

PIPPY HOULDSWORTH GALLERY

ZOË BUCKMAN

BLOODWORK

2 September – 1 October 2022

Private View: Thursday 1 September 2022, 6-8pm



Zoë Buckman, why don't you just tell me how you want to be, baby & i'll live like water around you, 2022

Pippy Houldsworth Gallery is delighted to present *BLOODWORK*, the first UK solo exhibition of London-born, Brooklyn-based artist Zoë Buckman. Buckman's practice takes an explicitly feminist and activist approach. Often reacting to issues pervasive in patriarchal society, her work explores experiences of gendered violence and trauma, both from a personal and social perspective. Working predominantly with embroidery on vintage textiles, Buckman brings together elements of old and new, highlighting the shared and cross-generational nature of these experiences. With an emphasis on joy, exultation and resilience, Buckman's work offers up the premise that sisterhood and the spiritual concept of the divine feminine can act as an antidote to suffering itself.

Buckman's latest body of work, *BLOODWORK*, focuses on portraits of survivors, whether those of sexual assault, miscarriage, illness or persecution, and their radical embracement of joy in the face of such adversity. Based primarily on photographs taken by Buckman of her own close circle, the subjects depicted are seen to be thriving in the wake of a prior, or persisting, pain. In the work *lately I see your ribbons & your bows*, a cancer survivor is seen in a moment of ecstasy; with scars visible from surgeries, her arms are thrown up behind her head and her expression is euphoric. Inspired by rave culture and the freedom and transformative qualities of music, *BLOODWORK* renders many of its figures in a state of dynamism, dancing across the fabric.

Much of Buckman's recent work has emerged from her own writings. In *Show Me Your Bruises, Then*, a long-form poem inaugurated in 2018 and later developed into the artist's first film of the same name, she explores themes of consent, power and violence, as well as highlighting the sense of community and kinship that abounds and uplifts the femme-bodied experience. Her scrutiny of the body is at once profoundly personal and political, Buckman's own experiences serving as a lens on the US supreme

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court's major rollback of abortion rights and the country's lack of universal health care. In a hanging sculpture of clustered boxing gloves in embroidered red and pink fabrics, titled *Dilation & Curettage*, Buckman probes the physical, emotional, spiritual and often financial consequences of abortion and miscarriage on the subject. The ensuing reclamation of personhood, both bodily and psychologically, is a key theme for the artist, whose work reflects the broader condition of living in a less privileged body.

Zoë Buckman (b. 1985 Hackney, East London) is a multi-disciplinary artist working in sculpture, installation and photography. Upcoming exhibitions include *Another Justice: Us is Them*, curated by Hank Willis Thomas and For Freedoms, at Parrish Art Museum, NY, opening in July 2022. Recent exhibitions include *Garmenting: Costume as Contemporary Art*, Museum of Arts and Design, New York (2022); *How Do We Know the World?*, Baltimore Museum of Art (2021-23); *She Says: Women, Words and Power*, Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (2021). Collections include Baltimore Museum of Art, The Studio Museum in Harlem, NY, and Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk.

To coincide with the exhibition, there will be a film screening of *Show Me Your Bruises, Then*:

Friday 2 September

6.30 pm, No. 9 Cork Street, London

Please note this event is free to the public, but booking is required: gallery@houldsworth.co.uk

Show Me Your Bruises, Then (2021-2022) is a 3-channel video installation, written, performed and directed by Zoë Buckman, and featuring actors Cush Jumbo and Sienna Miller. Based on the artist's free-flowing poem of the same name, the work builds a portrait of the multigenerational experience of domestic violence, and explores the shame and stigma prescribed to the female body in a patriarchal society. Although excerpts of the poem have appeared as text within Buckman's embroidery works and in the titles of pieces, this is the first time it is presented in its entirety.