

## *Press release*



*image: (from L-R) Alice Cunningham, So-Ha Au, Alexander Bates, Jacqueline Morreau, Lorna Giezot and Axelle Russo.*



Red Gate Gallery  
209a Coldharbour Lane  
London SW9 8RU  
Tel.: 0207 326 0993

## *Second Skin*

**Private View: 11th of April - 6 pm to 11 pm**

Exhibition runs from: 11th of April to the 17th of April 2008

Gallery Opening Hours: Sat, Mon, Tues, Wed: 11.00 am - 6.30 pm

Last day of Exhibition - Thursday 17th of April: Open from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm

**Second Skin brings together an engaging show of work by six painters and sculptors.**

Work that explores clothing and its notions of identity, the body and memories. With the artists depicting, reconstructing and referencing 'clothing': looking at its relationship with our bodies; how we identify ourselves and how others perceive us; provides commentary on everyday narratives; symbolises our psychological spaces; conjures and promises associative memories; and maps our absence and presence.

**Alice Cunningham's** previous work has been concerned with investigating and highlighting natural processes in an attempt to describe and understand the cogs of our existence on a universal level. Cunningham is fascinated by the hidden and basic truths around us. The installation for this exhibition was made as a discussion of the emotional and social process of growing up, the transition into the mainstream working world and understanding its substance and structures.

**So-Ha Au** is interested in exploring the themes of mapping memories and the layering of time, as a way of mediating personal histories and identity. Expressing ideas of absence and displacement, tracing and retracing. She is using diagrams of dressmakers' patterns to look at the interior space occupied by the clothed body. Deconstructing the shapes, like displaced limbs. Reconstructing them again, almost as flat plans for referencing an unoccupied, internal space of the absent and displaced.

### **Alexander Bates**

"Messy Bedroom" is a series of photographs or snapshots made with disposable cameras that document paintings of discarded clothing alongside their real life counterparts in situ, making the labour intensive seem casual.

**Jacqueline Morreau** first used a coat as a symbol of ambivalence in her 1980s series "Divided Self" but has since returned to it to symbolize the push and pull between two women closely identified with each other: twins, rivals, mothers and daughters, friends - all searching for separation. The idea came to her from seeing, in Camden Town, two schoolgirls struggling to get into the same coat. As models, she used two acrobats from Circus Space in London, whom she already knew. Their sense of playfulness and willingness to try out many ways of 'sharing the coat' encouraged her ideas.

In 1999 **Lorna Giezot** began a body of work which stemmed from an interest in how our relationship with clothing and the notion of dress is perceived. By removing the human form as the central structure for the clothing and replacing it with objects devoid of gender, or any need or social purpose for dressing, she aims to approach the impact dress has on the psyche. Garments, costumes, uniforms awaken nostalgia, represent cultures, ages and races, simply by their colour, texture, age or smell. The pointless act of 'dressing' the shells, juxtaposing the domain of clothing and the discarded, asexual shell, is an attempt to displace and manipulate the specific connotations both these items exude. In doing so she aims to encourage reflection upon what we see and how we can perceive it.

**Axelle Russo** started working on Burkas (Afghan Women's outdoor veils) in 1998. "The ghost like shape of any Muslim veil is familiar to the viewer but I play with the form to raise questions about women's identity and the clothing as a simile of that identity. Clothing, in any of its expressions, is a language and this hiding veil that is supposed to mask or disguise the self becomes an identity statement. I like to play on the paradox and conflicts raised by traditions and politics that impose a constrained (veiled) image of women and the way the self is inevitably appearing beyond the veil. You can see these women as victims, but also as Icons representing archetypal aspects of women's identity and sexuality. Beyond any geographical limits, religions or race."

For further information on the artists, please email So-Ha Au: [info@sohaau.com](mailto:info@sohaau.com)