

## **Gravitas**

*Gravitas* explores the continual and complex relationships between human and animal. The exhibition brings together large-scale, monochrome oil on canvas paintings by Abigail Reed and the life-sized fabric sculptures of Dorcas Casey.

In response to the impressive exhibition space, Antlers Gallery present two female artists working in a large, bold manner in order to convey the power and weight of the animal form in relation to human scale. In Abigail's paintings the animals are bursting out of the canvases whilst Dorcas' sculptures are awkwardly juxtaposed with seemingly fragile furniture. In both cases the animal subjects have a sense of stature but their relationship to human objects evokes an air of vulnerability.

### ABIGAIL REED

Abigail Reed's large-scale oil paintings portray animals poised in alternating positions: standing strong and powerful, or in a state of rest within the canvas. All of the works are almost sculptural in themselves and vie for the viewers attention. Her painting style is free and fluid; nothing is fixed as the dripping and cracking of the paint reveals the accidental, volatile and vulnerable nature of the medium.

Abigail has to work fast to capture the form. This exposes not only the beautiful medium of oil paints but engages us to look further at the subject. Look through under the layers and unveiled is something more than just an exterior. Strong but fragile these animals reveal the vulnerability of life, the primal instinct of survival. Abigail sees her paintings as representations of 'other', something non-human, which puts us in our place and stills our anxieties.

### DORCAS CASEY

Dorcas Casey uses a variety of materials including fabric, wire and found objects to create startling portrayals of animal forms. Her work seeks to translate the recurring and mysterious motifs of animals which appear in her dreams into tangible objects. These sculptures embody a myriad of emotions and sensations in one piece; exploring the unconscious associations we have with creatures, where the familiar and comforting is merged with the menacing and unsettling. Impeccably fabricated portrayals of stags, pigs, and bulls are awkwardly placed in direct opposition to delicate antique furniture; they are suspended between strength and collapse, evoking the ambiguity of dream-like imagery.

Favouring craft-based processes (such as hand-stitching) Dorcas transforms more malleable materials like gloves, socks and other clothing fabrics into her figurative sculptures. She likes the idea of these outmoded, discarded and marginal objects returning as powerful presences. Dorcas's new body of works use textured domestic and clothing fabric which she has coated and soaked with Jesmonite resin, which solidifies and preserves all the tactile detail in the surface of the fabrics. Dorcas sees these more solid and durable sculptures as a further development in bringing her dreams into reality.

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Antlers Gallery

Purifier House, Lime Kiln Road, Bristol, BS1 5AD

21 March – 19 April 2014

Everyday 10am – 6pm

Artist Talk: Wednesday 2 April, 6.30pm

Gravitas Feast: 11,12,13 April, 7 – 10pm – tickets – [www.foodandtheatrecompany.com](http://www.foodandtheatrecompany.com)

[www.antlersgallery.com/project/gravitas](http://www.antlersgallery.com/project/gravitas)

1. Abigail Reed - Black Greyhound - Oil on Canvas - 100 x 100 cm - £1,500
2. Dorcas Casey - Bull - Hand-stitched Fabric, Furniture & Mixed Media - 200 x 120 x 120 cm approx - P.O.A
3. Abigail Reed - Black Horse - Oil on Canvas - 100 x 100 cm - £1,500
4. Abigail Reed - Standing Bear - Oil on Canvas - 100 x 200 cm - £2,400
5. Abigail Reed - Sleeping Dogs - Oil on Canvas - 170 x 190 cm - £3,200
6. Dorcas Casey - Mule Heads - Jesmonite, Clothing Fabric, Iron Powder and Wood - 62 x 55 x 50 cm (each head) - Unique multiple in edition of 3 - £2,400 per pair
7. Abigail Reed - English Hare - Oil on Canvas - 60 x 60 cm - £900
8. Dorcas Casey - Bull Head - Jesmonite, Clothing Fabric, Iron Powder and Wood - 80 x 80 x 60 cm - Unique multiple in edition of 3 - £1,700
9. Dorcas Casey - Goat - Hand-stitched Fabric, Furniture and Mixed Media - 90 x 140 x 90 cm approx - P.O.A
10. Abigail Reed - Deer on Hillside - Oil on Canvas - 150 x 185 cm - £2,800

