

# The annexe

Sara Barker

*[hems]*

10 September – 23 October 2021

Opening preview: Thursday 9 September, 6-9pm

For '*[hems]*', Glasgow-based artist Sara Barker is showing a series of new sculptures in The Annexe. The title takes its inspiration from the humble edge that borders a skirt, handkerchief, or sleeve; a neat and folded trim, tucking away the messy tangles of loose thread and fabric underneath. In relation to Barker's sculptures, the hem evokes figurative associations, making connections to the things which contain and hold the body. The hem also draws attention to the physical – as well as metaphorical – edges and borders of things: both the works themselves and the exhibition as a whole are in a capsulated form. Though smaller than much of her previous work, the pieces in this new series retain Barker's distinctive artistic language where she blurs the thresholds between sculpture, painting and drawing. Employing these disciplines and their associated materials and techniques, Barker's sculptures create both physical and metaphysical space, sometimes expansive, and at others, claustrophobic.

Originally commissioned for her solo exhibition at Cample Line in Scotland, 2020, Barker's sculptures were made during lockdown. Using the limited materials and space around her, and without access to a professional fabricator, Barker has been getting intimate with production. Working from home, moving between her kitchen, garage and attic, she has hand-crafted her series of domestically sized wall-mounted reliefs. Incorporating painted and moulded brass, steel and aluminium as well as everyday materials such as wood, cardboard and wire, Barker conjures little worlds, abstract scenes constituted from linear shapes drawn in metal. To quote Susanna Beaumont: "Barker's reliefs are akin to pages from a diary, sketches sketched, a draft of a composition, a quickly written musical score. [In these new works] is a kind of unearthing, a reveal. A series of archaeological sites filled with the physical, the familiar and the unidentifiable, the less pin-downable shaky dream, the half-recalled and the fast-dissolving memory. Earthy yet brittle, *[hems]* gives evidence of time spent, time stretched, time corrupted, ordered and disordered."

Sara Barker (b. 1980, Manchester) lives and works in Glasgow, UK. She studied History of Art at the University of Glasgow and painting at the Glasgow School of Art. Recent solo shows include *undo the knot*, Cample Line, Lithsdale; *All Clouds Are Clocks*, *All Clocks Are Clouds*, Leeds Art Gallery (both 2020); *a weak spot in the earth*, The Approach, London; *The faces of older images*, Mary Mary Glasgow (both 2017); *CHANGE-THE-SETTING*, Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh and Ikon, Birmingham (2016); *for myself & strangers*, Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow (2014); and *The subtle knife*, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2013). Her work has been included in group shows, which include: *My Kid Could've Done That*, Holbourne Museum, Bath; *Drink in the Beauty*, Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow (both 2021); *She sees the shadows*, DRAF x MOSTYN; *Surface work*, Victoria Miro, London (2018); *NOW*, Scottish Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; *Virginia Woolf: An Exhibition Inspired by her writing*, Tate St. Ives, St. Ives, UK touring to Pallant House, Chichester and The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (all 2018); and *Women to Watch*, Phillips, London (2017). She has undertaken a number of outdoor work commissions including a permanent commission for the University of Leeds as part of the university's new Engineering and Physical Sciences development (2020) and for Jupiter Artland, Edinburgh (2015 and 2013).