

MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE?

EMMA FINEMAN

Preview: Friday 5 April (6 - 8pm)

Exhibition: 6 April - 11 May 2019



Throughout the early 19th century, Joseph Grimaldi was England's most popular entertainer. His portrayal of the clown in pantomime harlequinades became so well known that this role became colloquially known as 'Joey', and his invention of whiteface makeup is a staple of the modern clown outfit that still persists today. For 'May I Have Your Attention Please', (her first solo with Beers London), Fineman uses self-portraiture to reimagine herself as Grimaldi, replete with sharp red cheek makeup and protruding white ruff.

An important figure throughout history for its use in democratizing society, *The Fool* is able to present thinly veiled truths in the face of the powerful. Fineman uses this guise as a method of addressing her own position within a state of political unrest and heightened voyeurism. We are always watching the lives (and performance of lives) of others and, in a sense, are always performing ourselves through social media. With the slapstick performances of clowns being exaggerated and overly-simplified renditions of human emotions, Fineman's work points toward the disconnect between modern tools of communication like emoticons (which fail to convey the complexity and depth of true feeling) and genuine human interaction.

As Jung posits "The trickster is a collective shadow figure, a summation of all the inferior traits of character in individuals." With aspects of society such as politics often being referred to as a 'circus' (and politicians themselves as 'clowns'), Fineman utilises clowns in the circus as a symbol for our current state of affairs, where we bare witness to this performance (or circus act), and the clown is acutely aware of its being watched.

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Solo exhibitions include: *'REALMS OF THE [UN]REAL'*, PUBLIC Gallery, London (2019–upcoming); *'Fin_Bow'*, Eleven Spitalfields Gallery, London, UK (2017); *'O.S 1'*, The Great Highway Gallery, San Francisco, CA (2016); *'Samgongur'*, The Sub, San Francisco, CA (2015) and *'Solo Booth'*, White Space, Art Palm Beach, FL (2014).

Selected group exhibitions include *'John Moores Painting Prize Exhibition'*, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, UK (2018); *'Bloomberg New Contemporaries'*, South London Gallery, London, UK (2018); *'SURGE'*, East Wing Biennial 13, Somerset House, London, UK (2018) and *'RBA Rising Stars'*, Framers Gallery, London, UK (2018). She has been included in publications such as *Juxtapoz*, *ArtMaze*.

EMMMA FINEMAN (b. 1991, Berkeley, California), lives and works in London, UK. In 2018 she graduated with an MA In Painting from Royal College of Art, London, and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BFA in Painting from Maryland Institute College of Art in 2013.



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