

EXHIBITION GUIDE

SOPHIE BARBER

The Greatest Song a Songbird Ever Sung

18 Sep–13 Dec 2020

For her first exhibition in London, Sophie Barber presents a new series of paintings, commissioned by Goldsmiths CCA as part of the *Episodes* series. Barber's painterly practice revolves around her interest in the natural world, and life on the Sussex coast. Often humorous and tender these heavily impastoed canvases of significant scale, simultaneously dictate an intimacy and architectural presence. Towering heavily above the viewer, the weight and scale of these works are a testament to the artists' body and the action of painting, labouring to manipulate her materials and repetitively rework the surface.

Backgrounds of dense colour support surreal forms; fragments of recalled images that have somehow stuck with her. Each are rendered on unstretched canvas and when hung become tent-suggestive of hiding spaces or theatre backdrops. Wads of used canvas are repurposed and affixed onto new works, like hosts of old ideas. Often subtitled with texts that refer to bird and tent clubs, both fictional and real, these paintings evoke Barber's local surroundings, in and around Hastings.

A new series of paintings depict *Art Review* front covers. Barber uses whatever is at hand - including back copies of art magazines - in her studio to draft compositions, and make notes and sketches on. These 'sketchbooks' have now progressed to subjects of small scale paintings that shrunkenly line one wall in the gallery

Barber greatly values the importance of legacy in the trajectory of painting practice looking towards a lineage of artists such as Philip Guston and Rose Wylie, as well as being strongly linked with a group of painters from the South Coast.

BIOGRAPHY

Sophie Barber (b.1996, St Leonards-On-Sea) is a graduate from the University of Brighton's BA (Hons) Fine Art Practice at Sussex Coast College Hastings, 2014-2017 and was awarded the CVAN South East Platform Graduate Award in 2017. She has exhibited at Project 78 Gallery, St Leonards (2018) and De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea (2017).

EVENTS

30 Sep, 7–8.00pm ONLINE TALK
*IN-CONVERSATION: SOPHIE
BARBER & ROSIE COOPER*

Join Sophie Barber and Rosie Cooper (Head of Exhibitions, De La Warr Pavilion) for a conversation about Barber's new paintings for Goldsmiths CCA. Cooper has been a supporter of Barber's practice for some time, and the talk will revolve around the development of her work, her drawing on the Sussex coast and its wildlife as an inspiration, and position within a lineage of the history of painting.

ABOUT EPISODES

Episodes is an ongoing series of solo presentations that cuts through the main programming at Goldsmiths CCA and provides a counterpoint to the larger-scale exhibitions. Spanning installations, screenings, discursive events and new commissions, the focus of this programme is to provide an experimental platform for emergent practices.