

LUNGLEY

Brian Dawn Chalkley: Missing

02/11/18 - 25/11/18

'I am longing to get my image right'

There's something to be said for prolific makers. Those who don't flitter and get bored and leave things in piles and in folders. Those who have painted 454 portraits for a show but just in case there aren't enough, they make 75 more.



Angels Suffer Too (2018)
Watercolour on paper.

A selection of the hundreds of artworks tickles the floor of the gallery like the hem of a frilly skirt. I'm not convinced the works are based on real encounters but as the space swells with friends, students and associates, everyone, whether frantically or more subtly tries to find a figure who resembles them.

'That one looks like me!'

'No, it looks like her'

'I'm offended he didn't do one of me'

Text wraps its way around select figures, a deep dive into an imaginary monologue or a one sided conversation. Inclusion of text combined with the ambiguous, genderless characters craft a sweet and melancholic narrative that mirrors the artists' previous work around gender and identity.

'I am longing for attention from the right person'.

Mouths are overdrawn and bloated as if stained with red wine or stuffed with something sweet. Others look swollen or juicy after an intimate encounter. Some appear like Victorian high society with over the top headpieces or lofty lace and cake like layers. Occasionally a figure is more exposed in spaghetti straps or swathed in bleeding tones of brown and grey.

Some of these characters are smudgy and tired and weary. Perhaps they've been up all night and they catch your eye on your commute and their walk of shame.

'I get up every morning and feel like death.'

Eyes are pulled in all directions as concentration wanes. A need for back-story or for context draws us further in both figuratively and literally as we inspect the tiny faces, bending and kneeling; hoping clues might reveal themselves.

The figures in Missing reference art history and fashion and drag all at once. The loose sheets cast shadows and hide faces and crisp copier paper is gently warped by water and pigment.

'Life is so good to me now!'

Text by **Siannon Saunders**. Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/siannonn/>

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Beautiful, intense exhibition by Brian Dawn Chalkley at LUNGLEY Gallery.

- I love the democratic format too: the room filled edge to edge with a collective of 454 of these characters. **Lana Locke (artist)**.

Are they silent or noisy? Simultaneously pathetic and ecstatic, they seem to teeter somewhere between helplessness and malevolence, these characters. There's one that looks like an assassin, with cold hard eyes, another says 'I am crushed by all this attention'. Some of them sneer. One shyly quivers at my stare. They even have voices; some plaintive, others brash. The curtain lifts for a short while, and I am drawn into their multiple narratives, sometimes interwoven with text. Always enigmatic. We are left in semi-darkness, and all I see is a smudged, watery mouth smirking at me. **Vanessa Mitter (artist & director at Turf Projects)**.

For further information please contact the gallery at mark@lungleygallery.com