

NICOLA TYSON

14 January 2009 – 14 February 2009
69 South Audley Street London W1

"I work from the inside out - as a body experienced rather than looked at."

Nicola Tyson conjures complex figurative entities in the process of becoming, transforming or collapsing into something else. Her work exhibits a distinctive and instantly recognisable subjectivity even as it complicates assumptions about its nature and its supposed boundaries. She finds her images initially through intuitive, free-associative drawing. Yet her approach is not conventionally expressionistic as she transforms 'personal material' into an elemental component alongside texture, palette, and scale. For Tyson, painting is the perfect medium as it simultaneously operates on the retinal, the visceral, and the intellectual levels. The image constantly shifts and reforms in our act of looking at it.



Barry Schwabsky has written recently about Tyson's work: "These paintings are images of the body in terms, not of one's own subjectivity, but in terms of another, observing subjectivity. In painting the sensations of the self rather than its visual gestalt, Tyson may seem to come close to Expressionism - and the distortions of the features of the neurologist's homunculus also recall Expressionism, in that case as a sort of unintentional pastiche - but the difference is that Tyson does not appeal to pure subjectivism, as one might imagine would be the case with an art that depicts corporeal experience from the inside out. Because Tyson's art is stretched between two subjectivities it does not fall into solipsism. Such an art reminds us that, somehow or other, we experience other people from the inside out too." As opposed to the existential angst of the British post-war figuration to which her work has sometimes been linked, Tyson consistently explores the generative potential and value of play. She says "I use the figure as a sort of playground. I rearticulate it and reanimate it in unlikely ways, I inhabit it." Though she happens to be female, and therefore operates from within those co-ordinates, the notion of the individual, its gender and its psychological story is both primary and incidental in her approach.

In this her fourth show at Sadie Coles HQ Tyson continues her particular engagement with the genre of figurative painting, exhibiting six large canvases, a gouache piece and a series of drawings.

Nicola Tyson was born in 1960 in London and lives and works in New York. She has exhibited widely and internationally. Her work is in the collection of the Tate in London as well as many public collections in the United States, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, the Philadelphia Museum of Modern Art, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York and UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.

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 N.B. Opening hours Tuesday – Saturday 11 – 6pm