

PRESS RELEASE**Crowd****20 February - 4 April 2020****Charlie Billingham, Lydia Blakeley, Sharon Eyal, Danny Fox, Christopher Hartmann, Norman Hyams, Kingsley Ifill, Yulia Iosilzon, Damien Jalet, Dale Lewis, James Lincoln, George Rouy, Xiuching Tsay, Harley Weir**

Woe to those who, to the very end, insist on regulating the movement that exceeds them.

- Georges Bataille, 1949

Gathering in stadiums, on the streets, in unlicensed clubs and in stained-glass churches; the convulsions and euphoria. Under cover of darkness or laid out on warm sandy beaches we lose ourselves, obeying a logic of more than one. We converge. Entering a crowd bodies are cannibalised and repurposed. The result can be liberation—the ecstasy of the dancefloor, voices amplified in protest—as much as enclosure. The power that metabolises a crowd is no longer the body of the organism but the body of its intensity—and we surrender to it. We are indifferent, mournful and joyous. We are riotous.

Crowds are so commonplace now we forget they are a relatively new experience, emerging in earnest in the late 19th and early 20th century. As cities and towns gorged, their belts widening in each swell, first inhabitants then citizens were drawn into forms of collective experience that took them beyond their physical and psychological limits—fever-pitch descends to hooliganism, consumption enters golden quarter hysteria, and blood, sweat and soot transform themselves into manifestos for the future. In time we have wielded this power to enact political change and transform our societies, whilst egregious politicians continue to harness our anxiety of crowds to build arguments against immigration and suffrage. In their Janus-faced nature, crowds both reflect and challenge held ideologies, uphold democracy or ignite bellicose ferment.

Art has long responded to this energy - from Bosch's 15th century hells through the pre-war industrialism of Bomberg, Lewis and Nevinson... Here bodies are isolated or fragmented, in each case induced to delirium. Crowds have long been a trope of existential burden—seen as oppressive, claustrophobic or suffocating; as in Kafka's court chambers, where the rule of law, burdened by mob-like spectators, succumbs to obsequious whim. Evermore so today, we are subject to the throngs of an accursed share, an unpleasant game of sardines crammed in boats, trains and planes, or lost amongst the squall of Twitterstorms. Crowds are no longer a site of flesh and movement but a confluence of energy that sucks us in.

French moralist Jean de La Bruyère wrote, "The great misfortune, of not being able to be alone." Today we are rarely alone. The age of anxiety chases our thoughts; even when separated, we remain connected. Yet for many, gathering in number remains a clandestine movement. Together we organise better. We protest and celebrate more intensely. Enveloping bodies swarm amongst one another, extending the end. In a crowd we learn to sacrifice for a common cause. Our cries scream out frivolity, power and emancipation. We are the love-drunk clamour of a birdsong after dark; a unified voice in the desperate struggle to be heard.

LIST OF WORKS

Main gallery left to right:

Christopher Hartmann

Untitled, 2019

Oil on canvas

40 x 30 cm

CHH0002

George Rouy

Masked, 2019

Acrylic on canvas

160 x 130 cm

GR0113

James Lincoln

Ear to ear, 2020

Charcoal and soft pastel on paper

97 x 101 cm

JL0001

Lydia Blakeley

The Pony Club, 2019

Oil on linen

250 x 180 cm

LB0001

Kingsley Ifill

The King, 2016

Acrylic on canvas framed in carpet gripper

30 x 40 cm

KI0002

Charlie Billingham

The Masque of Alfred, 2019

Oil on linen

190 x 160 cm

CHB0001

Xiuching Tsay

Ngu Dong (snake whisky), 2019

Oil on canvas

150 x 130 cm

XT0001

Dale Lewis

Jubilee Garden, 2020

Oil, acrylic and spray paint on canvas

200 x 400 cm

DL0001

Kingsley Ifill

Safe Light, 2016

Acrylic on canvas

190 x 140 cm

KI0001

George Rouy & Harley Weir

Three, 2019

Photogram (framed)

202.5 x 144 x 15 cm

HWGR001

George Rouy & Harley Weir

A Flood, 2019

Photogram (framed)

202.5 x 144 x 15 cm

HWGR002

Window space left to right:

Christopher Hartmann

A conversation now too late (Red Layer Mask) I, 2019

Oil on canvas

250 x 200 cm

CHH0003

Xiuching Tsay

She has her own island, 2019

Oil on canvas

180 x 250 cm

XT0003

Staircase:

James Lincoln
Lager, 2019
 Charcoal and soft pastel on paper
 59.5 x 84 cm
 JL0002

Yulia Iosilzon
Red Wet Ground, 2019
 Oil and silicone on transparent fabric
 120 x 91 cm
 YI0003

First floor gallery left to right:

Norman Hyams
The Party 3, 2020
 Oil on primed linen
 25 x 30 cm
 NH0118

Norman Hyams
The Party 1, 2020
 Oil on sized linen
 25 x 30 cm
 NH0116

Norman Hyams
The Party 4, 2020
 Oil on primed linen
 25 x 30 cm
 NH0119

Norman Hyams
The Party 5, 2010
 Acrylic on sized linen
 25 x 30 cm
 NH0120

Charlie Billingham
Flutter, 2019
 Oil on linen
 190 x 160 cm
 CHB0002

Lydia Blakeley
Max Power, 2020
 Oil on linen
 200 x 150 cm
 LB0002

Lydia Blakeley
Cox and Crew, 2020
 Oil on linen
 200 x 150 cm
 LB0003

James Lincoln
Group pose red blue, 2018
 Acrylic on canvas
 130 x 150 cm
 JL0004

Danny Fox
White Girls Sleep Standing Up, 2014
 Acrylic on canvas
 160 x 180 cm
 DF0001

Damien Jalet
Tarantiseismic, 2017
 Film (44 minutes, without interval)
 DJ0001

Commissioned by National Youth Dance Company (NYDC). NYDC Guest Artistic Director & Choreographer 2016-17 Damien Jalet

Sharon Eyal
Soul Chain, 2017
 Film (55 minutes, without interval)
 SE0001

A production of Staatstheater Mainz

Yulia Iosilzon
Consequences, 2019
 Oil and silicone on transparent fabric
 190 x 145 cm
 YI0001