

Esme Hodsoll
Air du Temps

25 September - 6 November 2021
ALMA ZEVI Venice
Salizzata San Samuele

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Esme Hodson alla Galleria Alma Zevi di Venezia

L'artista inglese Esme Hodson, classe 1992, espone la sua prima mostra personale *Air du Temps* alla galleria Alma Zevi di Venezia

23.09.2021 di Cecilia Corsetti



La Galleria d'arte Alma Zevi presenta la prima esibizione della giovane artista inglese Esme Hodson *Air du Temps* venerdì 24 settembre.

Metti insieme una giovane **artista inglese**, lo scrittore e editore **Digby Warde-Aldam** caro amico di Hodson e una Parigi di fine ottobre che sta per affrontare un imminente ritorno alle restrizioni sulla pandemia. Il risultato? un'arte viscerale e vitale, decisamente sobria, ma con un grande potere evocativo. L'esposizione comprende alcuni dipinti ad olio raccolti nei primi cinque anni di attività dell'artista realizzati nel suo studio di Parigi e trasmettono una sensibilità davvero unica. Si tratta di alcune nature morte e scene di vita domestica, mai banali, cariche di tensione e emotività, grazie a un attento studio della luce e dello spazio. *"Voglio che le cose siano cariche, come l'atmosfera nell'aria prima della tempesta"*, dice l'artista.

>> Scorri verso il basso per vedere alcuni dipinti di Esme Hodson





“Per citare Cézanne: ‘dipingere secondo la natura non è copiare l’oggetto, è realizzare le nostre sensazioni’. Questo è ciò per cui mi impegno, e in termini di stile - se si può chiamare così - miro a farlo nel modo più sottile, anche se addebitato, possibile”.

E la sua pittura è davvero sottile, minuziosa e nulla è lasciato al caso. Come quel fico lasciato per troppo tempo sul davanzale della finestra che gocciola fino a macchiare di un certo color prugna il bianco del termosifone (o condizionatore?) o quelle medicine (o vitamine ?) poste ordinatamente, come fossero in scala, vicino al bicchiere. Nei suoi dipinti c'è una ricerca quasi maniacale del dettaglio e in un periodo in cui l'arte contemporanea spinge verso una direzione completamente opposta, lei ossessivamente quadra e inquadra tutto, ma lasciando sempre un senso di movimento.

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Dall'alto: Air Con & Figs, 2018 - 2021 e Vitamins, 2021

L'esibizione di Esme Hodsoll *Air du Temps* sarà presso **la galleria Alma Zevi**, dell'omonima fondatrice, a Venezia aperta al pubblico dal 25 Settembre 2021 al 6 Novembre 2021

INSIGHTFUL CONVERSATION WITH ESME HODSOLL DISCUSSING HER PRACTICE AND THE POWER OF PAINTING

By Irene Machetti • 19 October 2021
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ALMA ZEVI Venice presents *Air du temps*, the first solo show in Italy by UK-based artist Esme Hodsoll. The artist has been working on the paintings on display for the past five years, and many have come straight from her studio in Paris and are on display for the first time. Through this selection of small canvases, including portraits and miniaturised fragments of reality, the exhibition offers an insightful view into Hodsoll's interior world.



Esme Hodsoll, *Vitamins*, 2021. Courtesy ALMA ZEVI

How long for do you work on a painting? When do you consider it to be finished (if ever)?

The idea of a 'finished' work is complicated. It's a strange question as one has to answer to the painting as well as to one's own intuition. It usually takes months, occasionally years. Momentum plays an important part but, essentially, one shouldn't give in to time where truth is concerned.

What were the greatest influences in your education?

I hardly had an education. I've never been able to find meaning in prescribed learning. The discovery that painting makes visible the invisible, or indescribable, was intriguing to me. I've looked at a lot of paintings, and what stirs me most is when the paint itself carries a particular feeling specific to the painter and their time. Clouet, Cranach, Grunewald, Velazquez, Renoir, Soutine... they all did this with striking ability and courage.



Esme Hodson, *Portrait/Wild Flowers*, 2021. Courtesy ALMA ZEVI

Entering *Air du Temps* at ALMA ZEVI, Venice, is like coming into a new world, made of serene tones, tranquil solitudes, and crystallised atmospheres. Yet, there are often elements, such as a broken glass, that burst into the scene disrupting it. What do you want to convey in your paintings?

For me painting is about surprises; revelations rather than preconceptions. I find the sight and sound of breaking glass mesmerising. I want to transmit the viewer the feelings my subjects stir in me, in a novel way.

Your canvases are fragments of reality, a reality that could belong to any of us. Yet, because of these elements that interrupt the scene, they are also uncanny. How do you envisage them?

Ideas or subjects appear to me and rarely do I question them, just like emotions. If they develop, it's because they have, as you say, interrupted, or consumed me. I cannot move forward until I've acted upon them.

You tend to zoom in into reality depicting very intimate and specific details of the everyday. Do you wish for your paintings to become sort of universal, something anyone could potentially identify with?

