

James White

BODIES

22 November 2017 — 13 January 2018

Private View: Tuesday 21 November, 6-8pm

Blain|Southern
4 Hanover Square
London W1S 1BP



James White, *The Large Glass #1*, 2017
Courtesy the artist and Blain|Southern. Photo: Todd White

Blain|Southern presents *BODIES*, an exhibition of new paintings by James White.

White's grey scale paintings explore everyday minutiae and hint at something that has happened or may occur. Fleeting moments from intimate, domestic scenes are paused, extended and captured by the artist in meticulous detail.

The references for the paintings are the artist's own photographs; stripped of their original colour, the painting shifts focus onto subject and technique. Reminiscent of crime scene photography, 'The paintings are forensic in the manner of their image-capture, the documentary-no-expense-spared monochrome...'¹. Tightly cropped, they are suggestive of incidents beyond the frame, alluding to a human presence without depicting any individuals.

The subjects of the paintings, the metaphorical *BODIES*, are the drinking glasses that become surrogate participants. Half-full, half empty, bearing marks and traces, they are a body of evidence. The mundane setting they sit within gives the scenes an air of familiarity, they could be everywhere and anywhere. In a departure from his earlier works, White now fractures the composition to add a new level of psychological disquiet. This is seen in *BODIES IV*, where a single image is refracted, and elsewhere in composites of two scenes, different places and different moments. Suggesting emotional fissures they focus not on the relationship between the objects but on the people that are absent. The paintings become pieces of the larger whole as we fill in the gaps and impose our own narratives based on what is already in our minds.

The physicality of the paintings lends them an objecthood and archaeological quality. Sealed within Perspex frames, the base materials are left exposed. Sections of acrylic or layers of spliced plywood, like strata beneath the surface, suggest an uncovering of evidence whilst mirroring the composite moments pictured.

'Photography, purportedly, captures time by killing a moment dead when the shutter clicks. James White asks us to look again, making that moment not decisive, but endless, elusive and always – just – out of sight'.²

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue with 50 full colour plates, documenting *BODIES* and works from the past five years, with a foreword by Craig Burnett, an essay by artist Jake Chapman and a short story by author Ned Beaman.

¹ Chapman, J., 2017, *A Vivisection of Sight, The Obdurate Paintings of James White*, in James White, *BODIES*.

² Burnett, C., 2017, *Foreword*, in James White, *BODIES*

Notes to Editors

About the artist

James White (b. 1967 Tiverton, UK) received his BA from the Wimbledon School of Art in 1989 and his MA from the Royal College of Art in 1991. He began his career as part of a collaborative duo exhibiting large-scale sculpture in the early 1990s, coming to the public's attention at the same time as his fellow YBAs. After parting ways with his artistic partner in 2001, he turned his attention to painting.

Recent solo exhibitions include: *Aspect Ratio*, Sean Kelly, New York, US (2016); *From this Position*, Gerhardsen Gerner, Oslo, NO (2013); *The Black Mirror*, Sean Kelly, New York, US (2013); *Cornered*, Max Wigram Gallery, London, UK (2012); *James White: New Paintings*, Max Wigram Gallery, London, UK (2010).

Group exhibitions include: *NATURE MORTE: Contemporary Artists reinvigorates the Still-Life tradition*, Guildhall Art Gallery, London, UK; Museum Narodowe, Wroclaw, PO; Konsthallen Bohuslan, Uddevalla, SE; Ha gamle prestegard, Stavanger, NO (2015-2017); *Revealed 2:CollectorSpace*, Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide, AU (2013); *The Adventure of Reality: International Realism*, Kunsthal, Rotterdam, NL (2010); *Go for It! Art from the Olbricht Collection*, Weserburg Museum of Modern Art, Bremen, DE (2008) and *All Tomorrows Pictures*, Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), London, UK (2007).

White was a John Moores 24 prize-winner in 2006 and the subject of a monograph, *James White: Paintings*, with essays by Martin Herbert and Jeremy Millar, published in 2011. The artist lives and works in London.

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 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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For further information on the exhibition, please contact Laura Callendar at Blain|Southern

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