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Aimée Parrott

by Skye Arundhati Thomas



Artist : Aimée Parrott

Title : Installation view

Website : <http://www.breeselittle.com/>

Credit : Courtesy Breese Little by photographer Benjamin Westoby

Aimée Parrott, a graduate of the Royal Academy, is as much a painter as she is a choreographer: an expert craftsman able to temper and transform fabric with certain ease. Her first solo exhibition, at Breese Little in Bethnal Green, stands as a testament to this ability – seven new works hang upon clean, white walls in a brightly lit room, and Parrott, with each canvas, effortlessly pulls from its surface a new potential.

‘Meshes of the Afternoon’, made in batik wax on calico, is a purple-dyed work in which swims a curvaceous body with smiling eyelashes and two small, giddy points for pupils. ‘Percussion’, a watercolor screen print on calico and delicately embedded into an oak frame, does indeed reverberate a certain pulse – layers as thin as onion skins are torn apart to reveal their soft core: the

lips of a feminine sex. 'Thought Forms', on the other hand, is a work different to the rest, a collage of severed limbs, where each form is autonomous, threaded together with ink and acrylic.

The show is accompanied by an essay by critic and curator George Vasey, and Parrott's work lends itself easily to prose, and is perhaps a kind of writing itself – composed of long, sinuous lines, there is movement here and narrative too. For Vasey, "Everything looks washed out or that it could be washed away at any moment, and lacking solidity, these images appear like mirages or impressions." Certainly as a series of fading colours and delicate treatments, there is an impermanent quality to these canvases – and yet, their figures stand resolute; inexhaustible. The most striking work, and the largest of the seven, is 'Banner', rubbery and wet, it immediately betrays its material – latex, upon which a woman's body unfolds, as though she is dancing. In some ways, it is a stubborn movement, and a slight one, arms relaxed in full repose; she is a Dionysian body, ecstatic, and likely to explode.

Parrott's work hardly informs us of its labour – her complex process of building upon the surface by printing, dying, painting, waxing – ultimately the surface is indistinguishable from its process, and the process from its form. 'Faint', is just so, a large canvas where each colour leaks into the other, its forms indistinct, as though left too long to soak in the sun. But in the sight of a small detail, the illusion may rupture, as the fabric declares a faint stitch or a quick fold, and Parrott's tactile approach is thus revealed.

For Vasey, the figures of Parrott's canvas are deep underwater, or set in ancient permafrost; the show's curation allows each work enough space to disclose itself fully, to come up for air. To stand before one work is to imagine it alone, a frozen temporality requiring a further inspection, a little dip if you must, in its pools of ink and dye.