

**Nicola Tyson****04 March - 01 April 1999**

Nicola Tyson uses the traditional medium of figurative painting and drawing to pursue an examination of identity, gender and sexuality. In her earlier work isolated solitary figures were caught in the tightly controlled space of the painting, twisting and turning, morphing themselves into the androgynous mutations of familiar appendages and fleshy parts.

For the paintings in this exhibition Tyson has switched from oil to the medium of acrylic. The images are looser and more abstracted, less iconic, and closer in their immediacy and spontaneity to her charcoal and graphite drawings. Libidinous fragments like *Top* spin through a chaotic landscape and *View #1* introduces the fecund metaphor of landscape as a signifier for the body, an environment which is as much an ejaculatory eruption as the 'figures' themselves.

A sense of play is important to Tyson's process allowing an exploration of the primal compulsion to quite simply 'give image to' something, and in so far as her images are all partial self- portraits, to represent herself. Tyson's perspective as an artist is undeniably shaped by the feminist approach of the last decade. However, where much of that work was coming out of an attempt to give theoretical form to the relatively unarticulated realm of 'female subjectivity', to speak for all of us as it were, Tyson feels it productive to utilise an intuitive and personal approach to representation.

In addition to the painting installation at Sadie Coles HQ on Heddon Street, a group of large charcoal drawings will be exhibited off-site at 21 Ganton Street. These drawings are bursts of unpremeditated and feverish graphic activity that reveal the multitude of possibility from which the paintings spring. Nicola Tyson is a British artist who studied at Chelsea and St Martin's but has lived and worked in New York since 1990. A major survey of her work was exhibited at Zurich Kunsthalle in 1998. This is her third London exhibition.