It's true this is the case with my recent paintings, but that could change, it wasn't conscious. Looking back it was probably to do with being 'locked down', it's not so much our worlds became smaller during Covid, as more claustrophobic, or without a horizon. I've never really considered *who* I paint for, but as emotions are the driving force in my paintings, I suppose universal isn't an impossibility – I'd doubt that emotions are culture specific.

There are many debates nowadays around the role of painting in contemporary art. How do you feel about this? Why did you choose to work primarily with it?

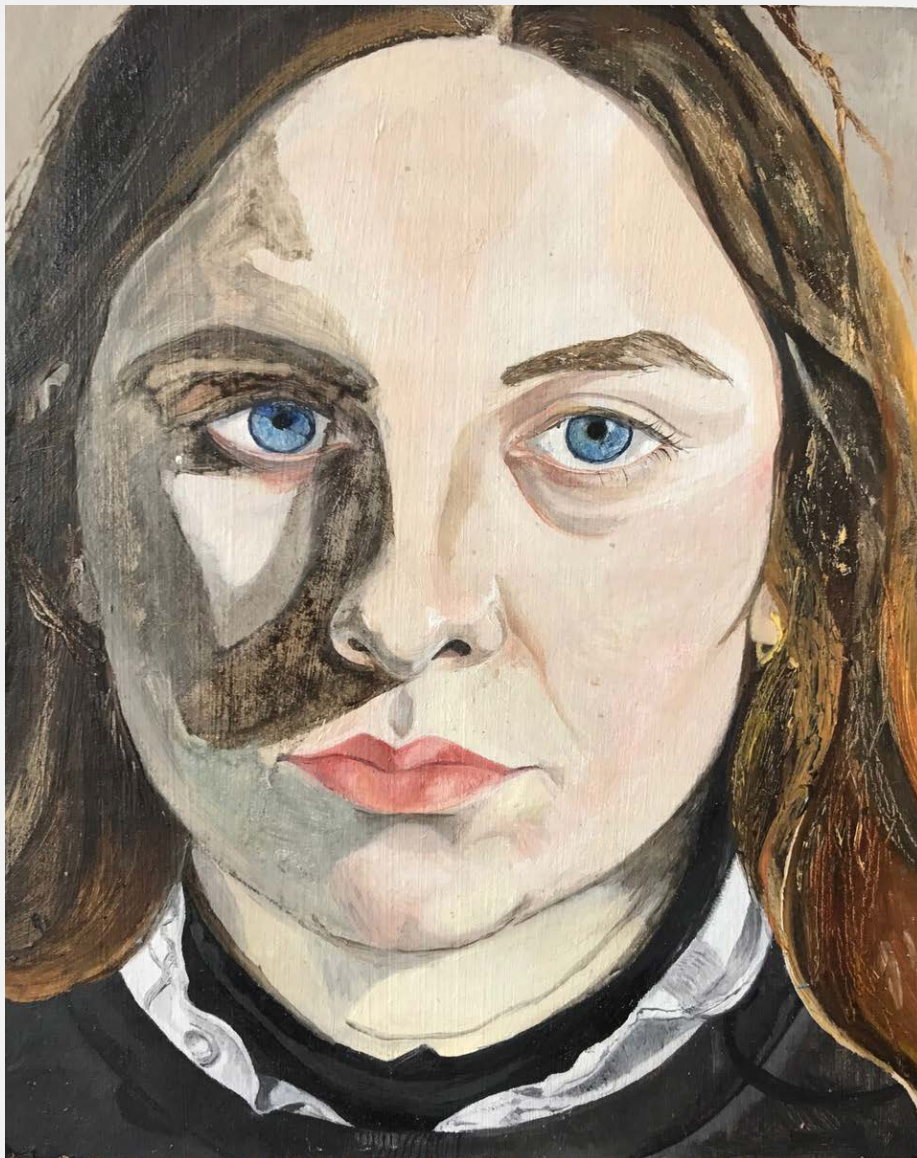
I haven't really paid much attention to these debates. I'm more interested in the relationship between life and art – less so between art and contemporary art – or its role. I discovered painting around the same time I sensed what it was to record life as art. I saw I was able to do something with paint, whereas when I'd sung/played music as a child, or read as a teenager, I didn't feel the same way.

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Esme Hodson, *Self-Portrait (Scotland)*, 2018. Courtesy ALMA ZEVI

As Digby Warde-Aldam brightly points out in his essay for *Air du Temps*, 'so much contemporary figurative painting is illustrative and provocatively grotesque,' whereas you maintain a very poetic and delicate touch. How was it to insert yourself in such context?

I don't think one can choose their touch but in any case poetry and emotions are closely related.

Sometimes by looking at your paintings I feel like they are all part of the same narrative, a continuous stream of consciousness, or reality. Do you ever envisage them as being part of a story, maybe your daily story?

I suppose at the end everyone's life becomes a story, when it's all been written so to speak, but one doesn't (hopefully) live their life as if it's a story. As my paintings are a translation of my life, I wouldn't say they are part of a narrative/story as I can't see my life that way. Perhaps there is a link with stream of consciousness, but painting, for me, rather than being concerned solely with thoughts or feelings passing through the mind, is the concrete attempt to depict the confrontation between inner and outer worlds.



Esme Hodsoll, *Air Con & Figs*, 2018 – 2021. Courtesy ALMA ZEVI