

COCHRANE | BACON

STUDY OF A WOMAN TALKING TO HERSELF

NEW WORKS BY JESS COCHRANE IN CONVERSATION WITH FRANCIS BACON

OPENING RECEPTION: 07.11.19, 6 - 8pm

EXHIBITION DATES: 08.11.19 - 07.12.19



Jess Cochrane's latest body of work, *Study of a Woman Talking to Herself* is in conversation with the works of modern British master, Francis Bacon. The exhibition, featuring works from both artists will open at Rhodes Contemporary Gallery on 7th November.

Paying homage to Bacon, Cochrane's emotionally charged, visceral works are reminiscent of his warped distortion of the human figure. Her subjects writhe in unnatural, sometimes inhuman poses - a knowing nod to Muybridge, whose influence on Bacon's oeuvre is well-documented.

The artist's signature approach of using highly gestural and expressive mark-making, worked over the surface of glossy, flawless photographic portraits reflects our relationship to imagery and in particular, to our own self-image. Our constant quest for perfection.

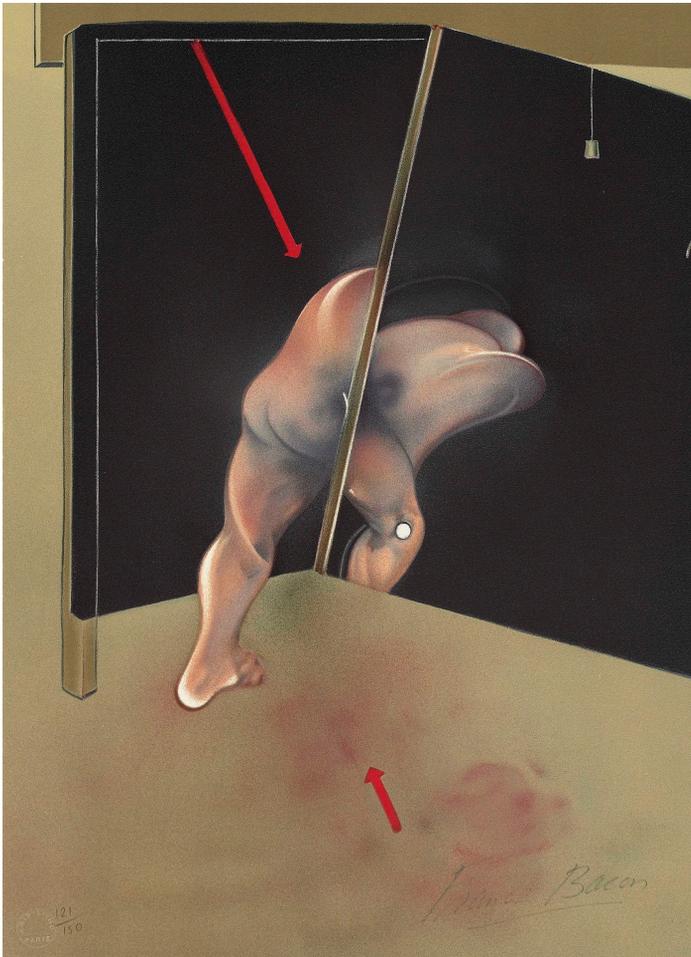
In *Muybridge Pose*, the subject's empty expression suggests a dislocation from her body; she confronts the gaze which envisages her as a sexual object. She is simultaneously childlike and powerful; a juxtaposition of all that she is, and all of the assumptions made about her by others.

"If we can find similarities between an image of a paralytic child and a woman posed in a hyper sexualised manner, what does that say about our idea of beauty? what does that say about how we've been conditioned to push ourselves into discomfort for the sake of the perception of others, for keeping up, for fitting in?" - Jess Cochrane

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The title of the exhibition refers both to the sitters; their relationship with their self-image and to the artist, whose confrontational works act as a window into her own mind. We are thus reminded of the dual-performance of painting. As Bacon put it, “When you paint anything, you are also painting yourself as well as the object you’re trying to record.”

Contemplating this aspect of the work, the viewer cannot help but consider their own appearance, as seen by others. This introspection was at the forefront of Bacon’s mind and implicit in his decision to frame his paintings behind highly reflective glass so that the viewer was forced to confront their own reflection as part of that painting.



Upon approaching the large-scale works by Cochrane, one experiences an overwhelming sense of impotency as they dissolve into abstraction. A stark reminder of our own fragility. The marks made are both a kiss and a blow: an assault on the viewer. In this way, she captures our evolving sense of despair in the modern age and paradoxically, the incredible beauty that derives from vulnerability.

Bacon’s influence on this young contemporary is indisputable. Both artists share the belief that chaos breeds images; in distilling raw emotion and sensation straight onto the canvas or paper in the most immediate way possible. Neither drafts their works, both are preoccupied with chance in painting: in *deeply ordered chaos*. The impact of this, culminating in such immense, powerful works is unforgettable.

Join Rhodes Contemporary and Jess Cochrane at the exhibition’s opening night in London’s Soho from 6-8pm on the evening of Thursday 7th November. The exhibition will run until 7th December. Original works from Cochrane and limited edition signed prints from Francis Bacon will be available for sale.

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