

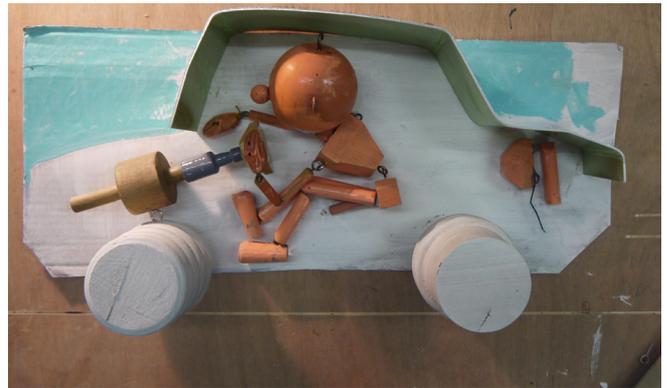
# Brian Griffiths

## No No to Knock-Knocks

24 January — 17 March 2018

Private View: Tuesday 23 February, 6-8pm

Blain|Southern  
4 Hanover Square  
London W1S 1BP



For the third exhibition in Blain|Southern's *Lodger* series, the British sculptor Brian Griffiths has drawn on stage- and screen-writing techniques to develop a 'character' who will inhabit the gallery's basement space. Appearing in a series of sculptural situations, often on the point of collapse, or running through some seemingly meaningless protocol, Griffiths' creation is a tragi-comic figure: a naked, puppet-like Caucasian male who seems not to know that his strings – if they ever held him up – have now been decisively cut. Bald, blind, and with his pink paintwork and wooden body showing signs of wear and tear, this little performer clunks through his part.

Three canvas works are suspended from the gallery ceiling, and slump onto its floor. Rough approximations of the human form, their large size, grey pigment, and fabric construction is an abrupt shift in scale, color and material. Considering the two types of figurative sculpture that cohabit in the exhibition space, we might ask ourselves 'who is dreaming whom?'

With its percussive title, which suggests the rattling of wooden limbs, and appears to prohibit that most tiresome of comic routines, the knock-knock joke, Griffiths' exhibition is an exploration, as he puts it, of 'objects as fictional tools'. Are these works sculptures playing at being puppets, or puppets playing at being sculptures? Then there is the question of who is pulling their (absent) strings.

Griffiths' not-quite-puppets are ambiguous performers, eliciting both laughter and sympathy. Material objects rather than living bodies, they are fated to take to the stage despite the implausible 'woodenness' of their acting, to communicate only through their own dull matter.

A publication accompanies the exhibition, with a new text by Tom Morton

### Notes to Editors

#### About the artist

Brian Griffiths (b. 1968, Stratford-upon-Avon) lives and works in London. His recent solo exhibitions include: *Vilma Gold*, London (2016); BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2015); Tramway, Glasgow (2014); Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo (2012). Recent group exhibitions include: *Voyage*, Benjamin & Gomide, São Paulo (2017); *Nuit Américaine*, Office Baroque, Brussels (2014); *Folk Devil*, David Zwirner New York (2013); *British Art Show 7: In the Days of the Comet*, Hayward Gallery, London and touring (2010-11); *Rude Britannia: British Comic Art*, Tate Britain, London (2010).

### About Lodger

*Lodger* is a series of exhibitions at Blain|Southern, conceived by the writer, curator, and Contributing Editor for frieze magazine, Tom Morton. Running concurrent to the exhibitions in the central space, *Lodger* expands Blain|Southern's programme into new territories. Previous artists participating in the Lodger series include Alex Dordoy and Sophie Jung.

Tom Morton's exhibitions include *Äppärät* at the Ballroom Marfa, Texas (2015), *British British Polish Polish* at the CSW Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw (2013) the touring survey *British Art Show 7: In the Days of the Comet* (2010/11, with Lisa Le Feuvre), and *How to Endure* at the 1st Athens Biennale (2007). He has worked as a curator at Cubitt Gallery, London and the Hayward Gallery, London, and his writing has appeared in numerous exhibition catalogues and anthologies.

### About Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern is a contemporary art gallery based in London and Berlin. The gallery represents an international roster of contemporary artists and is the world-wide representative of The Estate of Lynn Chadwick. The gallery's recent exhibitions include James White, Jake & Dinos Chapman, Michael Simpson, Bernar Venet, Mat Collishaw, Jonas Burgert, Amy Feldman, Tim Noble & Sue Webster and the critically acclaimed group show, *Revolt of the Sage*.

Blain|Southern  
4 Hanover Square  
London W1S 1BP

Monday to Friday: 10am - 6pm  
Saturday: 10am - 5pm

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