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# ARTILLERY

Avery Wheless, "Simone Kennedy-Doig; Antonia showering", Artillery (November 6th, 2018), online [ill.]

## SIMONE KENNEDY-DOIG; ANTONIA SHOWERING



Simone Kennedy Doig, *Under the Golden Arches (City Road)* (2018), courtesy the artist and Baert Gallery, Los Angeles, photo by Joshua White

Realities are relative to the individual, yet at Baert Gallery's current exhibition, one is granted entrance into two worlds of interpretation at once. Curator Louis Blanc-Francard unites the works of two London-based artists, which hanging side by side, hold obvious differences, yet together ingeniously evoke cohesive experiences of the past and present.

Despite variations in approach and delivery, both artists depict their subject's identity and narrative through a personal lens, inviting the viewer to be a part of the picture.

Simone Kennedy-Doig's multi-figurative and vivaciously colored pieces explore themes from her East London neighborhood, highlighting an awareness of youth and the desire to be seen. Her characters move about their world, openly granting the audience entrance. Sometimes it is a group of women in their element—in front of bathroom mirrors, nonchalantly taking "selfies" with blue-manicured fingernails in fashionable clothes such as in *The Ladies Restroom* (2018). As is often the case with youth, Kennedy-Doig's subjects are stimulated by the notion of being observed.



Antonia Showering, *Clinging* (2018), courtesy the artist and Baert Gallery, Los Angeles. Photo: Joshua White.

In *Under the Golden Arches (City Road)* (2018), Kennedy-Doig depicts street views filled with an array of characters—policemen, dog walkers and others. In some images, such as *Club Pool (Elephant and Castle)* (2018), Kennedy-Doig unapologetically illuminates subjects with beams of light, reminding them of their presence, while others ignore it or simply remain too self-absorbed to notice. One may initially assume these works are straightforward narratives, yet when examined more closely, we see they are filled with details to further inform. Women dressed in current fashions and details of green nail polish set the social context squarely within pop culture. Unidentified eyes hover over some scenes, hinting at a more symbolic purpose, while in other pieces the paint is sculpted, leaving a trace of something more difficult to decipher.

Antonia Showering's imagery, on the other hand, is full of ethereal layered marks—their assertiveness building a world of fleeting nostalgia. In *Histories* (2018), Showering's sentimental landscapes are composed of warm hues and are inhabited by figures seemingly plucked from a dream. In works such as *A Valediction* (2018), the gazes of the subjects are often cast down in internal reflection, inviting the viewer to do the same. Although quiet, these worlds are full of life, saturated with secrets and buzzing with energy. Juxtaposed with the bold, blocky works of Kennedy-Doig's, Showering's narratives evoke a sense of internal musing and precious secrets that allow the viewer to become lost in a private world.

The realities depicted by Showering and Kennedy-Doig invite the viewer into a world of strangers, but these strangers are open and are relatable. Some pieces whisper their story while others shout, yet together they illustrate that no perspective is the same, creating a cohesive conversation made whole by differences—and that is a conversation worth engaging in.