

ELIZABETH PEYTON**30 April - 30 May 2009**

Elizabeth Peyton's fifth show at Sadie Coles HQ marks a series of departures in her range of subjects, style and palette. There are pictures of people, this time including Barak and Michelle Obama, as well as still-lives and cityscapes of New York.

Peyton works most often in oil paint, but also in watercolour, pencil, and etching. She is celebrated for her vivid and lush pictures of people: rock gods, film stars, fellow artists and friends. Frequently assuming the position of the fan herself, Peyton turns the untouchable, super-mediated, iconic celebrity of Cobain, Gallagher, Doherty and Barat into the familiar personable contiguity of Kurt, Liam, Pete and Carl. Sexually ambiguous, feminine qualities are regularly emphasised; skin is the palest of tones, lips dark and sumptuous, and features almost ethereal in their fragility. In recent times Peyton has devised a series of still-lives suffused by the intimacies of reading. Literary sources invoked are markedly nineteenth century, French, and predominantly strands of Realism and Romanticism as found in works by Stendhal, Honoré de Balzac and Gustav Flaubert, works that begin the definition of the Modern and are steeped in revolution. Between fantasy and reality, waves of passion - the intensities of first love and the traumas of loss - run throughout.

Elizabeth Peyton was born in Danbury, Connecticut, in 1965, and studied at The School of Visual Arts, New York. She has exhibited widely internationally. Currently her solo show *Live Forever* is at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; touring internationally it began at the New Museum, New York, and will continue at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, and the Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht, Holland. She also has an exhibition at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) in Dublin, *Reading and Writing*, a show that brings together some of Peyton's literary-infused works. Group shows include *The Painting of Modern Life* at the Hayward Gallery, London, 2007, and *Surprise, Surprise* at the Institute of Contemporary Art, London, 2006. A catalogue accompanies the present show at IMMA and a monograph of her work, *Elizabeth Peyton*, was published by Rizzoli International Publications, 2005. She lives and works in Long Island, New York.