



PRESS RELEASE
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TATE BRITAIN

ART NOW: SIMEON BARCLAY THE HERO WEARS CLAY SHOES

7 July – 5 November 2017

Tate Britain

Free entry

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The Hero Wears Clay Shoes is the latest free exhibition in Tate Britain's ongoing *Art Now* series, presenting new and recent works by the Leeds-based artist Simeon Barclay (b.1975). The exhibition brings together a collection of multimedia works including large scale wallpaper pictures, lightboxes, paintings and videos that combine personal memory with appropriated imagery from advertisements, magazines, television and music. In these works, the artist explores the cultural significance of such images and seeks to understand how we identify and situate ourselves within culture and tradition.

In *The Hero Wears Clay Shoes*, Barclay presents aspirational pop-culture icons and fictional characters from his time growing up in the North of England which challenge notions of masculine and feminine roles, offering a view of British culture and identity. Figures from the 1980s *Viz* comic cartoon strip *Fat Slags* and from the television drama *Boys from the Blackstuff* are displayed alongside portraits of music band The Specials, actresses and models such as Kristen Scott Thomas and Isabella Rossellini photographed for *Vogue*, and famous footballers of the era.

Simeon Barclay lives and works in Leeds. Following a 16-year career in engineering, Barclay retrained as an artist studying fine art at Leeds Metropolitan University, Chelsea College of Art and Design and Goldsmiths College, University of London. He received an Associate Artist Award as part of the Liverpool Biennial in 2016 and his solo exhibitions include *They Don't Like It Up 'Em*, Cubitt, London (2016), *Mans Not Ready, Set The Controls For the Heart Of The Sun*, Leeds (2015) and *Where Did It All Go Wrong*, Dam Projects, London (2015). He was also commissioned to create site a specific work for the Grundy Gallery in Blackpool (2015) and has exhibited in group shows across the UK and internationally, including *Exit*, Rodolphe Janssen, Brussels (2017), *On Longing*, Arcadia Missa, New York (2017), *Playing By The Rules*, Royal Standard, Liverpool (2016), *A British Art Show*, Meyohas, New York (2015) and *True Players*, W139, Amsterdam (2015).

Art Now is a series of exhibitions at Tate Britain focusing on new and recent work by emerging artists. Since the 1990s, *Art Now* has recognized talent at its outset and provided a launching platform for artists who have gone on to become established figures on the international art scene. The series has recently included *Lucy Beech and Edward Thomasson: Together*, *Rachel Maclean: Wot u :-) about?*, *Sophie Michael: Trip (the light fantastic)* and the group exhibitions *Vanilla and Concrete* and *The Weight of Data*.

Art Now Simeon Barclay: The Hero Wears Clay Shoes is curated by Elsa Coustou, Assistant Curator, Contemporary British Art.

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