

LAURA BARTLETT GALLERY

THERIANTHROPY

Tom Allen, Eliza Douglas, E'Wao Kagoshima, Koak, Mel Odom & Seth Pick

3 June – 23 July 2017

Laura Bartlett Gallery is pleased to present *Therianthropy* which brings together works by Tom Allen, Eliza Douglas, E'Wao Kagoshima, Koak, Mel Odom & Seth Pick.

Derived from the Greek meaning *wild animal* and *human being*, *Therianthropy* refers to the mythological ability of humans to metamorphose into other beings. Depicted through early cave paintings and European folklore, this shapeshifting phenomenon is something that has been explored by artists throughout history.

Los Angeles based painter Tom Allen, presents here three intimately sized portrait paintings of exotic flora. *Angels Trumpet*, 2016-17 portrays the eponymous flower native to the tropical regions of South America. This enticing pendulous flower, despite innocent appearance, contains a toxin which, when ingested induces hallucinations and euphoria. When exceeded recreationally, the drug derived from the flower causes an acute psychosis leading the individual to a schizophrenic state of species dysphoria, believing themselves to be outwardly transformed into their inner animal.

Eliza Douglas's large scale painting *Untitled*, 2017 seems to capture the moment of mid-atomisation of an unknown character. Here, only hands and forearms can be seen, separated from all identifying other parts, as the person is abstractedly metamorphosed into something other.

The three small intricate collages by Japanese artist E'Wao Kagoshima represent shifts in time and memory. *A Carrier Pigeon*, 2012, *Red Delight*, 2014 and *Untitled (Snake Lady)*, 2011 are each abundant with historical references, war, international relations, commerce, sex – each conflated through a surreal minds-eye, dream-like and other-worldly in a recollection of moments remembered, reimagined and reinterpreted.

The works of Koak extend from a lineage of historical nude portraiture from classical painting to comic book cartoons. Exploring themes of gender, identity and transformation - her focus is on shape, form and a sinuous, ever flowing line that blurs her figures into their surroundings and their activities – all from a knowing and empowered female gaze.

Mel Odom is best known for his work as an illustrator, creating the cover art for many international paperback novels including Edmund White's *Nocturnes for the King of Naples*. However it was his works for the radical magazines of the 1980s *Blueboy*, *Viva* and *Playboy* which pushed the boundaries of sexual liberation in a conservative 1980s America, that are presented here. Odom was variously commissioned to illustrate the sexual fantasies of its magazines readers – offering him the chance to distil and mediate their dreams of transformation and escaping the routines and confines of societies expectations.

Seth Pick's *Beati Possidentes (after Francesco del Cossa)*, 2015 translated as 'Blessed are the possessors' and named after the Italian Renaissance painter, sees a set of eyes painted between petals from a simple green flower stem. Otherwise featureless on a simple background, and devoid of any telling emotion, these eyes confront the viewer in a state of transformation.

Tom Allen lives and works in Los Angeles, USA.

Allen has had solo exhibitions at Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles, and Galerie Michael Janssen, Cologne and Berlin. Allen has been included in group exhibitions in Los Angeles, New York, and Stockholm, Sweden. He holds a BFA from the University of Southern California and an MFA from Art Center College of Design.

His work is held in the permanent collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, as well as numerous private collections.

Eliza Douglas (b. 1984, USA) lives and works in Frankfurt, Germany.

Douglas has had solo exhibitions in Paris and Los Angeles. Recent group exhibition include: *Air de Paris*, 11 Columbia, Monaco; *Being There*, Vilma Gold, London and *Sans titre*, curated by Marie Madec, Paris.

E'wao Kagoshima (b. 1945, Japan) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Kagoshima has had solo exhibitions at the Nagai Gallery, Tokyo; Gabrielle Bryers Gallery, New York; The New Museum, New York; Mitchell Alpus Gallery, New York; and Alpus Greenspon, New York. Kagoshima has been included in exhibitions at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; The Asian American Art Center, New York; The Laforet Museum, Tokyo and Osaka; Marlborough Gallery, New York; MoMA PS1, New York; White Columns, New York; Martos Gallery, New York; Galerie Rodolphe Janssen, Brussels; and Sculpture Center, New York.

Kagoshima varying media includes painting, sculpture and collage, his work is known through the canon of Japanese Pop Art.

Koak (b. 1981, USA) lives and works in San Francisco, California.

Koak has been included in group exhibitions in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and Mexico, among other cities. Forthcoming group exhibitions include *TBA*, BBQLA, Los Angeles, CA; *Art Los Angeles Contemporary*, Alter Space at Barker Hangar, Santa Monica, CA; *On Elizabeth*, Olsen Gruin, New York

Mel Odom (b. 1950, USA) lives and works in New York, USA.

Odom has released several publications: *Gene Marshall Girl Star*, published by Hyperion (2000); *Dreamer*, published by Viking-Penguin (1984); *First Eyes*, published by Genko-sha, 1982. He has also received awards Illustrator of the Year, Playboy, 1980; Society of Illustrator's Gold Medal (Editorial Category), 1982; Silver Medal (Book Category), 1987

Seth Pick (b. 1985, UK) lives and works in Berlin.

Pick has had solo exhibitions at Gerhardsen Gerner, Berlin; Martin van Zomeren, Amsterdam; Clarence Mews, London. Recent group exhibitions include: *Shared Flat*, Hospitality, Cologne; *To The End of the Line*, Chateau Shatto, Los Angeles; *DO NOT DISTURB*, Gerhardsen Gerner, Oslo.