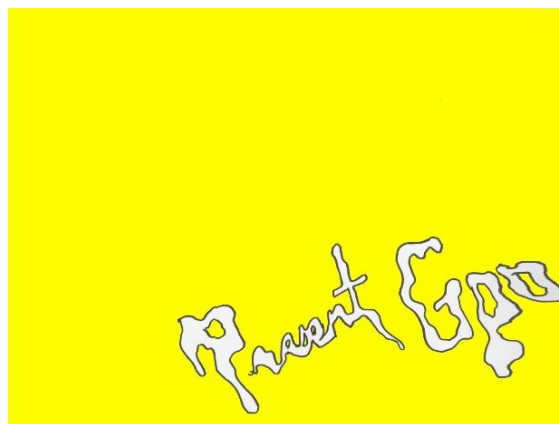


Martine Syms
Present Goo

1 Davies Street W1
14 September – 04 November 2023
Private view: Thursday 14 September, 6-8pm

This September, artist and filmmaker Martine Syms presents *Present Goo*, featuring a group of new works – spanning film, installation, drawing and photography – at the Davies Street gallery in Mayfair. Syms' new works encompass three distinct groupings, that each represent new avenues in her ongoing critical examination of narrative production. Distinguished by a versatile and research-based approach to her art, Syms' multifarious practice draws on both personal and historical references that speak to the nature of contemporary life and human experience.



In three new video works, Syms looks to surveillance footage and clips drawn from myriad sources to create nuanced filmic collages that coax a simulacra of psychological expression. In footage shot between August 2022 and June 2023, found materials are drawn from reactions and responses to messages sent via SMS. In one film's voiceover, the subjects' express their desires as 'wants', referencing Sam Kogan's 2010 book *The Science of Acting*; exploring the subtle shades of meaning and attitudes that can be invoked through language. Throughout, Syms consciously mediates the way in which technology – for example, the editing of the moving image, sound and its physical modes of viewing – may be deployed to evoke or alter the impression of perspective and character. The accompanying music scores are produced by Syms, with collaborators Emir West, Colin Self and Ben Babbitt.

Shown in dialogue with the video works are several enlarged photographic wallpapers and new drawings. By contrast to the intricacies of film's technological processes and temporal outcome, these are created with relative immediacy, offering a series of intuitive vignettes that might equally communicate personal shorthand or a narrative in flux that speak to a wider public consciousness.

Drawn from Syms' personal archive, the photographic wallpapers reveal the filtered fragments of images that relay the objects and minutiae of everyday life onto a monumental scale. Alongside these, a number of new drawings combine journalistic commentary, stream of consciousness phrases, diagrammatic illustrations and bold graphics recalling widespread commercial signage. Throughout her career Syms has used this vernacular style drawing and writing as a means to aid her creative process and approach to narrative construction. Shown for the first time here on enlarged scale, her new drawings reveal a diaristic palimpsest of narrative gestures, offering an insight into her ongoing practice.

Martine Syms (b. 1988, Los Angeles (CA)) obtained an MFA from Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson (NY) (2017) and a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (IL) (2007). Syms has exhibited internationally with recent solo exhibitions including: *SHE MAD S1:E4*, MCA Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2022); *Grio College*, Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, Annandale-On-Hudson (2022); *Neural Swamp*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2021, touring to Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia in 2022); *Aphrodite's Beasts*, Fridericianum, Kassel (2021); *SOFT*, Sadie Coles HQ, London (2021); *SHE MAD: S1:E4*, part of Glasgow International, Tramway, Glasgow (2021, touring to MCA Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 2022); *Ugly Plymouths*, at Sadie Coles HQ (offsite), London, and at 5239 Melrose Avenue, presented by Bridget Donahue and Sadie Coles HQ, Los Angeles (2020); *Boon*, Secession, Vienna (2019); *Shame Space*, Institute of Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond (2019); *Incense Sweaters & Ice*, Graham Foundation, Chicago (2018); *SHE MAD: Laughing Gas*, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago (2018); *Grand Calme*, Sadie Coles HQ, London (2018); *Projects 106: Martine Syms*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (2017); *VNXXCAS: Martine Syms*, Camden Arts Centre, London (2017); and *Fact & Trouble*, Institute of Contemporary Art, London (2016). In 2022, Syms released her widely acclaimed feature-film *The African Desperate*. Syms has been recognised with numerous awards, including the Guggenheim Fellowship (2023); United States Artists Fellowship (2020); Future Fields Commission in Time-Based Media (2020); and Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Chicago (2018).

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