

Oona Grimes: *Hail the new Etruscan #1*



Oona Grimes, *a spritz of grrrls #7*, 2018, coloured pencil, 210 x 297mm

12 January - 9 February 2019

Private View: Friday 11 January 6 - 9pm

Daily I would walk to Piazza Rotunda and beyond, just to be in Rome, early before the crowds; to watch the road sweepers and shop keepers setting up, to see the light changing over the city. Gradually those walks, and those films wove themselves into my dreams and my drawings.

— Oona Grimes

Hail the new Etruscan #1, Oona Grimes' fourth solo exhibition at Danielle Arnaud, presents two new series of drawings developed during her recent residency at the British School in Rome, where she was the Bridget Riley Fellow 2018. They are influenced by Grimes' long held fascination with post-war Italian cinema and the films designated as Neorealist. This canon of films ranges from Visconti's *Ossessione* (1943) and Rossellini's *Roma Città Aperta* (1945) to Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960), Pasolini's *Accattone* (1961) and beyond.

The first series of drawings, *le comparse* (2018), are, in the words of writer and director Tony Grisoni, 'spare, crayon drawings on white [paper] of brutalised faces running with snot and blotched with cold'. The faces belong to extras from Italian films— 'unknown players,' according to Grisoni, who 'without credit or lines of dialogue...inhabit the background action of Rossellini's *Roma Città Aperta*, (1945) or Fellini's *La Strada*, (1954).'

These are complemented by a series of larger stencil drawings on black paper entitled *ragazze e ragazzi romani* (2018). Here, Grimes layers images, patterns and colours in a fluid and hyper-associative way, combining, for example, 'fragments of Etruscan porn dancing with pixelated vespas and the maid from [Pasolini's 1968 film] *Teorema*.' They are dotted periodically with repair patches, mirroring the restored frescos and stone work that Grimes encountered in Rome.

Danielle Arnaud

123 Kennington Road London SE11 6SF UK T/F: +44(0)20 7735 8292 www.daniellearnaud.com danielle@daniellearnaud.com

Opening times: Thursday to Saturday 2-6 pm and by appointment

The drawings belong to a larger body of work called *Hail the new Etruscan*, which fuses drawings, stencils and—in a new departure for Grimes—film. The exhibition at Danielle Arnaud is the first of three solo exhibitions by Grimes in 2019. It runs in parallel to *Hail the new Etruscan #2*—an exhibition of six of Grimes' films, at Matt's Gallery from 19-27 January, and will be followed by *Hail the new Etruscan #3* at The Bower in summer 2019.

An accompanying essay by Tony Grisoni and a film script by Renée Tobe will be available as part of the exhibition.

Oona Grimes is a born and bred London scribbler and draw-er—a devout flattist with a love of pattern and all things paper and bookish from Japanese woodcuts and Windsor McKay to graphic signage and packaging; tartans stolen from a Lorenzetti blanket or cartoon detail thieved from Roman wall paintings.

You're lured in spite of yourself, in spite of not knowing what the shady characters and disjointed hieroglyphics represent...Isn't this what Grimes is seeking—a way to notate a reality that can't be determined or resolved through narrative or catharsis? —Cherry Smyth

My drawings are a celebration of the absurd, a transformation of ordinary objects and a simmering consommé of fact and fiction, an ongoing series of parallel worlds. They are an investigation into language, beginnings and ends of it, learning & losing it, neurological case studies, Alzheimer's, slippage and mis-memory.

Now tanglehead has nothing to say to brickface. Characters once locked in the personalities of hierarchical position must change as the power of speech is lost. —Cherry Smyth

Grimes is currently a Visiting Lecturer at the Royal College of Art London and The Ruskin School of Art Oxford University.

Tony Grisoni is an award-winning writer and director known for *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, *In This World*, the *Red Riding* film trilogy, *The Young Pope* and an adaptation of China Mieville's novel, *The City and the City*. He has worked closely with a number of directors including Michael Winterbottom, John Boorman, Sean Durkin and Terry Gilliam, and often collaborates with artists including Oona Grimes, Brian Catling, Dryden Goodwin and Marcia Farquhar.

Renée Tobe was Paul Mellon Research Fellow at the British School at Rome. She trained as an architect and is currently Reader in Architecture at UEL. Her publications include *Film, Architecture and Spatial Imagination* (Routledge, 2017). Her research investigates the political structures of cities expressed through the medium of film.

NEXT:

London Art Fair Stand 1B

Nicky Coutts, Freya Gabie, Oona Grimes, Helen Maurer, Annie Whiles and Sarah Woodfine

Private view: Tuesday 15 January 6 - 9pm

16 - 20 January 2019

For invitations please contact the gallery

Jeremy Cooper: Artist's Postcards

with Peter Kennard and Cat Phillipps

Private view: Friday 1 March 6 - 9pm

2 - 30 March 2019

For more information and images please contact us.

Danielle Arnaud

123 Kennington Road London SE11 6SF UK T/F: +44(0)20 7735 8292 www.daniellearnaud.com danielle@daniellearnaud.com

Opening times: Thursday to Saturday 2-6 pm and by appointment