



"IN SEARCH OF LOST SPACE"

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CELINA TEAGUE

Born in London, Celina Teague received her MA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins College in 2007. Prior to this, she studied Fine Arts at the Universidad de Bellas Artes in Oaxaca Mexico, from where she graduated in 2005. Recent solo shows include 'Brave New World Hits a Glitch' at Rook and Raven Gallery, London, as well as 'My Bunny is Full of Teeth and Other Stories' at London's Roa Gallery. Teague has taken part in numerous group shows in London, Los Angeles, Berlin, Porto and Vienna, while performances series and talks include 'Ode to Salmon' and 'For the Love of Insects' at London Bridge and the Talking Dogfood Lecture Series respectively, both in London. Her work has been shown at various art fairs, and awards and residencies include a 2012 Takt Artist Residency in Berlin, as well as the shortlist for the 2013 Beers.Lambert's 'Contemporary Visions IV'.

“IN SEARCH OF LOST SPACE”

Imagine a world where post-Apocalyptic disaster meets history and myth, where dystopian catastrophe unveils itself in voluptuous, fleshy human-like forms. In the works of Celina Teague, figures hunch, crouched. They are covered in the minutiae and paraphernalia of everyday life like some strange Swiftian lost adventurer; Gulliver besieged in the land of the Lilliputs. Rolls of surreal flesh are emblazoned with gnashing teeth. Gaping orifices are set adrift in Technicolor sunsets and bruised blue waters. For its Frieze season exhibition this year, Kristin Hjellegjerde/ARTECO Gallery is proud to present 'In Search of Lost Space', a solo show of all new works by the London-based artist. This search explores how personal space - both physical and emotional - is affected by the radical changes and apocalyptic predictions of the greater world. Through her explorations of space and theory, Teague's works prompt us, through their distinctive abstraction and tangible textures, to consider our own sense of location within and without the structures of modern space.

Previous series, such as 'Neurotic Tectonic' (2012), 'Sardonic Bucolic' (2011) and 'Euphoric Metaphoric' (2010) saw Teague explore allegorical tales, inspired by the likes of The Tower of Babel and Noah's Ark, as well as novels such as Brave New World and Animal Farm. In works such as Huxley's 'Brave New World' and Orwell's 'Animal Farm' Teague found a sense of dystopian catastrophe. This was echoed in her intricately-detailed canvases, imbuing them with a Bosch-like sense of anarchy and a Surrealist use of colour and form. She created alternate meta-universes that explored the big questions: What are we morphing into? What are the consequences?

And so, the title of this new exhibition was loosely inspired by Proust, "yet the idea of involuntary memory, so central to In Search of Lost Time, seems even more relevant the further along I have come in this exhibition," says Teague. "In this new series, there has been a break in my conceptual approach to painting." Teague has slowly moved away from more message-driven works, which were often connected to the places the artist had lived in and the incidents she had witnessed therein. "This new body of work, however, feels much more fluid and free; liberated by its not being too attached to a narrative," Teague continues. "I felt the need to reassess my approach to narrative and began exploring the tone of my work, which tended towards the grotesque and was bound tightly to the news stories I was reading. I wanted to explore these same global issues through a personal perspective."

The diversity of the paintings in 'In Search of Lost Space' reflects Teague's freedom from this commitment to narrative. While some, such as *Empty But Thriving*, *The Pursuit of Happiness* and *In Search of Lost Space* are personal, and deeply connected to the female position, others, such as the triptych *'Passive Aggressive, Aggressive and Release'* and *'The Final Destination'* veer into abstraction, moving away from Teague's more figurative approach. Teague's new series retains the characteristic other-worldly quality of her older work, and as always, she has an eye for the absurd. And yet, here one finds a noticeably pared down quality: Her complex, meticulous works of the past have given way to paintings in which space is almost flattened - raw linen remains unpainted, and centralised objects suspended in a vast expanse. By contrast, her use of paint is markedly textured, combed through with forks and applied with knives and spoons.

There is something distinctly unsettling in the crouching figures hidden by shadow in Teague's canvases, yet there is something equally uplifting about works such as *'Empty but Thriving'*, in which large voluminous shapes give a sense of floating space. Here, amongst the curling tendrils and organic dollops of form lies a search for a singular truth that defines *'In Search of Lost Space'*. It may present a new direction for the artist, yet her core values, particularly those relating to the environment and to feminist concerns, remain. The freer stream-of-consciousness approach to her latest work invites audiences to witness a more introspective exploration of sights, textures and emotions brought to life on canvas; one in which the global and the personal, Teague seems to suggest, is one and the same.



The Pursuit of Happiness, 2013
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 130cm x 150cm



Empty but Thriving, 2013
Oil on canvas, 152cm x 207cm



Still Life of Studio Angst, 2013
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 170cm x 150cm



The Final Goal, 2013
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 165cm x 140cm



In Search of Lost Space, 2013
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 150cm x 130cm



Passive Aggressive, 2013
Oil and acrylic on linen, 50cm x 50cm



Aggressive, 2013
Oil and acrylic on linen, 50cm x 50cm



Release, 2013
Oil and acrylic on linen, 50cm x 50cm



Winter, 2013
Oil on linen, 46cm x 55cm



Spring, 2013
Oil on linen, 46cm x 55cm



Summer, 2013
Oil on linen, 46cm x 55cm



Autumn, 2013
Oil on linen, 46cm x 55cm



Making Way For The New, 2012
Oil on linen, 92cm x 122cm



Celebrating the Arrival, 2013
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 150cm x 120cm



A Fish Called Wonder, 2013
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 120cm x 150cm



In Search of the Sentient Half, 2013
Oil on canvas, 130 cm x 150 cm

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