

PRESS RELEASE

DOMINIC DISPIRITO

28 JUNE – 28 JULY 2018

OPENING RECEPTION

WEDNESDAY, 27 JUNE, 6 – 8PM

PRESS PREVIEW IN PRESENCE OF THE ARTISTS: TUESDAY, 27 JUNE, 5 PM

Annka Kultys is pleased to present its first exhibition *In the Garden, Council Housed and Violent* with British artist Dominic Dispirito. The show will feature an immersive installation comprised of new paintings alongside sculpture, neon lighting effects and a sound piece, which together provide a disturbing portrayal of inequality and class hatred in Britain today.

Dispirito, who joined the gallery in January 2018, creates paintings and sculptures that may on first glance appear simplistic, with a sketch-like rather than polished feel, but on closer inspection are revealed to be wittily observed and subtly sophisticated representations of the British working class. The simplicity of line within Dispirito's paintings — faces are commonly reduced to bold blocks of only a few bright colours — invites visitors to reflect on the nature of society, at both a personal and universal level.

The title of the show, *In the Garden, Council Housed and Violent*, is a reference to the term 'Chav', often falsely thought to be an acronym for 'Council House and Violent' and used, as the political activist, writer and columnist Owen Jones has pointed out, to demonise the working class, especially young working class people, as if they constitute some sort of underclass distinct from the rest of 'non-chav' society. In *In the Garden, Council Housed and Violent*, Dispirito openly brings his cultural heritage to his practice, amid broader issues of class, labour and delinquency.

Through his work, Dispirito is developing a unique aesthetic language, combining classical painting techniques with digital art. All of his works start with the use of iPhone apps. The drawings and animations composed in this digital space are then transformed into paintings which look to replicate the digital textures and colours of these studies born in the digital realm.

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In the large-scale canvas *Working 9–5 wat a way to earn a living* (2018), a peasant woman is depicted, with a blue face, pink hair and a long dark blue dress cleaning her scythe, evoking the daily grind manual workers face and the challenge to earn a decent living. *Love on the dole* (2018) depicts a couple whose faces and enlarged bodies are reduced to bold blocks made of only a few key browns and yellows, is a reference to the families living on council benefits.

Pigeon, Council housed and violent (2018) features a 3D manually printed PLA plastic man, accompanied by two pigeons sitting on his cap and shoulder respectively. Pigeons are abundant in London and have a particular meaning for the artist, insofar as they may be viewed as akin to the working class: undervalued and mistreated by society. A smaller spray painting, *Fuck, it's a duck* (2018), depicting a duck swimming in a pond, refers to London's famous public parks, where people from all walks of life go to enjoy an escape from their usual routines. In a park everyone is 'equal' just through pursuing the same kind of activity, such as walking in a peaceful environment.

Several paintings in the exhibition such as *The pearly queen of hackney* (2018), *Purple pearly* (2018), *I'll give you an orange for Xmas* (2018) and *Pearl queen of Bethnal (green)* (2018) focus on the figure of Jackie, known as the Pearly Queen of Hackney. Jackie is often referred as 'London Royalty', her forebears being first crowned the Pearly King and Queens of Hackney at end of the nineteen century. Her daughters and grandchildren have inherited this title and keep the strong tradition of charity associated with the roles, through performing and singing to help local communities.

An immersive effect to the exhibition is generated from the artist's use of green neon lighting and the playing of a sound piece by the artist. In the work, where the entire conversation also doubles as the work's title, *Dispirito* has recreated an exchange he had with a policeman who arrested him while he was playing in a park with a twig when he was fourteen:

Policeman: What do you want to do when you get older?

Me as a 14 year old boy: I want to be a graphic designer.

Policeman: Why do you want to do that?

Me: Because I like drawing.

Policeman: The only thing you're going to be drawing is your dole money.

As an example of the British Establishment's dismissive attitude towards the working class, they do not come much starker.

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Dominic Dispirito (b. 1982) was born in London where he currently lives and works. Drawing from his working-class upbringing, as well as his personal battles with drug and alcohol addiction, Dispirito paints colourful and exuberant compositions that are uniquely recognisable.

Dispirito earned his B.F.A. in 2013 from Middlesex University, London, and an M.F.A. in 2017 from the Slade School of Fine Art, London. In 2017, Dispirito was awarded the Bruce Maclean Prize and later that year won the Adrian Carruthers Studio Award. In 2018, he was nominated for the Dentons Art Prize.

Dispirito joined Annka Kultys Gallery in January 2018. June 2018 sees Dispirito present *In the garden, Council Housed and Violent*, the artist's first ever solo show and first with the gallery. The exhibition presents a selection of the artist's paintings, manually-3D-printed sculptures and animations in an immersive installation that continues the artist's exploration of working class experience mediated by popular contemporary digital technologies. In early 2018 Dispirito was part of the group exhibition *Cacotopia 02* and he later traveled with the gallery to *Material Art Fair* in Mexico City.

Works by Dispirito have been included in group exhibitions including: *i'm sorry, i didn't quite catch that*, curated by Bob Bicknell-Knight for *isthisit?* at Arebyte Gallery, London; *Candy* alongside Cristina BanBan, The Dot Project, London; *The Politics of Too Many Rubbish*

For all press inquiries, please contact Noa

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Opening Hours: Wednesday through Saturday, 12 — 6pm

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