

Bodies, Gluttony and Me

4th May – 15th June 2023

PV: 4th May, 6 – 9pm

Performance *DRAGON SPAM*, Qingqing Liu: 4th May, 7pm

Nettle Grellier, Faye Eleanor Woods, Anna Choutova, Zoe Francis Spowage, Rosie Gibbens, Qingqing Liu, Damaris Athene.

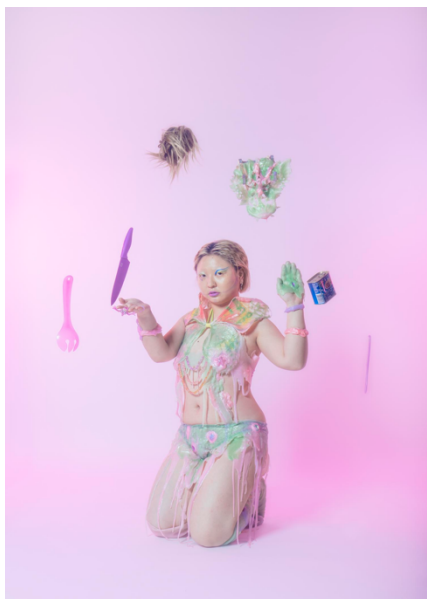


Damaris Athene,
Fruiting_Body.001 (Multiple Views), 2023,
Kiln-Formed Glass, Fabric, Polyester Fibre, Foam Nuggets, Foam, Wood, MDF, Chicken Wire,
Acrylic Paint, Pastel And Wall
145cm x 175cm x 60cm

In accordance with the Catholic faith, Gluttony is one of the seven deadly sins. Although often used with regards to food, Gluttony also refers to a desire for excess, wanton hedonism, and consumption. *Pictorum Gallery London* is delighted to showcase *Bodies, Gluttony, and Me*, a multidisciplinary exhibition of painting, performance, soft sculpture, and drawing. Featuring works by seven women artists, the show celebrates the grotesque, the carnivalesque, and the unexpected. Each artist considers what it is to go against society's expectations for women and women's bodies, drawing on the sin of gluttony to express enjoyment, humour, voyeurism, gender, feminism and transgression.

This exhibition stems from a wider art history where women artists present their own bodies as a sight of political activism and conflict. Considering past works by artists such as Alina Szapocznikow, Carolee Schneemann, and even Dolly Parton, each of the eight participating artists' works appear within this widely documented and considered history of pioneering women.

Bodies, Gluttony, and Me is inaugurated by a performance by **Qingqing Lui**, *Dragon Spam* (2022). Liu's practice spans moving image, performance, installation, and text. *Dragon Spam* (2022) plays with a surreal and somewhat absurd scenario of Lui interacting with both man-made and non-man-made objects, including SPAM, to draw attention to the impact of consumerism on women's self-image and bodies. The finale of the performance sees Lui etch 'FLESH' into the block of 'meat' with a large and imposing knife. Liu holds an MA in Contemporary Art Practice: Moving Image from the RCA and has exhibited across Europe and Asia.



Qingqing Liu,
Documentation from 'Dragon Spam' 2022



Nettle Grellier,
Crawl into my Mouth, 2023
Pencil on Acid Free Paper
29.7 x 21cm



Anna Choutova,
Smoking Indoors, 2017
Oil on Canvas,
40 x 33 cm

Throughout the show, we see women's bodies unbound by stereotypes, as in works by **Nettle Grellier** and **Faye Eleanor Woods**. Grellier's works are semi-autobiographical, showcasing portraits of women in ungainly positions, at once 'grotesque and beautiful'. Taking influences from artists such as Paula Rego and Dolly Parton, she uses references across high and low culture to delight in unashamedly slovenly, feral, and unpredictable womanhood. In this exhibition, a series of five drawings hones in on the artist's interest and obsession with being observed and observing; eating and playing. Having always lived and worked in rural settings, Nettle also examines the nature of gossip and storytelling as tradition. Nettle has exhibited in the UK, America, Europe, and Australia. She most recently had a solo presentation at Huxley Parlour Gallery, 'She Always Does Have a Good Time'.

Woods' works are, in her own words, 'a love letter to experience'; the absurdity and humour of life. Her recent works heavily feature the much-loved establishment the British pub. To Woods, the pub represents a state of emotional freedom where the act of dancing, singing, and drunken debauchery transcends time. The pub is a representation of the inner psyche; the room within rooms teetering on the edge of disaster, hysteria, and joy. Woods' women are often ruddy faced, laughing, and unapologetically taking up space with drink in hand. The figures luxuriate in their physicality – legs akimbo, tongues out, nostrils flared. They revel in their own excess and demand our attention and appreciation. Woods graduated in 2021 from Gray's School of Art and was featured in the 2023 New Contemporaries at the Royal Scottish Academy.

