

**VIEWING ROOM**

**HOLLY COULIS**



**1 JUNE – 30 JUNE 2018, LONDON**  
**PRIVATE VIEW: THURSDAY 31 MAY, 6 – 8 PM**

As part of its Viewing Room programme, Simon Lee Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Holly Coulis, her first in the UK. In her latest work, Coulis presents a series of vibrant paintings that traverse the traditional genre of still life painting, and delight in the geometry of the everyday.

The oil on linen works on view depict simple scenes of quotidian life - familiar objects and foodstuffs arranged precisely and playfully on tables and countertops. Reminiscent of early modernist and cubist still life painting, Coulis's domestic scenes are flattened, and the objects and surfaces are broken down into distinct areas or planes of unvariegated colour that represent different viewpoints. In each painting, there is a play and invention in constructing the space, and often the challenge lies in deciphering the dynamic of the table, whose lines and edges bisect and mirror the shape of the canvas.

Mundane and everyday objects, such as bananas, oranges, glasses, hotdogs, lemons and potato chips, are reduced to their most basic geometric forms - a square, a rectangle, an oval, or a circle. The spatial relationships that exist between these abstracted forms are exploited by the artist through her idiosyncratic use of bold planes of flat colour. The resulting forms are at once minimal and dense, familiar and abstract, and what initially may have seemed simplistic and traditional instead reveals a complex and strategic approach to painting.

Each individual form is further defined by an outline of two or three veins of contrasting colour that create a glowing or vibrational effect - like a force field or neon tubes. The objects float and bounce off each other in space, imbuing a sense of energy that seems at odds with the traditional genre of still life, or *nature morte*, which is defined by a subject matter that is at once static and contemplative. In contrast, Coulis's works strive to redefine the language of still life painting by injecting it with a glimmer of life, a hum, a spirit.

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

Holly Coulis was born in 1968 in Toronto, Canada and lives and works in Athens, GA. She holds an MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, and a BFA from the Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto. Recent solo exhibitions include *Table Studies*, Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York, NY (2017); *Days and Nights, Lemons, Cherry and Martin*, Los Angeles, CA (2017); *Dishes and Fruits*, Atlanta Contemporary, Atlanta, GA (2016); *Holly Coulis*, Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York, NY (2015); *Holly*

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*Coulis, Cherry and Martin*, Los Angeles, CA (2015); *Holly Coulis – PITCHERS*, Sardine, Brooklyn, NY (2014) and *Inside Out*, University of Georgia, Athens, GA (2012).

Image: Holly Coulis, *Grapefruit Halves and Water*, 2018, Oil on linen, 81.3 x 96.5 cm (32 x 38 in.)

For further press information, images and interview requests please contact Julia Kelly-Kennedy:  
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