

Vilma Gold, London

Sophie von Hellermann

After a Fashion - A Play with Fire

22 May – 20 June

Private view Thursday 21 May 6:30 - 8:30pm

Sophie von Hellermann's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery *After a Fashion - A Play with Fire* comprises a new series of paintings, both large wall mounted works and a sculptural installation of much smaller paintings. Hellermann has used paintings before to make structures and by placing the painting sculpture in the middle of Vilma Gold gallery she emphasises on painting's reach outside of 2D.

Hellermann juxtaposes two ideas of performance, that of *The Fashion Show* and *The Play*. *After a Fashion* puts forward that painting is 'a manner of speaking', and perhaps a style that proposes ideas and emotions rather than actual facts. What we are presented with is not as such seen but rather imagined and possibly a fleeting moment's experience. The second half of the title for the exhibition *Play with Fire* also derives from an idiom, 'playing with fire'. Here Hellermann is using the idiom as a noun and again reminds us how the experience of art is an edgy one. In relation to performance, *Play with Fire* also expresses something uncontrollable and we as viewers are invited to do just that. We are encouraged to consider painting again through an interest in painting vs. sculpture. This dichotomy is also reflected in her defining two performance concepts and point towards the narrative hinted by the exhibition title.

These oppositions are also negotiated through size, very large vs. very small, and how Hellermann pays as much attention to one as the other. Speed is also important for Hellermann's work and the difference in size seems to comment on this. Big concepts are treated naively, only to be scaled up and occupy the world of significance. The colours and the gestural brushstroke debate important conversations but appear ambiguously vague. The constant juxtaposing of the inconsequential and the serious, results in a painting that is free. The fleeting feel of Hellermann's imagery makes her paintings projections of imaginary worlds.

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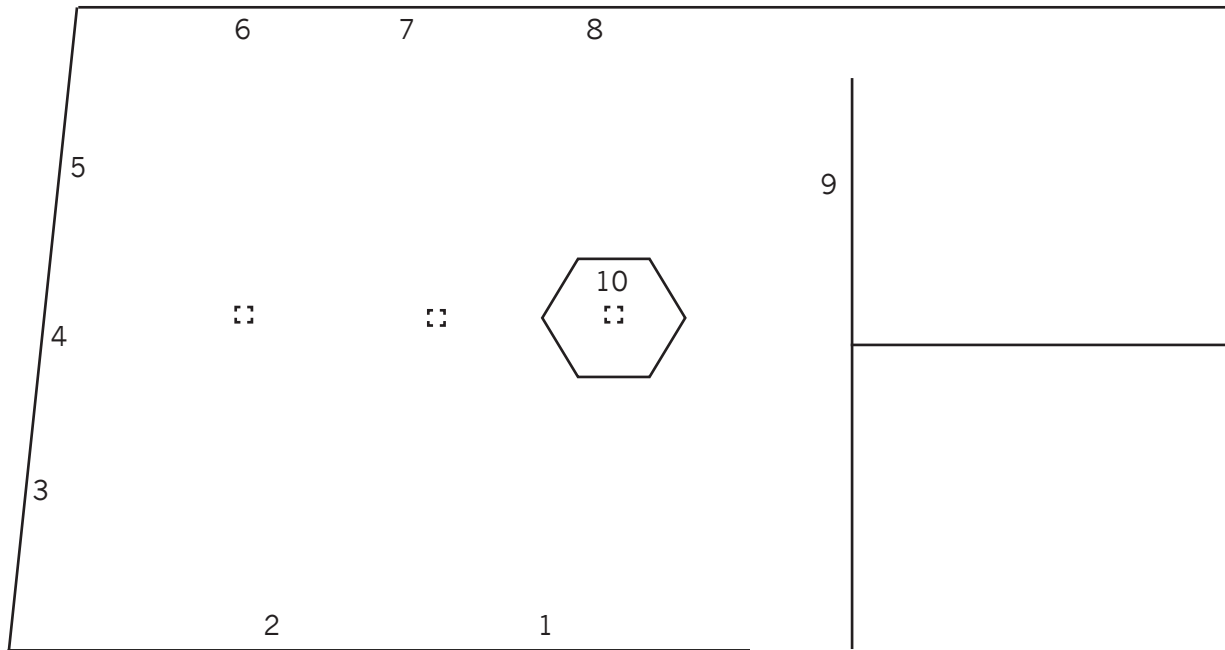
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1. *Vanity*, 2015
acrylic on canvas
146 x 112 cm
57 1/2 x 44 1/8 ins

2. *Lovely Bird*, 2015
acrylic on canvas
183 x 132 cm
72 1/8 x 52 ins

3. *Wheeled in Last Minute*, 2015
acrylic on canvas
146 x 112 cm
57 1/2 x 44 1/8 ins

4. *Finity*, 2015
acrylic on canvas
253 x 175 cm
92 1/2 x 68 7/8 ins

5. *All Want a Piece of Her*, 2015
acrylic on canvas
146 x 112 cm
57 1/2 x 44 1/8 ins

6. *Vultures*, 2015
acrylic on canvas
146 x 112 cm
57 1/2 x 44 1/8 ins

7. *Infinity*, 2015
acrylic on canvas
200 x 160 cm
78 3/4 x 63 ins

8. *I am the State*, 2015
acrylic on canvas
146 x 112 cm
57 1/2 x 44 1/8 ins

9. *Catherine*, 2015
acrylic on canvas
118 x 105 cm
46 1/2 x 41 3/8 ins

10. *Playing with fire*, 2015
painted wood, acrylic on canvas
variable dimensions