HUXLEY-PARLOUR
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Iris Schomaker
in secret kept/ in silence sealed

8 June - 3 July 2021



Woman/folded, 2021, watercolour and oil on paper. Iris Schomaker.

Huxley-Parlour Gallery is pleased to present a solo presentation of 16 new works on paper by Berlin based artist, Iris Schomaker, opening in June of 2021. The exhibition will be Schomaker's first UK solo show.

Taken from a line in a Charlotte Brontë poem, *Evening Solace*, the title of the exhibition 'in secret kept/ in silence sealed' reflects on interiority, solitude, and reworks the romantic understanding of 'emotion, recollected in tranquility'. Rendered in flat, monochromatic planes, Schomaker's characters are often pictured solitary, sometimes with an accompanying animal, and frequently at large scale.

Schomaker's figures - inscrutable and monolithic - are psychologically charged, drawing from Jungian archetypes to create atmospheric portraits that invite viewers to engage with introspective, 'androgyn' figures. Influenced by Japanese woodblock prints and ink drawings, Schomaker's works are built up with both charcoal and watercolour and finished with oil paint to create deep, gothic tableaus that Schomaker describes as like 'film stills'.

Brontë's poetry takes imaginative departure from a post-Cartesian conception of self. Here, the Romantic 'recluse' has an impenetrable exterior, harbouring secret feelings, desires, hopes and fears. Schomaker's exhibition meaningfully reworks this conception by presenting her figures as radically vacant.

While the surfaces of Schomaker's work - angular, coarse, geometric - are symbolically charged, the characters of her paintings refuse to confer meaning. This is particularly evident in Schomaker's faces, which remain obscured in each of the works. In turn, this collection of paintings - developed over a number of months - allow us to materially consider our contemporary sense of 'self'.

Iris Schomaker (born 1973) studied at the Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design, Kiel, continuing her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bergen and Trondheim. Schomaker has participated in several national exhibitions, including at the Berlinische Galerie, Berlin in 2007 and 2010, and at Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt in 2013. The following year she participated at the Mediations Biennale in Poznan, Poland. Schomaker's work is now held in numerous public and private collections, including the Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, Germany and Deutsche Bank collections.

'The human heart has hidden treasures,
In secret kept, in silence sealed;—
The thoughts, the hopes, the dreams, the pleasures,
Whose charms were broken if revealed.

— Charlotte Brontë, *Evening Solace*

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