

Alexander Ikhide

Aman Aheer

Cecilia Klementsson

Curated by
Mala Yamey

Devidas Vytautas

Ella Dabsyng+Brooke Murphy

Felix Wilks

Francesca Hummler

KINGDOM



PV: Wednesday 21st July 4-9PM

Exh: Thursday 22nd - Sunday 25th July 11AM-5PM

Art Hub Gallery, 5-9 Creekside, Deptford, SE8



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Valentin Rilliet

Kit Griffiths

Leila Alice Smith

Hira Gedikoglu

LIST OF WORKS + DESCRIPTIONS

We are proud to present 'KingDom: The Exhibition', opening on the 22nd July at Art Hub Studios in Deptford. The curatorial project brings together 12 artists and collaborators for the first time in physical space, fulfilling desires to see art in person.

The exhibition is a reverberating response to questions of how to explain the phenomenon of the modern man. Exploring the wonder and toxicity of masculinity in a post #metoo world and building on Jack Halberstam's poignant encapsulation, "a multiplicity of masculinities". The exhibition aims to capture the shapes that we all leave on the world without being confined to a gendered taxonomy. 'Posing' inquiry into normative, queer and "female masculinity", the artists in the exhibition create a helter-skelter of imagery and representation that defies clear categorisation in multidisciplinary forms from photography to film to painting to sculpture. KingDom defies "the myth of the interior origin" (Judith Butler) and our artists perform their own pluralistic notions of gender.

Artist List:

Alexander Ikhide, Aman Aheer, Cecilia Klementsson, Deividas Vytautas, Ella Dabysing & Brooke Murphy, Felix Wilks, Francesca Hummler, Hira Gedikoglu, Kit Griffiths, Leila Alice Smith, Valentin Rilliet.

Presented in collaboration with The Feathers of Daedalus Circus, the exhibition adds a physical dimension to the upcoming short film: KingDom into the physical space. The film explores misogyny, toxic masculinity and masculine vulnerability in society today through an entirely female or non binary team of drag kings. Characters debate questions of gender and gender inequality through a narrative centred around the art world heist. The film aims to help raise further awareness of gender inequality in all walks of life, to show the performative nature of gender and to showcase the often underrepresented but incredibly talented and powerful art of the drag king.

Alongside, The Feathers of Daedalus are exhibiting photos and excerpts from the short film KingDom. The film is due to be released in September 2021 and they hope to develop a live show in 2022. The film is written by Molly Beth Morosa, directed and produced by Joanna Vymeris, with cinematography from Cordelia Lawler and starring Molly Morosa (Moloko Jones), Veronica Thompson (Randy), Ruby Gaskell (Frank), Symoné (Barry Badass), Madi Gianfrancesco (Beau Jangles), Rosie Bartley (Steve Muffstuffherson), Len Blanco (Guard) and Lilly Snatchdragon (Celeste Lacroix). The Feathers of Daedalus would like to thank the Arts Council England and the 150 Kickstarter donors for making this project possible.

ALEXANDER IKHIDE @alexander_ikhide



Legroom, 2020
24 x 33 cm (Framed)
Collage on paper



Narcissus, 2020
24 x 33 cm (Framed)
Collage on paper



Otamere, 2019
37 x 53 cm
Photograph print



Jordan and Jermaine, 2019
36 x 53 cm
Photograph print

Born in Lagos Nigeria in 1993, currently living in London and studying Photography at the RCA, Alexander is a multidisciplinary visual artist working in a range of media, primarily collage (analogue/digital) and photography in the vein of documentary portraiture to interrogate issues of representation, identity, history, gender and race. Examining the political, social, historical and cultural ideologies of African diasporic traditions in a post-colonial age and drawing upon surrealist aesthetic sensibilities of the post modern and contemporary that inform his stylistic approach to his practice.

Alexander's photographs and collage pieces challenge 'expected' notions of masculinity, breaking up the male form with flowers, high heels and domestic items and creating velveteen textures in flesh and silken fabrics.



VALENTIN RILLIET @valentirrilliet

Today is my day off, 2020

27 x 21.5 cm

Oil on cotton canvas

Valentin Rilliet was born in Geneva, (1996, Switzerland) to a Swiss father and a Chinese mother. He received a Bachelor degree in Fine Arts at the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL in August 2020.

