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Andrew Gannon

Impressions

10.12.22 – 08.01.23

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This exhibition brings together new work by Edinburgh-based artist Andrew Gannon (b.1980, Bolton). With a practice rooted in performance and minimal, everyday actions Gannon began to explore both sculpture and his own disability in late 2019. A selection of his new series of *Impressions* (2022) is shown here alongside drawings and sculptural prostheses that result from his *Drawing Limb* performances.

The *Impressions* are made using plaster bandage casts of the artist's left arm, bound together whilst Gannon is still wearing them, in a process that can be quite unpredictable. Creating the modular casts is akin to creating a first fit or impression of a limb in preparation for a prosthesis, a process that has been part of Gannon's life since childhood due to his congenital limb difference. Enjoying the way in which the word 'impressions' 'slips between its medical usage and the connotations it has within art practice', as he puts it, the artist is also interested in the way that plaster bandage is as associated with the medical world as it is with art-making. His *Impressions* exist on the boundary between these two worlds, testing out an identity as sculptural disability objects, somewhere between 'limb' and independent abstract sculpture.

While they are made using a process associated with fitting prosthetics, Gannon's *Impressions* neither look nor function like limbs. Prostheses usually offer functional and aesthetic 'normality', something that, as Gannon points out, 'is less for the wearer and more for the onlookers. So I started to think about, what would a prosthesis be if it were neither functional nor cosmetically convincing?' This deliberate challenge to the usual expectations of disability objects also opens up questions about societal expectations of the disabled body more broadly. However, Gannon is careful to point out that his experience of disability cannot stand in for that of all of those who identify as disabled. Most of his *Impressions* remain the off-white of hardened plaster, but some are sprayed in eye-catching metallics and high-vis colours to highlight 'the visibility of disability objects', as Gannon puts it.

Gannon's *Drawing Limbs* begin with the same casting process as his *Impressions*, but rather than being bound to one another, each cast has a long bamboo pole bound in, with a piece of charcoal held at the tip. Gannon began making these objects when, thinking about the artist's gaze, he found an image of Henri Matisse at work on a mural using a long drawing pole. Matisse used these sticks to shift the action of drawing from his wrist into his elbow, so that he could work fluidly at a large scale. Gannon's *Drawing Limbs* also extend the reach of the artist's arm, taking the functionality of the prosthesis to the point of absurdity as he draws the other objects in the exhibition. Using his non-dominant hand at such a reach introduces an element of jeopardy into the performance, making very visible the usually invisible work of prosthesis use. In these drawing performances Gannon 'performs' the role of artist, with the subject of his drawings being his own sculptures, themselves formed from casts of his own body. The performances therefore operate within a curiously self-referential system, exposing the artist, and his own limb difference, to scrutiny – both his own, and that of the audience.

Drawing Limb performances

09.12.22, 16.12.22, 03.01.23, 2–6pm.

In person. Free. Drop in.

Artist's Talk

16.12.22, 6.30–7.30pm. Free.

In person and live-streamed.

Andrew Gannon in conversation with Fiona Bradley.

New publication

Andrew Gannon: Impressions is accompanied by a new book, with exhibition photography and new texts by Ruth Bretherick and David Cochrane.

The works in this exhibition are for sale. Please ask a member of staff for more information.