

Through The Neuropolis
James Dean Diamond
Curated by Samia Ashraf



Through The Neuropolis

James Dean Diamond is in an elegiac mood, drawing us into a crepuscular world of espionage. Immersed in an indeterminate urban setting, nothing is as it seems – a sense of mutability lurks in the shadows, where all matter is unsustainable when confronted by mortality.

Working as before, in a mode of cinematic frames, the 14 photographic pieces, each measuring 95cm x 63cm, are a disquieting monochromatic journey of fragmentary episodes. Here Diamond speaks of his experience of post-traumatic stress disorder, resulting from a near-fatal burst appendix in 2010. This incident dominates his thinking, as he grapples with the unguarded feelings of shock, and a realisation of man's fragility. Hovering at the edge, he attempts to anchor his being by 'evaluating a life by review and examination'.¹ Utilising the architectural milieu to calibrate his emotions, as well as to frame the identity of the metropolis, the work becomes a psychological exploration of a 'streaming mindscape'² locked in isolation.

We encounter a quiet, sensitive panorama of silhouetted figures fusing into their surroundings. The translucent surfaces are awash with movement, while the delineated expanses of transient forms and minimal lines hold great tension. Scenes are offset by vestiges of the city, steeped in decaying beauty and an impalpable absence, the surfaces drip with paint, a shaft descends into an abyss, and dense textures pervade with a melancholic undercurrent. With moments punctuated by hope, Diamond's life is filled with meaning – a solitary cyclist enveloped in wings passes, perhaps we fleetingly glimpse an angel through a sea of dislocated sentiments, while another image is shrouded in mist, where the subtle leaves of an autumnal tree delicately ebb and flow.

The modulated grey compositions of film and digital capture are taken across London and Copenhagen – to sense the invisible where 'a measure of uncertainty and complexity'³ haunts the human condition. Informed by Gerhard Richter's practice, in particular the 'grey paintings', the colour grey occupies a paradoxical position, encompassing the real, the reflective, the anti-illusion, the illusionist, and within which a multi-figural state of existence evolves. Citing 'The Plattner Story' and the enduring enthusiasm for HG Wells's science-fiction literature, Diamond recalls the atmosphere of the

Through The Neuropolis

human and spirit spheres veiled in a tonal fog. Furthermore, notions of separation suggestive of the seminal film 'Wings of Desire' (1987) by the German director Wim Wenders are referenced – guardian angels cloistered from a mortal existence provide solace to the population at large through sympathetic observation.

By contrast, the exhibition concludes with an ascent to another level of consciousness. Contemplating abstraction as an impression of the mind, the dynamic bioelectric chemical energy represents a future of possibilities.

¹ Antonia Macaro and Julian Baggini, 'The Shrink & The Sage,' 'The Financial Times Weekend Magazine', 14/15 June 2014

² Jonny Greenwood in conversation with Thom Yorke, Radiohead interview, YouTube 2016

³ Gerhard Richter interview, 'In art we find beauty and comfort', Louisiana Channel 15 Nov 2016

The 14 works from the series 'Through The Neuropolis' are each 'Untitled'

Dimension: 95cm x 63cm

Medium: C-TYPE

Edition: Eight per piece

2008–2010

Contact

samia@jamesdeandiamond.com

www.jamesdeandiamond.com

T +44 (0)7784 145 618