situational Attempts, a group exhibition curated by Billy Parker that challenges the traditional role and methodologies of drawing.

Antonin Artaud was a dramatist, poet, philosopher and artist who became a major influence within the French avant-garde. He spent the final years of his life in psychiatric hospitals where he produced a series of 12 exercise books containing writings and drawings. Two months before his death in 1948, art dealer Pierre Loeb initiated a project to collate select works from the exercise books which became Artaud's final work – 50 Drawings to Murder Magic. Throughout, scrawled writings and drawings have been intentionally punctured and stabbed through with nails. Drawings of disfigured bodies, dying flowers and machinery have nails and screws drawn through them. Artaud recognised the fleeting nature of an entity presenting itself on the page and the strength and power required to keep it there.

It is already a brave act to draw; translating an image or a symbol to paper to reveal some inner workings of the mind and declare a personal perspective. It is even braver an act to forfeit a mimetic description of reality. Situational Attempts brings together a body of works that are not necessarily concerned with description or expression. They engage in the alchemical archeology of rendering something unknown, fossilising a conscious form as it attempts to stabilise itself on a surface.

The exhibition features Oluwatobiloba Ajayi, Archie Fooks-Smith, Hugo Hagger, Richard Maguire, Arthur Poujois, Katie Shannon, Mia Vallance and Joel Wyllie.

NOTES TO EDITORS.

Oluwatobiloba Ajayi is a London-based artist and writer. She has been studying printmaking for eight years, and her trace prints and prints of traces reference both material and imagined spaces. Her work reflects on her diasporic lineage, the notion of home, and the spaces of conversation within her network. Recent group exhibitions include *Make Yourself at Home* at Hweg, Penzance, UK (2024), *Head of State* curated by Diallo Simon Ponte at Strada, New York, US (2023) and *Manifold (Deluxe)*, FF Projects at Frieze Cork Street, London, UK (2023).

Archie Fooks-Smith (b.1995, Bury St Edmunds) lives and works in London. He is a contemporary artist specialising in drawing and conceptual art. He is best known for his sculptural 3D pencil works which are highly intricate and often feature hand-sewn embroidery. His artworks reference and bond themes of mysticism, theories of consciousness, psychedelic experiences and the philosophical notion of subjective qualia. He has numerous works in the private collection of Emanuel Von Baeyer, who is a specialist in fine European drawings dating from the 15th century to post-war and contemporary art. Recent shows include "My Mother, Esoterica" in New York showing alongside Genesis B Porridge and Patti Smith, "Babele" curated by Caspar Georgio Williams at Spazio Musa gallery in Turin Italy, as well as The

Emanuel Von Baeyer Cabinet Collection at TEFAF Maastricht in Holland. He has upcoming solo shows with Emanuel Von Baeyer at his new Leicester Square Gallery, as well as with Season 4 Episode 6 in 2025.

Hugo Hagger (he/him) is a writer living in London. He writes about narrative flux, queer narratology, sculpture making, and metalepsis. He makes performances, sculptures, and drawings alongside writing. Hugo's work has been published in Pilot Press, Sticky Fingers, Coven Magazine - Berlin, and Deleuzine, he has exhibited at Thamesmead Arts and Culture Office, Alice Black Gallery, and Arusha Collection, London.

Richard Maguire (b.1991, Aberdeen). Concerned with the histories of race and sexuality from Britain and South Asia, Maguire approaches archives as sites of both epistemic loss and abundance, dwelling in the images to consider what they communicate, and that which is veiled. Maguire attended the Royal Drawing School (2015) and graduated from the Masters programme in Printmaking at The Glasgow School of Art (2018). In 2023, Maguire was the recipient of both Edinburgh Art Festival's Early Career Artist Award, and The Ingram Prize's The Founder's choice award, and a Creative Scotland development award he was also shortlisted for Trinity Buoy Wharf Drawing Prize. Notable exhibitions of his include his Solo exhibitions: *Amidst Relations*, Patron Gallery, USA (2024) and *What Happens to Remain Unsaid*, Maximillian William, London (2023). Group shows include: *The Drawing Biennial*, Drawing Room, London (2024), and *Like Paradise* curated by Ekow Eshun, Claridges Art Space, London (2023). Forthcoming exhibitions include the group exhibition "Drawing Room, Vardan Gallery, Los Angeles".

