

Leaves Turn Inside You

Charlie Hodgson

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David Dale Gallery

161 Broad Street

Glasgow

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An opening scene with a grand stage. Holding our story is a vessel, proposing we have an event—what kind of event? Here is a gesture frozen, silently watching, like an eye or a buttole—an attraction to something so immediate. We have arrived joined by a certain set of historical signposts, jagged and slightly off, with a theatrical grubbiness making me wonder if we've been tricked! A noble presence testing my limits of both fear and curiosity creating a historical creep with flair. History and authority made uneasy with proximity to a sharp edge and public sumptuousness. Apparent disregard for a brutal deterrent and pathetic measures of control. A living breathing life looms and says no. Laser vision clocking distance lurking on the edge out of sight. The monolith of mythology, and various appearances throughout. I've been told it basically boils down to the shape of a head. I vibrate colour like a screen or the backdrop of my

90's school photoshoots. The crisp line of your edge keeps drawing me out of my kaleidoscopic anus and toward a prior perfection. I'm in and out of destruction. Machine violence and eros tangled in a confusion about our bodies morphing and capabilities getting mixed up fragments of parts smashing together. Milky material of baggy softness, rigid turned pupae. Something gone wrong in the day-to-day. Replaced with a lattice that invites a pause and, despite not being able to see myself, some time for reflection and a place to sink into. Now it has an impression. Heavy transparency somehow also slumps. A weight cemented in unfamiliar territory. Not a tree I've seen before, mottled camouflage glistening. Poised, lengthening while melting. Tiny screaming faces trying to get out. An almost office-core quality takes me to government forms. Filling me with an anxiety specific to a fear of authority. Bureaucratic greys and a brown so thin it could disappear. Maybe it is dissolving? I will tell you about the ghost gum. Especially at night, it looks like a ghost, wildly gesturing. Stretching limbs, bends filled with wrinkles that look so much like human skin. Gathering in a corner smooth and dimpled pot marked texture. The most beautiful one I have seen was in a carpark. A disconcerting intimacy between the edges of two disparate things, touching. Frivolity and horror rubbing together clinking. The foam from a fire extinguisher takes a long time to clean up. Self-embrace, you're making do. You have skin touching on the idea of disaster. Precariously teetering on the edge

of embrace and self-consciousness. Thirdly, suggesting we might get fucked up tonight. Crouching in a spontaneous moment of exposure and a refusal to let this stop me. Inner worlding becomes even more necessary. Apparent nonchalance acting as a border, making way for the possibility of coexistence. Suddenly, your vulnerability pulls me from the apparent concrete permanence and into the wet mess of flesh. The sadness of an inner thigh exposed to be just as human as the next. Bodies press on cold surface bending to repetitive architecture your desire playing out in the distance on a grid of a, b, c and how to get there. The possibility of warmth and want, pursuing yourself through an alienating structure. Baring yourself to recalibrate a new face. I'm all in front of you wanting to know what you'll do next. You're turning to show yourself to yourself checking on your status as shown from your own perspective. Sometimes you just have to notice when you're looking really good. Some things just are. Take some time to arrive and take stock of how you are and how you're meant to be. If it was complete abandon we wouldn't be watching, so I take these things to indicate a vigilant eye. One eye open, on the ass, to make sure a you got it and b you're here. The architecture of the body is no match for these walls. You open endlessly and where does that get you. Stepping up to warm yourself. Before it was an announcement now it has become impressed.

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When carving a spiral, the inside and outside of the rock become unclear. What's convex and concave change place every few centimetres. He has to know how to be with the light. The sun's always behind like a plane landing. We walk through the city talking of waste. It zooms up to the eyes, nothing's been vanished.

He had gone into town yesterday. He had seen a little boy standing on a stage before a cloth with stars. The boy had sung a song then left the stage, looking confused. Now he felt like the little boy, unsure what his performance was.

Black ice spread in webs across the stone and shone when he stood at the right angle. He picked the column from the mulch. The morning frost was past, it was safe for him to be outside. No danger of his cells expanding then falling damp. He felt protective of them, like an Uncle.

