

ARTIST STATEMENT

Amplified floral subjects encapsulated within the oval bring complexity to ubiquitous matter. Recognised for its decorative associations, this unique form is revitalised from its 18th Century roots; that being the primal stage of the oval's autonomy.

Form, colour, and size; flowers serve as an ultimate source of familiarity. Their biodiversity on a global scale enhances their prominence. As a seemingly omnipresent entity, flora has the capacity to ground the individual. I seek to mirror this experience within the work.

From a dark green ground, a pictorial space abundant with flora is fabricated. Tone becomes established as brushstrokes are imposed upon the surface. As flora begins to emerge, chiaroscuro is facilitated, synchronically creating a striking visual experience. Amongst the chaos are minute regions of negative space, permitting ocular rest for the contemplative observer. Subsequently, the surface seeks to be paradoxically subtle yet conspicuous.

Encrypted within this intricate configuration, silhouettes are strategically placed; a way of generating a dynamic between familiarity and unpredictability. The silhouettes seek to serve as "expectancy violations"¹ (Verhaeghen, 2018: 382); dimensionality is reduced to mere shape. Their direct correlation with detailed matter alludes to a notion that they themselves are floral, however, they also have the potential to be perceived as entirely different entities.

The homogenisation of flora and femininity and its wider associations with beauty isn't necessarily a recent notion; however, within a contemporary society, it has become problematic. An industrialising, consumer-orientated society has meant that the beautiful, or rather, visual appeal has become a sought after, seemingly attainable attribute. Consequently, this very notion has become expendable, chasing desire diminishing a once convoluted paradigm.

Plausibly we have tendencies to fixate on our own surfaces, lusting over our outward appearances. In a similar regard, due to the painting being a traditional wall-based practice, the surface is often all that we can perceive. Accordingly, the recognition of the painting as a unified structure is frequently disregarded. Surface, edge, and frame; the 'painting' is a three-dimensional entity.

The dominance of the surface is further deconstructed through the staging of the work. Painting and palette are considered equal in their capacity for display; chaos and uniformity sit side by side as an act of consecutive construction and deconstruction. Concurrently, the surface is theatrically abstracted using semi-transparent muslin. The work becomes more indistinct through this act of concealment, this obscurity aiming to entice the observer into a closer, intimate experience.

¹ Verhaeghen, P. (2018) 'Once More, with Feeling: the Role of Familiarity in the Aesthetic Response' In: *The Psychological Record*. 68 (3) pp. 379-394. At: https://go.gale.com/ps/retrieve.do?tabID=T002&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchResultsType=SingleTab&hitCount=1&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm¤tPosition=1&docId=GALE%7CA561883342&docType=Critical+essay&sort=RELEVANCE&contentSegment=ZONE-MOD1&prodId=AONE&pageNum=1&contentSet=GALE%7CA561883342&searchId=R1&userGroupName=ucca&inPS=true (Accessed 11/04/2023).