

# REBECCA AKROYD

## *House Fire*

24 March - 16 April 2017

In the morning when I wake up I forget that none of it really happened and I lie for a while trying to piece together the fragments. It feels like I lost something. Like the ache of heartbreak the shadow of the memory slumps heavily in my chest until it gradually takes shape and comes into focus. I begin to remember what happened; the unrelenting heat from the black, hard ground beneath my feet and how it burned through the soles of my shoes, how the scorched, thick air itched my bare skin with the weight of an invisible blanket. I remember the helicopter ride that circled around the vast, gaping mouth as it softly and slowly spat and hissed its hellish, red, hot utterances of death. The beautiful and measured female pilot who spoke to me through a headset, and made me feel like I was part of something important, a mission of some sort. Of knowing what no one else seemed to know, that it was all about to end, and my sense of overwhelming loss, of heartbreak for life and its inevitable end, I wondered why everyone was so calm. I remember the unshakable sadness at thinking I'll never have sex again, or that the man I love I couldn't reach to say good bye and I love you one last time. Through this darkness at night the memory is formed of an experience I've never had, but that nevertheless leaves the residual, lingering sense that it was real, that it counts.

Recent solo exhibitions include Hunter/Whitfield (2015) and Kinman Gallery (2014). Recent group exhibitions include *These Rotten Words*, Chapter Gallery, Cardiff; *Walled Gardens in an Insane Eden*, Sara Zanin Gallery, Rome; *Modest Villa Immense Versailles* (co-curator), Kinman Gallery, London; *At Home Salon: Double Acts*, Marcelle Joseph Projects, Ascot; *Bloody Life*, Herald St, London; *Is it heavy or is it light*, Assembly Point, London; *With institutions like these*, Averard Hotel, London; *Opals*, Galerie Opdahl, Stavanger, Norway; *Royal Academy Schools Degree Show*, London; *Works in Residence*, David Roberts Art Foundation, London; and *The London Open*, Whitechapel Gallery, London. In 2013, her work was included in Bloomberg New Contemporaries (ICA, London and Spike Island, Bristol).

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