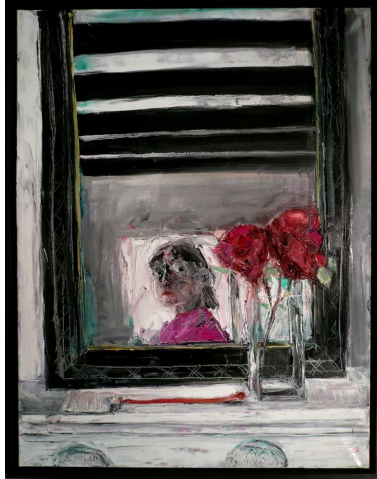


Shani Rhys James

Two Ateliers

24.04.09 – 30.05.09

“I have to be emotionally and mentally taken over by my paintings”



Connaught Brown Gallery is delighted to present its first solo exhibitions of works by contemporary Welsh artist Shani Rhys James. This selection of her latest paintings introduces a fascinating new step in her artistic language: The emergence of two different styles born in two different Ateliers.

Shani Rhys James came to prominence fully in the early 1990's and has since known immense success. Winner of the Jerwood painting prize in 2003 and awarded M.B.E. in New Years Honours List in 2006, Shani Rhys James is considered a Welsh national treasure. Her works are held in major national collections in England and Wales, and many private collections both in the UK and internationally.

In a time of contemporary art that feels almost apologetic for figurative painting, Shani Rhys James work exists in contested territory. Her subject matter is consistent and familiar - self portrait, domestic interior, and still life, yet she creates an unusual paradox through her distinctive figurative realism which gives private subject matter very public exposure.

Rhys James has developed her own intense language of figuration. Her intimate yet ambiguous self portraiture goes beyond likeness to reflect inner reality and the condition of the self. Raw paint colours hint at the fragile skin which exists between concealment and exposure, and the often uncomfortable process of self discovery. Disturbing in their mesmeric directness, even at a distance, Rhys James's paintings are characterized by an unmistakable magnetism.

Two Ateliers presents works realised in both her Welsh studio and her French atelier. It shows the encounter of her rich and intensely colourful “Welsh style” and her new fresh and luminous “French style”.

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