



Chris Dolman

Falling from a Broken Ladder

Galerie pompom, Sydney

20 March - 14 April 2019

Falling from a Broken Ladder is mostly inspired by the artist's recent employment as a gallery installer. The exhibition looks to the fetishisation of tools, pokes fun at the stylised outfit of the installer, and touches on the theme of labour, both the labour of making (painting/sculpting) a body of work, and also the labour of preparing (sanding/patching/painting/measuring) a gallery space for an exhibition.

Self-referential and self-deprecating, the paintings and objects in the exhibition look not the perfection of such pursuits (perfection is what the actual job of a gallery installer/art handler requires), but to the everyday failures, the various little mishaps accidents and mistakes, that can easily take place (and do take place) behind closed doors. In this way the artist, whilst choosing to display scenes and objects within a 'gallery under installation' setting, is also talking about 'bigger' more universal themes concerning the human condition such as anxiety, uncertainty and despair.

Dolman is a caricaturist. He uses slapstick and deprecating humour as a device or prop to talk about what could be somewhat stressful situations. He simplifies (or completely obscures) certain elements of the body, whilst extending and distorting others. Using visual and verbal puns and jokes to upend notions of failure.

The exhibition sees the artist employing a mix of techniques such as washes, dry brush, scumbling, and crosshatching, all performed with an economy that leaves much of the original white of the canvas showing through. Each canvas has been given a painted border inside of which the text of the title of the work is written.

Objects from the world of the installer have been placed (or left) on top of each canvas. Upon entering the space one questions if the exhibition itself is still half way through being installed.

Further sculptural objects in the exhibition are a mix of cast plaster, ready made or found objects, timber, Fimo, real food, and glass. They become real world surrealist props in direct conversation with the images in the paintings.

Chris Dolman holds an MFA (research) from Sydney College of the Arts, Sydney University, 2016, and a BFA (first class) from the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne, 2010, where he was the recipient of the Wallara Travelling Scholarship (2009). He was awarded the 2017 AGNSW Dyason Bequest, and received New Work (early career) and ArtStart grants from the Australia Council for the Arts, and Artist Support from Arts NSW. Dolman has exhibited in solo and group shows at Cement Fondu, Artspace, Gippsland Art Gallery, Grace Cossington Smith Gallery, Alaska Projects, Firstdraft, West Space, Seventh, FELTspace, Wellington St Projects, MOP Projects, Casula Powerhouse, Hazelhurst Regional, Hawkesbury Regional, Fontanelle, Anna Pappas, and MARS Gallery. He has undertaken international residencies at the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, and Frans Masereel Centrum, Belgium, and in 2017 was artist in residence at Parramatta Artist Studios. He is currently a one year studio artist at Artspace, Sydney.