

# CHRISTINA ZIMPEL

## Troupe

PREVIEW: THURSDAY 5 SEPTEMBER (6-8PM)  
EXHIBITION: 6 SEPTEMBER - 12 OCTOBER

### *Troupe*

1. a group of dancers, actors, or other entertainers who tour to different venues.

“a dance troupe”

Australian-born, New York-based painter Christina Zimpel's unique painterly language is playful and romantic, with a tension and tenebrism that recalls artists such as The Fauvists as well as contemporary painters like Tal R, Marlene Dumas, and Alice Neel.

Zimpel's London debut solo-exhibition, *Troupe*, refers to a group of amateurs or community theatre players. “The stage is a simplistic metaphor for life,” writes Zimpel, where the private moments of doubt, anxiety or confidence are of particular interest to the painter. But implied in the definition of ‘troupe’ is also the notion of movement, of traveling, which is ironic given that Zimpel has chosen the precise moment of rest or pause wherein these performers are between phases, off-stage, awaiting curtain call. For Zimpel, the laden moments are those quiet moments happening “off-screen.”

There is a patience and fermentation necessary for all creatives (actors, painters, writers alike) where so much of the creative impulse is about regeneration: rest or rumination, where ideas percolate. The artist needs quiet in order to stoke the muse's fire. But these moments of stillness are dual-edged. In fact, the etymology of the verb “patience” comes from Latin *patientia* - meaning, literally, to suffer. And much of Zimpel's work evokes similarities to Jan Matejko's (uber) famous *Stańczyk*, a 1480 painting that depicts Poland's most renowned court-jester in a moment of solipsistic quietude - an image tinged with profound tragedy and sadness, and in some respects, Zimpel's figures carry this tradition where the performative masks of tragedy and comedy can seem interchangeable: often one and the same.

This portrayal comes across, through reticent poses and vibrant colour combinations, a disquieting, enervating, but always compelling portrayal. Through Zimpel's approach,



**Stage** (2024)

Acrylic and gouache on canvas, 135 x 182.8 cm

the visitor is often a voyeur, wherein her works assume hover or embellish or saturate in these ulterior moments, where what Zimpel delineates with her brush or her striking, bold colour palette is as crucial to the image as what she chooses to omit, sublimate, or suggest. Faces, bodies, or even the occasional still life are brought to life with a confident - and confidently reductive - approach.

Somehow these large planes of colour seem charged with emotion and an unbridled desire to break the rules of figurative painting. She lists Matisse and Christina Ramberg as sources of inspirations. So too does she credit some of this to her youth in Australia in the '70s, as well as the folkloric teachings of her Hungarian mother, both of which find their way into the soul of these paintings. “I am [always] digging into other eras,” Zimpel states, “from Ancient Rome and Greece, 50's pinups and imagery from my own life... This kind of women [...] is always a modern woman.” These are modern archetypes. “I exaggerate, reduce and modernize archetypes.” Alluding to punk, Belle Epoque, and Romanesque sources of inspiration. “With attention to body language I'm representing dignity, awkwardness, and humor.”

Included herein are a series of coloured stools in which we also invite guests to sit, be patient, and enjoy the show.



**Curtain** (2024)

Acrylic and gouache on linen, 40.5 x 30.5 cm

CHRISTINA ZIMPEL (b. 1961, Perth, Australia) currently lives and works in New York. Zimpel graduated from Curtin University Western Australia in 1981.

Solo exhibitions include: *Understudy*, Olsen Annexe, Sydney, Australia (2023); *Wave*, HAGD Contemporary, Aalborg, Denmark (2023); *Body Language*, The Cabin and The Bunker LA, Los Angeles, USA (2023); *The I's Inside*, Schönfeld Galleries, Brussels, Belgium (2023); *Bright Eyes*, Maison Kitsune Perry Archives & Gallery, New York, USA (2021); *Botanical Drawings*, Hesperios, New York, USA (2018) and *Book People*, Book/Shop, California, USA (2017).

Group exhibitions include: *Salut Henri*, NBB Gallery, Berlin, Germany (2024); *Fractals*, C Square Gallery, Taichung City, Taiwan (2024); *30 Years Celebration*, Olsen Gallery, Sydney, Australia (2023); *Family & Friends*, BEERS London, UK (2023); *Botanica*, The Finch Project, London, UK (2023); *A PRO POT*, D'Apostrof Valerie, Meigem, Belgium (2023); *The Patriot*, O'Flaherty's, New York, USA (2022); *The Odd & Imaginary*, Simard Bilodeau Contemporary, Los Angeles, USA (2022); *Fun Gal Gro Up Show*, Gallery Sade, Los Angeles, USA (2022); *Little Fires*, Schönfeld Galleries, Brussels, Belgium (2021); *Parcours Saint Germain*, Paris, France (2019); *Studiolo #05*, Less Is More Projects, Paris, France (2018); *About Face*, Sheer Gallery, Sydney, Australia (2018) and *Polly Borland: Polymorph*, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, Australia (2018).

Fairs include: *CAN Art Fair*, HAGD Contemporary, Ibiza, Spain (2023); *Untitled Art Fair*, HAGD Contemporary, Miami, Florida (2023); *Luxembourg Art Week*, Schönfeld Galleries, Luxembourg (2023); *Art On Paper*, Brussels International Contemporary Drawing Fair, Schönfeld Galleries, Brussels, Belgium (2023); *Drawing Now*, Schönfeld Galleries, Paris, France (2023); *Luxembourg Art Week*, Schönfeld Galleries, Luxembourg (2022) and *Art On Paper*, Brussels International Contemporary Drawing Fair, Schönfeld Galleries, Brussels, Belgium (2022).

Residencies include: La Brea Studio Residency, Los Angeles, California, USA (2023) and Schönfeld Galleries, Brussels, Belgium (2023).

