

EXHIBITION GUIDE

KRIS LEMSALU

23 Nov 2018 – 3 Feb 2019

First Floor

Kris Lemsalu's *4LIFE*, her first solo exhibition in London, presents newly commissioned works that manifest the stages of life; from birth to death, and 'the bit in the middle'.

Lemsalu's practice is a continual evolution of ideas, forms, anecdotes and personal histories, expressed through sculpture and performance, in which the division between life and art is blurred. In the *4LIFE* cycle Lemsalu combines collected and crafted objects to create totemic sculptures in a visual narrative that gives shape to the formlessness of lived experience. Staged in evocative environments, talismanic figures populate Lemsalu's hallucinogenic world, one that hovers between birth and mortality. The question lingers; are we seduced or repulsed, or both? Across three rooms the human body is metamorphosed; it's sometimes amputated and re-assembled as a fantastical multi-limbed creature, or recently absented leaving behind shrugged-off shells of clothing. Each insists on being read through its affective quality and a dense symbolism that is born of both a highly personal cosmology and an engagement with universal themes. They suggest both a grotesque laugh and an existential shudder.

Through a ritualistic and bricolaged materiality, Lemsalu poses earnest questions about hierarchies of beauty and revulsion, merit and mediocrity. Exquisitely crafted cast ceramics and hand stitched textiles sit alongside found clothing and machine-made commodities. The latter are just as precious as the former in their capacity to combine and create worlds that are one remove from our own, but instantly recognisable. Her ceramic process is instinctive yet elaborate; some pieces go through four firings, and for this exhibition she employed Japanese anagama, an ancient wood fuelled firing technique in which a fine layer of ash dusts the ceramic.

Moving from birth, in *HOLY HELL O*, through *Sally, Go Round the Roses* and finally to *Biker, Bride, Builder, Businesswoman and Baby*, the exhibition traverses our passage through life; a plunge into existence, a centrifuge of bristling energy, and final dissolution.

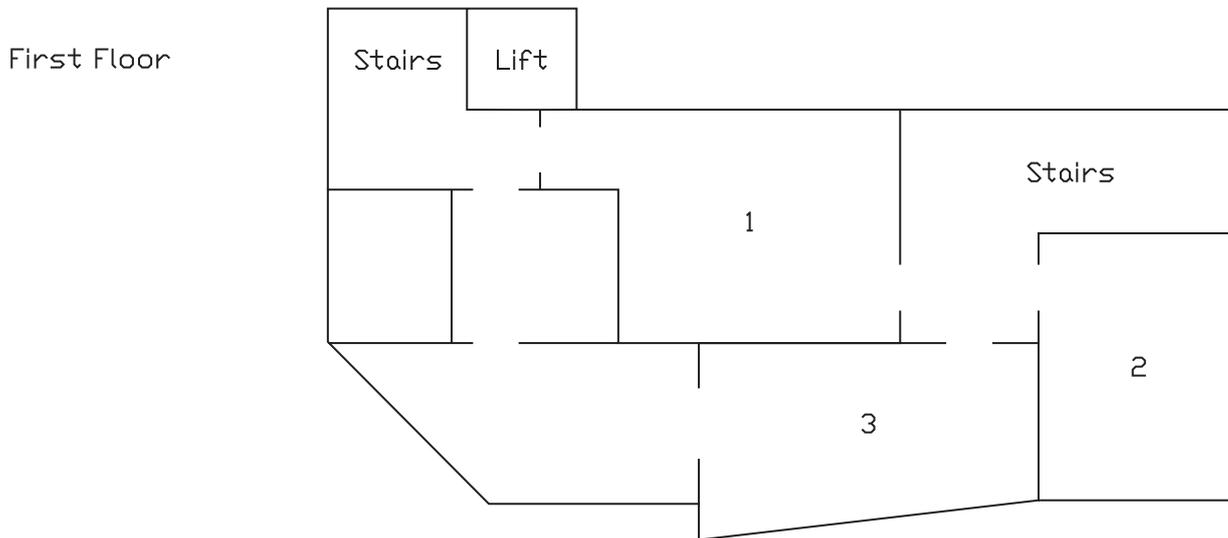
We're all going, going, going
but where are we going?
are we going to places we know about?
are we going to places that don't even exist?
are the places waiting with open jaws
and fiery tongues
to lick us into other spaces yet unseen,
even by the demon spawn of yesterday?

Tell me bout your dreams,
do they drift and float in the clouds?
do they get shot
and plummet into the dark shadows
of endless night?

I often want to fly
and my wings,
my wings are already there.
They're glossy and black

extemporaneous poem
by Philly Abe

FLOORPLAN



FIRST FLOOR

1 BRIDGET RILEY GALLERY

HOLY HELL O

2018

Jacuzzi tub, ceramic, quilts, mannequins, textiles
Courtesy of the artist, commissioned by Goldsmiths
Centre for Contemporary Art and Tramway, Glasgow

2 CANDIDA & ZAK GERTLER GALLERY

Sally, Go Round the Roses

2018

Cast ceramics, textiles, climbing wall grips,
Courtesy of the artist, commissioned by Goldsmiths
Centre for Contemporary Art

3 DASKALOPOULOS TANK GALLERY

Biker, Bride, Builder, Businesswoman and Baby

2018

Rocks, textiles, metal stands, cherry trees, strobe lights
Courtesy of the artist, commissioned by Goldsmiths
Centre for Contemporary Art

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