

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**CLARE WOODS: *REHUMANISED*****9 FEBRUARY – 17 MARCH 2018
PRIVATE VIEW: THURSDAY, 8 FEBRUARY, 6 – 8 PM**

Simon Lee Gallery is proud to present, for the first time in Asia, an exhibition of new works by London-based artist Clare Woods. For over 15 years Woods' painting practice has been an exploration of physical form through the materiality of paint. Originally trained as a sculptor, Woods established her reputation with large-scale landscape paintings rendered in enamel on aluminium. Based on photographic source images, her immersive paintings of diverse scale have more recently moved into figurative works rendered in rich hues of oil paint. With an acute understanding of sculptural language, Woods' interpretations shift between figuration and abstraction imbuing this central tension with volume, weight and interior mystery.

Clare Woods' source images often of the human form provide a catalyst to delve into what is hidden. An intuitive exploration of mood, unseen presence and internal expressions are made tangible through the painting process. Metamorphic psychologic states, extremes of feeling and endurance are communicated through painted forms transcending natural appearance. In looking outwards, expressing strangeness of objects and parts of the body heightened by the sculptural energy, luscious transformative colour and vigour of the applied paint, Woods is also turning inwards within this act of psychically charged defamiliarisation. Rich meditations on the particulars of colour, intentionally ambiguous semi-organic shapes often hover between abstraction and representation with a flowing, fluid energy.

This new body of work sees a significant shift in technique and subject matter, both in the use of oil paint from enamel, and in the traces of human form removed. The revealing layers of oil paint generate a different complexity of narrative whether in the ambiguity of emanating light in empty rooms or in the amplified viscerality of flesh in an open hand, colourful blooms or a darkened profile. Personal spaces are intimate but enigmatic, defined by an elusive quality of light and the palpable absence of the human form. Both familiar and incongruous, the works yield an atmospheric poeticism, channelling form and figure while exposing internal landscapes and the sense of a world made new and strange.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Clare Woods was born in Southampton in 1972 and lives and works in Herefordshire, UK. She received her MA from Goldsmith's College, London and her BA from Bath College of Art, Bath. Woods' work has been shown extensively

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internationally and has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions and projects, including Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, UK (2018), Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, UK (2017), Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, UK (2016), A Rock, A Tree, A Cloud: A Curated show with works from the Davies Collection, The National Collection Of Wales, Oriel Davies, Wales (2014) which travelled to Oriel-y-Parc, Wales (2015) and Oriel Plas Glyn-y-Weddw, Wales (2014). Other important solo exhibitions include The New Art Centre, Salisbury, UK (2013), Southampton City Art Gallery, Southampton, UK (2012), The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, UK (2011) and The Chisenhale Gallery, London, UK (2006). Major group exhibitions include Pier Art Centre, Scotland, UK (2016), The Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, UK (2014), The National Museum Wales, Wales, UK (2014), ARKEN Museum of Modern Art, Denmark (2014), Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (2009). Her work is in major and private collections including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY, ARKEN Museum of Modern Art, Denmark, Arts Council Collection and British Council, London, UK.

Image: Clare Woods, *Short Bad Day*, 2017, oil on aluminium, 190 x 190 cm (78 3/4 x 78 3/4 in.)

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