

Jake Wood-Evans: Relic

10 January - 29 March 2020

The Gallery, Winchester Discovery Centre, Winchester



Jake Wood-Evans in his studio, 2019

Jake Wood-Evans' new body of work, produced for this solo exhibition at Winchester Discovery Centre's Gallery, which is operated by Hampshire Cultural Trust, is a continuation of the artists' exploration of memory and mortality. Returning to his enduring love of the Baroque for inspiration, the likes of Peter Paul Rubens, Anthony Van Dyck, Nicolas Poussin and Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre form the conceptual genesis for *Relic*. Here Wood-Evans moves further into abstraction than ever before, as the reference piece is transformed he uses the canvas to examine the tangibility, or lack thereof, of our existence. Jake claims he has always been just as interested in what is absent, missing or removed, than what remains; he hopes these new paintings have the power to engage and captivate the viewer for even the briefest moment, to provide the opportunity for a meditative and emotional response.



The Assumption of the Virgin Mary, after Rubens, 2019

Large-scale and bold, Wood-Evans' versions of the historical altarpiece are washed with a depth of colour that obscures and fragments the figures of classical imagery that lurk beneath. Yet these underlying forms refuse to be fully erased, like an artistic palimpsest shapes from previous layers remain, serving as a shifted, reconstructed memento of what once was. The final products only loosely retain a visual connection to their reference, yet offer widespread allusions to seminal moments throughout art history: there are traces of mankind's first cave paintings made with earth pigments; the Old Master's red chalk sketches; Francisco Goya's Black Paintings and Rothko's famous Colour Field works. The layers of references and meaning are mirrored by the seeming erosion, reworking and restoration of the subject. These new works offer a scene largely concealed, as if through wreaths of smoke, or the scratched surface of a long discarded, corroded film.

Wood-Evans continues to focus on revising the emotional atmosphere, energy and space that his figures inhabit, something he previously accomplished with such assurance in past Unit London shows *Legacy & Disorder* (2019) and *Subjection & Discipline* (2016). However, in *Relic* he has embraced the tumbling figures and entangled scenes of the religious and mythological imagery of the Baroque. Each painting, and particularly the smaller oil sketches and preparatory works, have imprinted within them an energy, movement and physicality which enshrouds the subject. These are pieces as much about the surface texture, the brush strokes, scratches and marks of the artist's hand as the compositions themselves. Wood-Evans' work manages to erode its original source whilst simultaneously renewing and reinvigorating it in a constant regenerative flux. His paintings are testament to our complex yet inescapable relationship with the past.

NOTES TO EDITORS

JAKE WOOD-EVANS

Jake Wood-Evans' work is a manifestation of his complex relationship with British art history. At once haunting and seductive; evocative and familiar, Wood-Evans' oeuvre resists a definitive interpretation. 18th Century figures appear as apparitions, wreathed in gossamer oils they peer out from linen canvases: faceless, ghoulish memories of an imperial past.

HAMPSHIRE CULTURAL TRUST

Hampshire Cultural Trust was established in 2014 to promote Hampshire as a great cultural county. We manage and support 26 arts and museums attractions across Hampshire, deliver county-wide outreach programmes that bring culture to local communities and care for 2.5 million objects relating to Hampshire's rich and internationally important heritage. We also deliver a diverse range of social impact initiatives targeted at those who are most vulnerable or disadvantaged and who would not usually have access to arts and culture. Our mission is to provide great arts, heritage, museums and creative programming, working closely with local and national partners, placing communities, our collections and their stories at the heart of everything we do.



Study for The Assumption, with Oxide Red, after Rubens, 2019



Study for The Assumption of the Virgin Mary, with Cadmium Red, after Rubens, 2019

UNIT LONDON

Unit London remains firmly committed to its core principles that art should be celebrated, inclusive and undivided. Founded in 2013, Unit London was born from an innate desire to break down the barriers of elitism and create new innovative pathways into the contemporary art world, recognised for its pioneering approach to digital media and role in expanding and diversifying audiences using new technologies.

Since its inception, Unit London has strived to provide a unique and experimental platform for the world's most distinctive emerging talent, showcasing their work to a culturally curious audience across the globe.

Exhibition	Jake Wood-Evans: Relic
Private View	Thursday, 9th January 2020, From 19:00
Dates	10 January - 29 March 2020
Venue Details	The Gallery, Winchester Discovery Centre, Jewry Street, Winchester, SO23 8SB Monday – Friday 10:00am – 7:00pm, Saturday 10:00am – 5:00pm, Sunday 11:00am – 3:00pm

For all press enquiries and future partnership opportunities please contact:
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