

Hayley Tompkins
After A Long Sleep, It Woke Up
The Modern Institute, Osborne Street
20th November 2020 – 16th January 2021

Glasgow-based artist Hayley Tompkins presents six acrylic works on gesso board for her latest solo exhibition at The Modern Institute's Osborne Street space. Negotiation between intuition and control brings dynamism to the narrow panels, leading both artist and viewer on a spontaneous and experimental journey.

Tompkins' work continues to find new ways to challenge and explore paint's transformational capabilities, as the boards are an extension of a wider practice rooted in an experimental approach to painting as an active process of thinking and investigating. This determination to remain unstable imbues the works with a mysterious energy that calls to mind Susan Sontag:

"In place of a hermeneutics we need an erotics of art. [...] Art is not only about something; It is something. A work of art is a thing in the world, not just a text or commentary on the world."ⁱ

They are simultaneously thoughts and visions, oscillating between figuration and abstraction, yet refuse to be determined; thus, lending the works an uncanny mood of the supernatural, flitting between the domain of the weird and playful. The saturated fluorescent colours and impassioned strokes direct the eye all over the surface, the repetitive tension between restraint and abandon in the brushwork suggesting conflict, anxiety and questioning as each battle for the viewer's attention and response; in turn introducing a maximalist quality to the expressive paintings.

Modest in scale, the works act as windows into intangible, multi-coloured fantastical realms, bursting with vitality and motion. First soaked with washes of paint then challenged with orderly, angular gestures, the scenes offer portals into Tompkins' fluctuating process - forming and disintegrating before materialising into another manifestation. As unpredictable as a photographic snapshot, some appear to feature a singular focal point off-centre and skewed, streaks shooting off into the swathe of colours that dominate the surface; while others purely encourage viewers to behold and sense the unreserved emotion in its gestural temperament. Initially appearing as a series of related scenes, upon closer inspection they are disjointed and fluid, more dreamscapes and imagined interiors than known landscapes and spaces - this unremitting shapeshifting offers an indisputable otherworldly force to the panels.

Tompkins unrelentingly challenges and provokes the viewer's inherent desire to rationalise these images, which persist to escape definition, invoking a sensualism that flirts with the real and uncertain; and, operates within its own rules as it asks viewers to engage with feeling rather than reasoning.

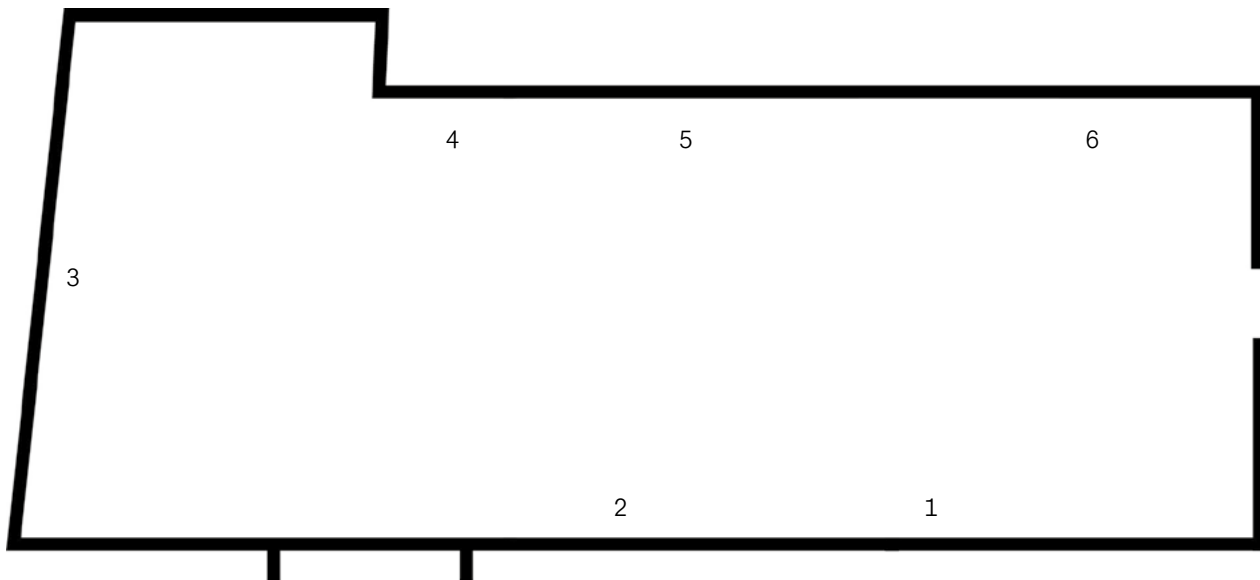
ⁱ Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, 1966.