Katie Shannon (b. Glasgow, UK) is a London/Glasgow based artist currently working across drawing, costume, performance and programming. Her work presents filmic framings and deferred time-coding which often foreground friendship alliances, feminist research practices and outsider music cultures, positioning other voices within new rooms; works evoke states of energetic melancholia, seeking to counter ennui with collaboration, shared intimacy and unrest. Recent solo exhibitions include *Vacancy*, Celine Gallery (Glasgow, 2024) and *hardcore til i die*, Kunsthalle Ost (Leipzig, 2022) and *Last song for a waterbaby*, Collective Gallery (Edinburgh, 2019). Recent group exhibitions and projects include *TLC23* and *The Amber Press*, group performance, Kunstverein Dortmund (Dortmund, 2024), *Scene*, Neven (London, 2024), *TLC23PEDESTRIANFETISHAGM*, a collaborative performance at ASP Fair 8, Conway Hall (London, 2023), *The Artist Bar*, research seminar and performance at the Horse Hospital (London, 2023); *Sicko* fan-art for Finlay Clark (2023); *TLC23* collective action *FET MIASMA MIS* at *Le Bourgeois* (London, 2023), *Rebi* programmed events at *Cafe Oto* (ongoing) and soundtracking and performance for *Liquid Currency* at Kunstverein Dortmund (Dortmund, 2022). She co-runs record labels and gig series *Domestic Exile*, *So Low* and *Rebi*, performs with band *Kübler-Ross*, and has a radio residency on NTS radio. Shannon graduated with an MFA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths, University of London in 2024.

Mia Vallance (b.1998) is a London based artist working across drawing, painting and print-making. Working with erasure and image layering, she considers her process as a kind of archaeology that allows her to work with the notion of time. The work presented started as a mono-print, was cut out on the studio floor, brushed with caligo ink, blackened with charcoal, and fixed with spray. Using the transitional chemistry of pigments and solvents in her painting to guide whole body movements that create sweeping gestures on the canvas, she references the idea in physics that nothing exists unless it is in motion. Recent exhibitions include "*Into Black Light*," at ZERUI, her first UK solo show. She has also showed at Roman Road, JOHS in Mexico City and has exhibited in Paris.

Joel Wyllie was born in London 1986, and grew up in Southampton, UK. He graduated from the Royal Academy Schools in 2015 and is currently living and working between Suffolk and London. Recent exhibitions include: **Shedding Pictures**, Jack's House, London (2024) **Drawing Room Biennial 2024**, Drawing Room, London (2024) **Forms Without Forms** curated by Shayna Fonseka, Asylum Studios, Suffolk (2023) **Drawn Out**, Drawing Room, London (2021) **Return to Naught**, Kingsgate Projects, London (2021).

Arthur Poujois (b. 1994) is a French cross-disciplinary artist based in London. His playful and intuitive work entails the act of creation as a process of translation where inspiration exists as an inner vision that begs to come into being. Aiming to actualise his inner promptings and the sacred realities he contemplates in meditation, Arthur's work creates a sensory space which widens the possibility of existence. His quick and expressive gestures become the cipher to the contract he intends to make with the viewer, to embrace the unknown and trust one's gut feeling. In order to develop a stronger and more intimate bond with the non-human by drawing upon the magical energy found beyond trauma in a patriarchal society, Arthur invites the viewer to experience change, transformation and letting go as a drive to go further in the world. Arthur holds a BA (Hons) in Fine Art Painting from the Slade School of Fine art, London. His most recent solo exhibition is *Us at the End of the World*, Lee-Alexander McQueen Sarabande Foundation, London (2023). Recent group exhibitions include *Ein Tir*, Pipeline Contemporary, London (2023); *Metamorphoses*, Paris (2022); *Potentials*, 122 Minorities, London (2022); *Grotto*, Ridley Road Project Space, London (2022); *Selects: Vol.1*, London paint club, Hoxton 253, London (2022); *Synesthesia*, Galerie Joseph, Paris (2021); *Served*, Lee-Alexander McQueen Sarabande Foundation, London (2021); *Casting the runes*, Harlesden High-Street Off space, London (2021).

Opening times: Wednesday–Friday, 11am–6pm and Saturday, 12–4pm; and by appointment.

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