

EMBODIED

EMBODIED: a body of work from 2010-15, that uses layers of bitumen and oil paint, sculptural form, text and colour to explore sexual difference, narratives and selfhood.

These paintings made over a 10 year period are aggregates of experiments with sculptural form, grandiose idiom, and vernacular imagery. We know and construct ourselves through the contours of the bodies that we inhabit. Exploring body specificities and residues, through the medium of bitumen paint, forms and *performs* new relations between contradictory positions. It is thus a form of 'becoming'.

Painting can explore new ways of thinking about identity and multiplicity. Through the interplay of sculptural, historical and monumental reference to bodily form, and to its fragmentation, it is possible to posit the performance and persistence of an embodied self, even through birth, change and process.

There is a form of 'palimpsest' in these paintings. It is a term applied to medieval manuscripts; the act of removing and replacing images and texts, one on top of another. It has become a term that contains notions of layering up meaning and history. Bitumen paint can be used to create depth and tactile surfaces on a flat plane, and over time, layering up patterns and text underneath a final image. Depth of field and tactility, lend legibility to touch, and play on the senses. Contrasting form and lettering, movement and stasis, figures appear 'written'.

Taking the feminist project of 'writing the body' a step further and presenting the female body as a norm, the female body shows its difference, its 'lived experience'. Not inhibited or delimited, it is a zone of renewal, performance and potential. Male forms also imbibe a sense of body-gesture which dripping bitumen paint creates with calligraphic fluidity. Shifting between sensual, emotional, conceptual and aesthetic references, paint can reveal repetition, memory, echo and time. This meditation and performance of language, and form, hopes to configure patterns of 'becoming'.