

## *Actions speak louder than words*

A number of shifts have taken place in the new work presented by Timothy Kendall Edser. The artist has shifted his gaze from earlier works where he focused on his skin, the limits of his overall body or its proximity to the constructed space around it. In *Viewpoint*, Edser has shifted to a new point of view, a more finite emphasis on particular actions and gestures. Although a more focused enquiry, it opens up new possibilities in exploring the artist's trademark spatial awareness.

The audience is also asked to make a shift: from the security of voyeuristic contemplation of a performance work, to the more embodied consideration of our own physical characteristics and subjectivity within a shared occupation of the gallery space and our mutual physical frameworks.

Edser has furthered his practice in other ways in this work. In addition to the now fragmented body, *Viewpoint* explores a new source of inspiration—contemporary dance. Galvanizing the frisson of repetitive movement as a means to evoke narrative and spatial awareness, the artist deploys gesture as a new sculptural language to extend his vocabulary in poetically representing and evoking the human experience.

Whereas hitherto Edser has erratically flung his weight around the gallery or purposefully and slowly evoked the tenuous fragility of a body suspended, this work explores a whole new realm - his body is absent, replaced by representations, castings and mechanical gadgetry. An array of ostensibly traditional art-making has been intelligently reconfigured to depict contemporary experience.

Arms, hands, ankles, feet: these are the pared down elements on display in these painted and sculptural works. Watercolour bathed in light sits in contrast to concrete, timber and perspex, revealing the experimental and challenging tensions set up by the artist. Although the sustained minimalist aesthetic is softened by the small painted works, masculine physicality is foregrounded by the much larger sculptural works, 195cm high, mimicking the artist's actual height.

The sculptures employ hidden mechanisms to trigger the repetitive bodily movements of walking, pointing, rotating, pivoting and punching, which simultaneously and surprisingly recall both poetic dance movements and tense, emotional repression. The concrete appendages are encased in their tomblike structures while our view inside the boxes is partially obstructed by sections of timber. The fragments of cast body parts anachronistically hint at experimental and outmoded medical practices, usurped these days by extreme technological advances in prosthetics and surgery technique. Our bodies have become machines, sublimely removed from our material origins. *Viewpoint* suggests a return to the transparent, the analogue, the material body and its lived physicality, represented here through its gestures.

The inhabiting of contemporary physical and cultural space is not always comfortable: our relationship with the built environment and with other bodies around us can challenge this delicate balance. It is our actions, experienced *through* our bodies that allow us to negotiate this terrain. Conjuring the display and performativity of Judith Butler, identity can be theorised as constructed. *Viewpoint* presents us with one way to do just that.

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