

“When sex becomes reality, it becomes horror”

-Slavoj Žižek, probably, paraphrased by Ella Fleck

For The Manchester Contemporary, Forth presents a selection of drawings and sculpture by Ella Fleck b.1993, UK, on the back of her show ‘Four Horsegirls of the Apocalypse’, which continues at the space until 19.11.22.

Created during the later stages of 2020, and early parts of 2021, the works here all crucially circle around themes of love, loss & sexuality. The subjects of Fleck’s drawings find themselves in various states of exaggerated entanglement, uncomfortable proximity and distance, or solitude in equal measure. Expressions span a complex range from contented bliss to evident unease and reluctance as these icons of girlhood explore themselves and their relation to others.

The works flirt openly with ideas of fetish and fantasy: idealised proportions and explicit, if minimally rendered, intimate areas melt away into abstraction and enter the realm of the fantastic through a supporting cast of mostly humanoid sprites.

With a practice that encompasses softwares, simulations and games, Fleck considers these works as a form of vector drawings: the subject viewed through a digital lens, yet employing analogue aesthetics and materials. This expanded context even finds a place within the framing of the work, drawing inspiration from toy phones: a copy of a copy.

Central sculpture ‘True Love Roleplay’ continues Fleck’s exploration of interpersonal relations, acting as a system for intimacy that is both cynical and sweet, violent and (literally) soft. The work is designed to be worn by two individuals, bringing them together as a whole. Orchestrated intimacy as an uncomfortable desire is expressed here, to ends that feel both sincere and humorous.

Building on the themes of relationship and community building seen in other works, Fleck co-founded DARP, an experimental project operating out of the former Michael House School exploring communal practice and living for artists and other collaborators. As part of on behalf of DARP she has co-presented the project at EASA (European Architecture Students Assembly), June Art Fair, Basel and Artcore, Derby, UK. She is also one half of the curatorial duo, 650mAh.

Fleck opened her first solo exhibition, Doomer Mommy in 2021 following a residency at Newgate Gap in Margate, UK. Group exhibitions and performances: Doing Youth at Gegenwart, Hamburg, Germany; Jumper at Harkawik, NY, USA; Playground at Artcore, Derby, UK; Airconditions, Seydisfiordur, Iceland; Dating Sim at Raflost (Icelandic Festival of Electronic Arts), Reykjavik, Iceland. Her writing has been published in magazines such as Frieze, Dazed and King Kong.

Forth is a Nottingham based project space working with early career artists from international backgrounds to present new work and solo exhibitions. Forth’s programme is focused on, but not limited to, Artist’s moving image, installation, performance & AV.

Recent programming includes: Ella Fleck, Four Horsegirls of the Apocalypse; Gabriella Davies, Blue Italian; Ali Lotz, Through the Forest of Denial and screenings by Daniel Hopp and Julia Sjolin.

For list of works available please see works list.

Prices available upon request.

@fleels
@this_is_forth

ella.zone
thisisforth.org

adam@thisisforth.org

Forth
Primary
33 Seely Road
Nottingham
NG7 1NU