"My practice discloses an ongoing dialogue between the personal and the political through a recollection of memory and personal archives. Popular references, symbolic potentiality and anthropomorphism heavily rotate around the subjects of the work, as a way to personify a conceptual position or an emotional state. Driven by my dual-heritage and the idea of appropriation, I like to investigate how visual art has been used as a tool of persuasion as well as self-questioning through history, consequently acting as a simulacra for image-making." (Valentin)

Valentin drew this image from a Chinese comic book from the propaganda Mao era in the 70s, which he bought from a corner shop in Xi'An, China. Although intended for children, all the protagonists were made to look very virtuous and heroic, which may have symbolised the contemporary politics of the time. Reading the comic book, Valentin described, "it really gives off an absurd and uncanny feeling when reading it...an obvious "fake-ness" to it, which I still find relevant nowadays where a lot of people and groups are trying to be seen as successful or more virtuous by others in society, especially men who appear to always want to prove something, unironically". *Today is my day off* draws on the same aesthetic from the comic books, building on his lineage to create a response to how he sees the world and his own experience of being a man today.

CECILIA KLEMENTSSON @cecilia_ulfsdotter



Mapping Body 1, 2020

A3

Graphite on paper



Mapping Body 58, 2020

A3

Graphite on paper



Mapping Body 9, 2020

A3

Graphite on paper

The Mapping Body drawings intimately touch the character of Cecilia's nude subjects, drawn during life drawing sessions. Cecilia is mostly known for her paintings but the underlying drawing visible in her painting carries the same map like quality as her latest paintings she calls *Naked Drag*. "Naked drag is the power of the pose, in the body stripped of its clothes" (Cecilia)

In her paintings she paints fleshy bodies in reinterpreted poses from fashion advertisements, switching genders and extracting colours. Inspired by poses from the archives of the 1990s and early 2000s, when big fashion brands pushed the boundaries of the nude, especially with models such as Kate Moss. Subverting her source material, she poses men like women, women as men, trans as cis and vice versa.

"When we are confronted with opposites, differences in male and female poses become all the more apparent: with women seductive but passive, men seductive but active. My work aims to reach a transcendence" (Cecilia)



HIRA GEDIKOGLU @hira.gedikoglu

Ophidia Stuck, 2021

1 (125 x 150 cm), 2 (190 x 150 cm),

3 (125 x 150 cm)

Graphite on paper

"This series explores masculinity, sensuality and death through the squirming amalgamation of "cins" and exotic animals. Carnivorous humanoids writhe in static discomfort: where breath is thick; all is feverish." (Hira)

Hira Gedikoglu (b.1994, Adana, Turkey) Lives and works in Winchester, England. After graduating with a First Class degree from the University of Oxford, she went on to complete her postgraduate diploma at the Royal Drawing School. She relies on storytelling to unveil her nostalgia within a series of photographs, home videos and fragments of literature. The work becomes a biographical exploration of themes such as womanhood, sisterhood, motherhood, religion, familial dynamics and tension usually within a Turkish (and personal) cultural context.

LEILA ALICE SMITH @leila_alice_smith

Ex-hale, 2021

MDF, wallpaper, fabric, plaster, bronze powder, copper powder (sculpture in centre)

"After several years as a technician and art educator my work continues to be heavily research based. Being trained in metalwork and woodwork contributes to a raw material interest which relies on hand crafted and workshop made sculpture. I approach this with an awareness of what it means to be working in inherently male dominated environments such as metal workshops, and what it is I bring, as someone who identifies as female, not only in those spaces but also to the work. This awareness and sensitivity for materials is a way of me transmuting gender, as-well as me exploring a way to communicate ideas of self, other and world." (Leila)

Starting as a single sculpture, *Ex-hale* was later sawn in half, representing the simultaneous feeling of release and connection on the journey of becoming. The title is taken from blending the etymology of the word erode (ex- out, away) and hale (old English of Hal or whole) to symbolise a sigh of relief. The two halves have a dialogue, through a spilling out of their fabric inners and small plaster cast forms as they continue to inform and form part of each others being.



ELLA DABYSING + BROOKE MURPHY @elladabysing_art @brooke.murphy

An Ode to They Them, 2021

A3

Poem and digital drawing

Ella Dabysing and Brooke Murphy have created a collaborative piece for KingDom, 'An Ode to They Them' (2021). Inspired by Alok Menon's image and poems, Ella and Brooke have created a piece to pay homage to the possibilities of reclaiming your gender by not conforming to preconceived gender stereotypes of the strong masculine or delicate feminine.

