



Nicholas Byrne
Divider

Friday 2 October – Sunday 2 November 2008

Nicholas Byrne's paintings stage a transaction between the figure and design. A particular lexicon of ornamentation, of hooks and optical pattern work within the edges of the composition and formally hold figures, profiles and hieroglyphic forms. Reminiscent of an era of British painting in which the figure is brutalised, as with the work of Graham Sutherland, Francis Bacon and Leon Kossoff, the work pushes an investment of character in material, weighing the purity or impurity of highly individual constellations.

At Studio Voltaire, Byrne will present a new large-scale ironwork sculpture. In the volume of the space the wrought iron will scroll down from the ceiling to floor. The work invests in the cultural heritage of Beaux-Arts tradition. On a pastel painted floor reaching into Studio Voltaire's vaulted ceiling that was blackened by fire, it will function as a mural through which to peer at other people in the gallery and divide the space.

Alongside a new suite of paintings of a more explicit figuration, Byrne will present two maquettes, composed of carved bandeau and hook motif's, constructed in plaster, wood and concrete, the forms are cross-sectioned by brass and nickel and partially obscured by fabric and damask. Enacting a theatricality based on grooming and ornamentation, around the height of a standing figure, they offer handles and holes to the viewer on either side of the ironwork *Divider*.

With kind assistance from Art Bridge Finance Group.

About the artist:

Originally born in Manchester, England, Nicholas Byrne now lives and works in London. The artist studied at the Royal College of Art and has previously exhibited at Kerlin Gallery (2008), Vilma Gold (2007), Marc Foxx, Los Angeles (2007), The Reliance, (2006), and Counter Gallery (2006). The artist is represented by Vilma Gold, London.