

# LEG UP

New Paintings by Emma Cousin

PV 8th Feb 6.30-8.30



*Peeing at 80*, 2017, oil on canvas

In Leg Up London-based artist Emma Cousin (b. 1986) investigates the body as the site of experience - examining what we can and cannot control in all aspects of daily life, and questioning the meanings of mobility, both physical and social. Using the body as a metaphor, and emphasising the role that the body plays in processing and defining our experiences, Cousin's paintings present a pantheon of women performing everyday gestures to address notions of time, aging, strength, inertia and vulnerability.

Cousin's darkly comic and irreverent parade of female characters are pulled and twisted into impossible bodily contortions, balancing the weight of gravity with a lightness extending from their mix-and-match body parts. Exploring concepts of freedom and identity, they inhabit precarious situations and engage in awkward activities, such as urinating in a cup in the back-seat of a speeding car (*Peeing at 80*), or teetering precariously on high heels while juggling groceries in *Purchase*. *Running Scared* depicts a wave of 'hysterical women' seeming to hold one another up as they launch themselves across the canvas, away from or towards we don't know what. Nor do we know how dependable matters are underfoot, as Cousin's figures act on surfaces ranging from concrete to butter. Through the theme of mobility, Cousin balances weight and agility to propose that a persistent psychological anxiety, experienced through the body, is our frontline experience of the world.

Leg Up takes forward Cousin's residency research project, Legwork, started at Wimbledon in October 2016 and is supported by paintingresearch at Wimbledon College of Arts and Isabel Bingley at Lewisham Arthouse Gallery. The work is accompanied by a text by Luce Garrigues and Amy Mechowski. The results of the artist's residency research project, Legwork will be published on 8 October in the form of a catalogue including contributions from over 30 artists.

Exhibition Open: 9th - 18th February 2018. Wednesday to Sunday 12 - 6pm  
Venue: Lewisham Arthouse. 140 Lewisham Way, SE14 6PD | Step-free access  
Transport: New Cross, New Cross Gate or Brockley stations  
Contact: For more information and images please contact: [challisede@gmail.com](mailto:challisede@gmail.com)  
[www.paintingresearch.net](http://www.paintingresearch.net)