

PRESS RELEASE

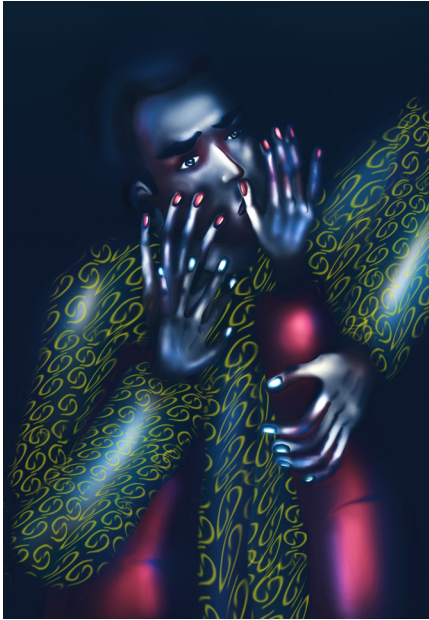
PILAR CORRIAS PRESENTS

RE-FRESH

LOUISA GAGLIARDI, WHISPERS IN THE SHADE

25 FEBRUARY – 29 MARCH 2017

PV: FRIDAY 24 FEBRUARY, 6–8PM



Louisa Gagliardi, *Tense Shift*, 2017. Ink on PVC, 170 x 115 cm

Across the 2016/17 programme Pilar Corrias Gallery will present *RE-FRESH*, a series of solo exhibitions which will contemplate the broad scope of painting at present. In his 2015 text, “The Sext Life of Painting”, John Kelsey contextualises painting as a form of ‘refreshment’. Kelsey describes the experience of viewing painting within the framework of an information and image saturated age, drawing comparison to the constant feed of information one experiences through vehicles like social media. *RE-FRESH* considers each exhibition as an iterative re-posting or re-freshing of the space, looking at the ways the medium is enacted in the work of each artist.

Overly smooth surfaces and strong contrasting colours characterise Louisa Gagliardi’s paintings. For *Whispers in the Shade* she presents four new works: *Tense Shift* (2017), *Spitting Pearls* (2017), *Slow Motion Scheming* (2017), and *Overflow* (2017), along with a piece by artist Adam Cruces.

Louisa Gagliardi’s *Whispers in the Shade* plays with the suggestive nature of its own words, encapsulating an ambiguity between violence and sexuality which serves as metaphor for people’s relationship anxieties, both public and private. The paintings of this series depict a continuous tension between two role players, leaving the viewer unsure if the subjects are expressing feelings of pain and/or joy. The bodies of Gagliardi’s figures and their respective parts are flawless, hairless, and indistinguishable from one another. The atmosphere evoked is dense with oneiric elements, creating a surreal context where part of the bodies are mere silhouettes, barely visible, acting as symbols of someone’s fantasy. Though a silhouette would usually imply a position of relative inferiority, in Louisa Gagliardi’s works this reclining and almost invisible figure dominates.

Gagliardi plays with the foreground and background in the same way the tension shifts between the characters. The two bodies and their parts are often intertwined as if one could not ‘be’ without the other. Elsewhere, a body lies barely covered by a transparent lace pattern on a bed. Adorned by a collar and bracelet of the same material, this too references to a strong underlying relationship between the two characters.

The physical presence of her subjects emerges through layers of gel medium built up to give both the impression of bodies enveloped in fabric and three dimensionality to the pearls; in the same way nail varnish accentuates the fingertips. Created initially as fluid digital images, these works are printed and then intervened upon again by Gagliardi with painterly techniques bringing forth texture and thus distancing them from their digital origins.

**Louisa Gagliardi** (b. 1989 Switzerland) lives and works in Zürich. She received her BFA in Graphic Design from ECAL in 2012. Since 2015 she has been focusing on her painting practice. She has recently exhibited at LUMA Foundation, Zürich; Tomorrow Gallery, New York City; König Galerie, Berlin; Istituto Svizzero, Roma, and Helmhaus, Zürich. She was featured in the book *Vitamin P3: New Perspective on Painting* by Phaidon at the end of 2016. Gagliardi received the Swiss Design Award in 2014.