

RYAN HEWETT
New Paintings
20 June - 13 July 2019



Ryan Hewett in his studio, 2019

This June, Unit London presents a new exhibition by South African born, Cape Town based painter, Ryan Hewett. The show will bring together a collection of Hewett's latest painterly works, which draw on the artist's captivation with vibrant and abstract portraits, alongside a developing interest and representation of figurative anatomy through distinctive shapes and concentric circles.

New Paintings marks Ryan's fourth solo exhibition with Unit London and also celebrates one year since the opening of our flagship space in Hanover Square, Mayfair.



Ryan Hewett, *La Femme I*, 2019

Renowned for his brooding and evocative paintings, Ryan Hewett's fascination with portraiture does not focus on the external likeness of a subject; but rather an inner journey of self-exploration and expression. The fragmented segments present in Hewett's works dissect forms and faces to a point of abstraction, resulting in an aesthetic that is both joyous, through the vibrancy of the colour palette, and simultaneously unnerving, due to the exposed figures he reveals.

Hewett's application of oil paint and bold colour fields are such that the thick, textural layers become sculptural, causing his figures to project beyond the picture plane, directly confronting the viewer with an arresting energy and haunting sharpness.

While the artist predominantly paints faces, the new collection of works on display at Unit London will highlight Hewett's move towards the portrayal of bodies, and the captivating essence that figurative forms can hold.

It is particularly in *La Femme I*, 2019 that the artist's development of a more reductive style is evident. While earlier works are characterised by an intense, all-over painterly approach, here, contrasting areas of Hewett's signature heavy impasto are balanced with subdued areas of flat colour and clean lines. In addition, the marble tonal effect visible in the figure's shoulder joint is reminiscent of the strength portrayed by a Renaissance statue, whereas the sweeping crescents and skin coloured teardrops bear much softer and pliable qualities.

It is the combination of these contrasting elements – between the visceral and the constructed – that allow Hewett's work to provoke audiences to question, not only the figures in front of them, but also feelings towards their own form.

NOTES TO EDITORS

RYAN HEWETT

Living and working from Cape Town, Hewett is known for his vibrant and abstract portraits of influential characters who have impacted society, as well as strangers without a name. The striking works are created using a range of tools, including knives, brushes and paint rollers. To date, Hewett has presented three solo exhibitions in South Africa, one in New York and two in London. The demand for his paintings continues to grow steadily, both locally and abroad. He has participated in group exhibitions in many major cities including; Berlin, London, Paris, Sydney, Hong Kong and New York, and his paintings have been presented at various art fairs including LA Art Show (2015); Art Central Hong Kong (2016); Volta NY (2017) and AKAA (Also Known As Africa), Paris (2017).



Ryan Hewett, *Belle*, 2019



Ryan Hewett, *Skin and Petals I*, 2019

UNIT LONDON

Unit London remains firmly committed to its core principles that art should be celebrated, inclusive and undivided. Founded in 2013, Unit London was born from an innate desire to break down the barriers of elitism and create new innovative pathways into the contemporary art world, recognised for its pioneering approach to digital media and role in expanding and diversifying audiences using new technologies.

Since its inception, Unit London has strived to provide a unique and experimental platform for the world's most distinctive emerging talent, showcasing their work to a culturally curious audience across the globe.

Exhibition Ryan Hewett *'New Paintings'*
Private View Wednesday, 19 June 2019, 18:30 - 21:30
Dates 20 June - 13 July 2019
Venue Details Unit London, 3 Hanover Square, London, W1S 1HD
Monday - Saturday from 10:00 - 19:00, Sunday from 12:00 - 18:00

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