Hayley Tompkins (b. 1971 Leighton Buzzard; based in Glasgow) represented Scotland at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013.

Selected solo presentations include: *'Bag of rainbow'*, Recent Activity, Birmingham (2020); *'LB.'*, Drawing Room, Hamburg (2019); *'Think I wanna drive your Benz (I don't)'*, The Modern Institute, 3 Aird's Lane, Glasgow (2018); *Stick Crystals to Paintings*, Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn (2018); *Lulu*, Mexico City (2016); *Myth Cart*, Jupiter Artland, Edinburgh (2016); *Technicolour Hamburger*, The Drawing Room, Hamburg (2015); *Electric Magnetic Installation*, The Modern Institute, Aird's Lane, Glasgow (2015); The Common Guild, Glasgow (2014); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2013); *Currents*, Studio Voltaire, London (2011); *A Piece of Eight*, The Modern Institute, Osborne Street, Glasgow (2011); *Autobuilding*, Inverleith House, Edinburgh (2009); and *Re*, The Drawing Room, London (2008).

Selected group presentations include: *'Breaking the Mould: Sculpture by Women since 1945'*, touring: Wakefield, Walsall, Plymouth, Nottingham, Hull (2020-2021); *'Drawing Biennial 2019'*, Drawing Room, London (2019); *'Jason Kraus & Hayley Tompkins'*, The Modern Institute, Aird's Lane Bricks Space (2017); *British Art Show 8*, touring: Leeds, Edinburgh, Southampton and Norwich (2015 – 2017); *I still believe in miracles*, Inverleith House, Edinburgh (2016); *The Persistence of Objects*, Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore, curated by the Common Guild (2015); *The Grass is Singing*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, curated by The Modern Institute (2015); *I Cheer a Dead Man's Sweetheart*, De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill (2014); *The Imminence of Poetics*, São Paulo Biennale, Sao Paulo (2012); and *Watercolour*, Tate Britain, London (2011).

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|---|--|---|
| <p>1 <i>Green Politic</i>, 2020
 Acrylic on gesso board
 100 x 63 x 3 cm
 39 3/8 x 24 3/4 x 1 1/8 in</p> | <p>2 <i>Grass Stocks</i>, 2020
 Acrylic on gesso board
 100 x 63 x 3 cm
 39 3/8 x 24 3/4 x 1 1/8 in</p> | <p>3 <i>After A Long Sleep, It Woke Up</i>, 2020
 Acrylic gesso on board
 100 x 63 x 3 cm
 39 3/8 x 24 3/4 x 1 1/8 in</p> |
| <p>4 <i>Pinkest Mesh War</i>, 2020
 Acrylic on gesso board
 100 x 63 x 3 cm
 39 3/8 x 24 3/4 x 1 1/8 in</p> | <p>5 <i>Purple Passages</i>, 2020
 Acrylic on gesso board
 100 x 63 x 3 cm
 39 3/8 x 24 3/4 x 1 1/8 in</p> | <p>6 <i>Yellow Politic</i>, 2020
 Acrylic on gesso board
 100 x 63 x 3 cm
 39 3/8 x 24 3/4 x 1 1/8 in</p> |