

Rebecca Ackroyd  
*The Party Is A Woman*  
September 4 – October 27, 2024  
Opening Wednesday, September 4, 6–8PM

Peres Projects is pleased to present *The Party Is A Woman*, Rebecca Ackroyd's (b. 1987 in Cheltenham, UK) fourth exhibition with the gallery, and her second in Seoul. This exhibition of paintings on canvas and drawings on paper, expands on Ackroyd's recent exhibitions *Period Drama* displayed at the Kestner Gesellschaft in Hanover and *Mirror Stage*, which was presented at the occasion of the 60th Venice Biennale. The mundane permeates her multidimensional compositions sometimes involving ready-made objects, acting as sporadic anchors into reality. Still, the everyday remains imbued with metaphors, symbols and layered timelines encouraging brand new perspectives on the otherwise overlooked. Open or shut eyes, ripped tights, plant stems, bruised skin, and pieces of machinery are dismantled and rebuilt into new architectures, wherein figuration dissolves into abstraction. Familiar motifs become devices of reflection on the metaphysics and foundations of the human experience: transience, memory, existence and identity are observed through an introspective lens, magnifying the minute, capturing the unseen. These quotidian elements stand as protagonists of a fragmented storyline in which past and present converge, inner and outer selves intersect, beginning and end overlap.

There is an uncanny familiarity in Rebecca Ackroyd's pictorial universe, the strange feeling of recognising something without really knowing what it is. The subject matter shape-shifts alongside the medium, at times painting, at times sculpture, drawing or installation. Forms and textures emerge through vivid colours and striking details, but never fully disclose their identity, urging the viewer to muster a sense beyond that of sight, and rely on their intuition, or even their memory. This subconscious inner knowing is precisely the realm in which Rebecca Ackroyd lures the viewer, immersing them into life-sized landscapes filled with body fragments, faceless apparitions, engine parts and other domestic objects that populate our daily surroundings.

Here, it is clear that time is not linear; it circles, unfolds and retracts, bridging the present moment and a moment that has passed, often through the recurrent motif of clocks and other time-telling devices. In Ackroyd's works, clocks are monumental beings, partially displaying their numbers or not displaying them at all, and never quite telling time either, simply indicating that it is ever passing. Turbines, rotors and flowers in bloom are depicted as giant spirals, spinning entities both caught in the stillness inherent to the two-dimensional image, while simultaneously translating the restlessness of our unstable zeitgeist. By bringing the past into the now, Ackroyd orchestrates encounters with the impalpable language of dreams, to create a surreal yet sensory realm between imagination and hallucination.

In this series of works, organic bodies enter in dialogue with the anatomy of engines, revealing a similar ambivalence to their respective physicalities. From this encounter emerges the underlying softness of mechanical entities, simultaneously exposing the machine-like character of human and vegetal organisms. Turbines are depicted in soft gradients and the hands of a clock appear faintly through layers of paint, almost dormant inside the petals of a blossom. Rebecca Ackroyd paints flowers that opens like eyelids and irises that remind us of the core of electric motors. Or vice-versa. One way or the other, such parallels can spark a thought on the automatism of our daily behaviours, subconsciously surrendering to the irresistible pull of technology. In Ackroyd's compositions however, machines are not vilified but observed with attentive curiosity, perhaps to be better apprehended and reflect on the subtle sameness tying us to them.

What we think we know from reality is altered by the artist's peculiar methods of fragmentation and reproduction, balancing our perception on the edge of alert consciousness and dream-like visions. Serial works, repeated imagery and the revisiting of patterns and visual motifs create a cohesive yet ambiguous lexicon speaking to both the earthly and the spiritual. This creative approach reveals an interest in capturing that which cannot be seen or easily grasped through the visceral experience of image, material and form. Rebecca Ackroyd weaves a broad and intricately crafted network, in which narratives and media interlace, offering surprising vantage points and

forming nuanced intersections between social commentary and personal history.

This is Rebecca Ackroyd's fourth exhibition with Peres Projects and her second in Seoul. Recent solo exhibitions include *Rebecca Ackroyd: Mirror Stage*, organized by Kestner Gesellschaft, Hanover, collateral event of the 60th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, IT (2024); *Period Drama*, curated by Adam Budak and Alexander Wilmschen, Kestner Gesellschaft, Hanover, DE (2023); *Shutter Speed*, curated by Matthieu Lelièvre, Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon, Lyon, FR (2023); *Fertile Ground*, Peres Projects, Seoul, KR (2022); and *100mph*, Peres Projects, Berlin, DE (2021). Her work has been featured in a number of group exhibitions, including *Contested Bodies*, The Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK (2023); *Antéfutur*, curated by Sandra Patron, CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, Bordeaux, FR (2023); *Dark Light, Realism in the Age of Post Truth*, curated by Massimiliano Gioni, Aishti, Foundation, Beirut, LB (2022); *SPRING*, Peres Projects, Seoul, KR (2022); and *corpus murmur*, Peles Empire, Berlin, DE (2022).

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