Each series of occurrences creates a season. Seeing a tree seeing a column seeing a flytip. Each object is indicative of a time that passed, with edges, into the next one. He moves through the world taking pictures. Charting his pastoral.

There are now fridges lying sideways in the back court. Waste is never removed. Each line is a separate event:
1. In the back court two boys drag a miniature trampoline in. They put it directly in the centre. One mounts and

bounces up and down while the other watches. 2. A green chair straddles the brick. Directly below are wooden forks and spoons. The spoons float holy above the grass. 3. Men with leaf blowers come to encourage it all into piles. They shovel it into bags and lump it away. For a while afterwards the view is greener.

Each of these occurrences is a season. The weather states that form in your life. People's togetherness in a room can be one person.

Ice spread in webs. With the light coming in from overhead like a plane, he looked forward and down, an introverted gaze.

Outside other things were happening. Death was happening. He painted a beginning, middle and end. The moment at which the tree came into focus, looming forwards. The middle waited for him. He lived in a city of visible decomposition. He attended to it furrily.

Beginnings, middles and ends draw a half-circle over the top of movements like a dome. They take decisions out of muscles. The movements his arm makes while painting are up, down, side, diagonal, around, etc. The pictures are evidence of hundreds of hours of small, controlled movements, most of the energy concentrating in the hand, his arm still, the connection between his eye and his hand like a web drawn at evening light.

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He asked for my number and I gave it to him, my real number, because although I did think of giving him an incorrect digit, deep down, so deep that I do not think there, I wanted him to call me so I could hear his turbulence. He was incredibly ugly and horrid in appearance but I wanted him to phone because, and this is going to sound grim, I wanted him to actually say, or at least feel, how upset he was that my car had touched his car, because I did not crash or bump him or his car, I just touched it, I felt the touch happen, there was no damage but this touch, almost casual, had really, really upset him. He had felt it too, from inside his car he felt the same thing I felt, symmetrically, and it hurt him, his car was unhurt, but this, the most protracted touch, through metal and oil, this contact, this faint impact, he felt it and he did not like it. I barely noticed, but he did, and I wanted him to say this, to just say I had wound him up. If he phones me, whatever he is going to say or feel tomorrow, or the next day, is going to be poisoned by his feelings about this delicate, mutual touching. There would be the reality of there being no damage to his car but he would still be angry because a woman, infinitely more beautiful, attractive, creative, more fertile than him, had accidentally, perhaps pointlessly, made him feel this impact in a place where there should be no contact with strangers, in his driver's seat, in the safe interior space behind his wheel, and not liking the unbidden intrusion into his comfort

where he should not be feeling anything, this wonderful nothing, his repose, his steady ongoingness is suddenly gone by the impact – he makes himself angry – his oil is boiling now. I will be absolutely permissive and liberal in my acceptance of his anger, and say, or perhaps just feel, the anger roll off me like oil repelled by water, let it go, just let it roll off across, away, far off, because all the damage is in you, rolling in you, finding its gravity, stop entertaining, stop coddling your anger, when you take it home to watch it instead of the TV, let it cascade, away, away. And he climbs back into his car pantomiming his righteousness, for me, and perhaps for him too, then he drives off curtly with my number in his phone. And the transaction is complete, which has nothing to do with money, because there is no damage but has everything to do with the damage inside him.

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Works (Clockwise from left):

Bather (Emma),
Oil on Canvas,
100 x 65 cm, 2024

Owl on Composite,
Oil on Canvas,
160 x 130 cm, 2024

Study for Ruins,
Oil on Canvas,
60 x 45 cm, 2024

Bather (Hannah),
Oil on Canvas,
80 x 60 cm, 2024

Tree,
Oil on Canvas,
140 x 100 cm, 2024

Envelope,
Oil on Canvas,
100 x 75 cm, 2024

Charlie Hodgson (b. 1996, London) lives and works in Glasgow. He graduated with an MFA from Glasgow School of Art in 2023. Recent exhibitions include: *24*, Moosey, London, 2024; *Trade Winds*, Boardroom Committee Room, Glasgow, 2023; *Business*, Limbo, London, 2023. Hodgson is also currently a contributing editor to *Ghost Press*, Glasgow.

Texts by Kate Power, Olivia Wiles & Sarah Tripp