"Alok is a remarkable example of the 'modern day' human. A person who breaks away from established gender moulds, to form their own beautiful shapes moving how they want to and inspiring while they do it."



FRANCESCA HUMMLER @fransangle

Flor del Desierto #1, 2020

3 works (41 cm x 49 cm each)

Photographic prints

Francesca Hummler is currently studying an MA in Photography at the RCA, but due to the pandemic is based in San Diego. Francesca employs the intimacies of photographic portraiture to explore gendered and cultural themes. She strongly believes in the therapeutic capabilities of the camera and takes this as inspiration for her work. In *Flor del Desierto*, she has portrayed the model Miguel in caricatured 'masculine' poses against a floral background that suggests traditionally 'feminine' domesticity, especially poignant in the sugar cube cowboy pose in the pink image on the left.

"I believe that taking pictures is a therapeutic act and that the camera reveals to us what we wouldn't otherwise see." (Francesca)



AMAN AHEER @_amanaheer_

Half Here, 2020

95 x 150 cm

Oil on canvas

"*Half Here* considers the relationship between masculinity, conflict, and spectacle. The event of martyrdom or spectacular death, and of public violence more broadly, tends to be associated with male bodies. Violence against women, however, often remains concealed within the private or domestic realms. *Half Here* tries to invert and complicate this problematic by considering the idea of maiming. A figure's arms are propped up by vermilion crutches; one hand slumping while the other iconographically points towards the sky, asks one to consider maiming as an incomplete or unfinished sacrifice. Unintended and unexpected, is a maimed body a martyred one? The suspended or disembodied limbs in my work also suggest the feeling of absence, denying viewers the full story and provoking them to reflect on the unseen itself." (Aman)



KIT GRIFFITHS @kit_griffiths

'Dic Pic' Print

32 x 32 cm (framed)

Print, ed. of 20.

Kit Griffiths is a professional Drag King, their alter ego is Cesar Jentley, filmmaker and visual artist. Kit is exhibiting the photographic image: 'Dic Pic', which has also inspired their short film of the same name.

"The image is of mine and my partner's dicks, together making a vulva, on a velvet blue cushion from the sofa that was at the end of my bed when we first met. It makes for a simple yet rich image of queer love.

I am not faithful to one medium or another, but devout in my practice of Art as a whole." (Kit)

FELIX WILKS @thegayglutton



Holy Crepe, 2021
42 x 42 cm
Photograph print



Pink Narcissus, 2020
42 x 42 cm
Photograph print



The Devil's Lettuce, 2020
42 x 42 cm
Photograph print

Felix Wilks creates images of himself that are good enough to eat, his photoshopped works accompany easy to follow yet luxurious recipes shared on his blog. Felix studied History of Art at Cambridge and continues to dazzle his friends and followers with his food, puns and looks.

"Superimposing myself onto a cake felt like the natural way to explore queer masculinity." (Felix)



DEIVIDAS VYTAUTAS @deividasvytautas

Mutant, 2021

3'23"

Video

"As the virus mutates, so do I, and so does the world that we exist in.

To mutate is to change state or condition. I'm interested in exploring the ever-transforming state of identity. A continuous cycle of reinvention. Mutation instinctively links to something negative, a change for the worst. A mutant is a monster. In a system of binary categories – the other. In a (failing) heteropatriarchal regime the non-hetero, non-fertile, non-maternal body is a mutant body: a non-reproductive body resisting an established order. Slowly the gender regime begins to crumble. Is that Utopia in the distant horizon? Can you feel the rippling presence of a dawning new world? The revolution fronted by bodies existing beyond hegemonic gender and racial norms has already begun.

I work with sound design, digitally shot footage, computer generated imagery, AI technology and archive material as I explore notions of transformation. A synthesis of personal narratives and critical ideas - my research and visual work become tools providing opportunities to engage with and reflect on the self and beyond. An exploration of a system of complex internal networks that are heavily interlinked with the mechanisms and technologies extending beyond the border of the skin. Reconstruction of the self. In a state of continuous change. To what extent are we able to move beyond our pre-configured identities?" (Deividas)