Rosie Gibbens is a multidisciplinary artist who makes performances, videos, sculptures, and installations that feature her body. She has a similar focus on absurdity and humour, using her work to explore gender performativity, labour, consumer desire, and the slippery overlap that exists between each of these things. Showcasing new soft sculptures, and framed works, Gibbens draws us into a mad world where eyeballs, sliced heads, and lipstick marks meld, generating a bizarre but powerful installation. Rosie has exhibited and performed at various institutions, including: Konig Gallery, South London Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery, Elephant West, Zabłudowicz Collection, TJ Boulting and GIANT. In 2022 she won the Ingram Prize and was awarded the Sarabande residency.

Anna Choutova's Anna's practice is best described as a browse through a forgotten section of a Duty Free store. She fixates on items that "glitter but ain't gold"- researching their societal significance and cultural connotations. She is fascinated by the things we consume in an effort to alter our identity. Coming from an Eastern European background, then thrown into a Westernised upbringing in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Anna's practice functions as a form of rose-tinted voyeurism into an idealised Western culture, approaching food, consumerism, and addiction with a contemporary Pop Art vernacular. Recent and upcoming exhibitions include: *Bye Bye Cowboy*, Arusha Gallery, 2023, *Husband Material*, Arusha, London, 2022, *Who Holds the Sword*, Hypha Studios, London, 2023, *Let Them Eat Fake*, The Bomb Factory Art Foundation, London, 2022, *Hot Air*, Pigeon Park, London, 2021



Zoe Francis Spowage
Mardy Kids and a Cruel Interruption, 2022
Acrylic and Dye on Canvas
153 x 184 cm



Rosie Gibbens,
Spite Face, 2023
(Image: work in progress)
30 x 30 x 40cm (with stand)
Head rest for massage table, fabric,
stuffing, thread, rope, elastic, eyelets

Zoe Francis Spowage creates raucous and all-encompassing large-scale paintings. The artist invites us into her world of seemingly impulsive revelry led by bold, strong, and powerful women. Spowage's women are mostly nude and muscular – defying societal expectations as well as impressing. The artist draws inspiration from imagination and life, working intuitively with subject and material to create her playful scenes. Spowage is a graduate of Falmouth University and was recently shortlisted for the British Woman Artist Prize. Earlier in 2022 Spowage had a solo presentation at Xxijra Hii, London.

Damaris Athene's transdisciplinary practices explores new ways of viewing the materiality of the body and understanding the body's potential. Creating fascinating soft sculptures, Athene showcases an evolving practice where the digital and the physical meld. *Fruiting_Body.001* (2023) is a key work within Athene's practice and explores the overlap between the body, technology, and the posthuman. A large, padded, three dimensional 'painting', *Fruiting_Body.001* (2023) is at once familiar and bodily, whilst also appearing strange and unsettling. The edges of the work softly glow, hinting at Athene's fascination with ideas of the 'sublime and the slippery'. Athene is currently studying for her MA in Fine art from City and Guilds of London Art School. Selected exhibitions include 'Trussed Up and Nowhere to Go', 2022 (solo), at JG A Z E [Art Space; 'I Wish I Was As Hot As My Memoji', 2021 (solo) at TOD Gallery; 'If Only I Could Be 2D', 2021 (solo), at Compact Contemporary; and 'Cheer Up Love' (solo) at Cambridge University.



Anna Choutova
Oyster City (I used to, now I don't), 2023
Oil on Wooden Cut-out
12 x 15 cm



Faye Eleanor Woods
I wish I was at the pub!, 2022
Raw pigments, acrylic ink and oil
86 x 66 cm



Nettle Grellie,
I Love Her Darkly, 2023,
Pencil on Acid Free Paper
29.7 x 21 cm

ABOUT THE GALLERY

Pictorum Gallery London is a contemporary art gallery that presents exceptional artists from around the world, based in Portman Square. The Gallery presents up-to-date and highly curated exhibitions, with a specific focus on Women and POC artists. Pictorum Gallery seeks to nurture and incubate new talent by offering artists a dynamic, inclusive, and supportive environment through which they can be introduced to both our London-based and international collectors.



Zoe Francis Spowage
Book Club, 2022
Acrylic and Dye on Canvas
184 x 244 cm