

Emma Hart

*BE SOME BODY*

2 October - 12 December 2020

For *BE SOME BODY*, Emma Hart's first exhibition with The Sunday Painter, Hart has filled the space with a major new body of work. Hart's sculptures jut out from the gallery walls, and launch themselves into your personal space. Ceramic megaphones, glazed speech bubbles, lustred body mirrors, and clay arms merged with table tennis bats become Hart's new vocabulary; to hail you, announce you, reveal you, and beat you. Each work interrogates how we construct ourselves, putting you under pressure to examine your own performance of your self, especially through speech.

In Scott McCloud's book, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* he examines why we find cartoons so engrossing, and suggests the reader gets personally involved due to the simple way heads are depicted. When we interact with each other in person, we notice the other person's features in vivid detail, akin to seeing a photo or realistic drawing of a face. But when you see something as simple and as basic as a circle, two dots (eyes) and a line (mouth) you instead understand the image to be of yourself. If this is true, then *BE SOME BODY* is full of yourself. 'You' are being implicated, but not described, repeatedly across the work. You are taking action - shouting through a megaphone, or looking in the mirror to continually project, double, split and repeat.

Even Hart's ceramic speech bubbles emanate from you, forcing words from your mouth whilst you look at them. At the same time, Hart's speech bubbles visually form a big head and the letters become facial features. The large glossy faces make announcements but are undermined by a rough red flipside. Almost two faced, they are split. We all are able to say one thing, and feel another, yet speech is often how people try and guess your social background. Class has always played an important part in Hart's practice, particularly in terms of how speech can determine us. Your mouth holds your upbringing, accidentally spitting out your history. As Hart puts it 'If you come from a working class background and are trying to be some body in this middle class artworld then you are more than likely to also feel split. Split between the world you grew up in, and the opaque artworld you've entered. Your speech acts to produce yourself, and probably gives you away.'

Embedded within *BE SOME BODY* is Hart's conceptual employment of the physical properties of ceramic glazes, importantly their reflective qualities and whether the finished surface is matt or glossy. Can you see your self in the work? Are you even really there? Emma Hart makes work that actively confronts you. The power relationship between the artist, the viewer and the work is tested. Whilst due to its scale, shape and form Hart tests what is possible with ceramics.

Emma Hart lives and works in London. In 2017 she won the Max Mara Art Prize for Women in collaboration with the Whitechapel Gallery. In 2015 she was awarded a Paul Hamlyn Foundation award for Visual Art. In 2022, Hart will realise her first permanent sculpture for the public entrance of the UCL East, Pool Street West building, on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Recent solo exhibitions include: *Banger*, The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh (2018), *Mamma Mia!* Whitechapel Gallery and the Collezione Maramotti, Italy (2017); *Commercial Breakz*, Frieze Art Fair, London (2017); *Love Life* with Jonathan Baldock, Peer, London, The Grundy Gallery, Blackpool and De Le Warr Pavilion, Bexhill (2016-7); *Giving It All That*, Folkestone Triennial (2014); *Dirty Looks*, Camden Arts Centre (2013).

Recent group exhibitions include: *Ways of Seeing*, Government Art Collection, Leytonstone Library, UK (2019), *The Lie of The Land*, Milton Keynes Gallery, UK (2019), *Further Thoughts on Earthy Materials*, Kunsthau Hamburg, DE (2018); *In My Shoes*, Arts Council Touring Exhibition, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK (2018); *An ear, severed, listens*, Chert, Berlin, DE (2017); *Sticky Intimacy*, Chapter, Cardiff, UK (2016); *Only the Lonely*, La Galerie CAC Noisy Le Sec, France (2015); *Dear Luxembourg*, Nosbaum Reding, Luxembourg (2015); *Hey I'm Mr.Poetic*, Wysing Arts Centre (2014).