

# Roman Road Quo Vadis

Press Release

## Abstraction & Daydreaming: Ellen Antico, Hannah Knox and Tom White

Private View: Tuesday 26 April 2022,  
from 6.30 pm

Exhibition: Wednesday 27 April –  
Monday 25 July 2022

Opening Hours: Monday –  
Saturday 10 AM – 12 PM  
and 04 PM – 06 PM and by  
appointment

Address: 26-29 Dean Street,  
London W1D 3LL

27 April– 25 July 2022

**Roman Road is pleased to present Abstraction and Daydreaming at Quo Vadis. Abstraction and Daydreaming a group exhibition spread across our three unique rooms, curated by Marisa Bellani, Founder and Creative Director of Roman Road. The exhibition features a diverse trio of the most talented international emerging artists, Ellen Antico, Hannah Knox and Tom White, and attempts to offer alternative dreamlike depictions addressing the established term 'abstraction'.**

Ellen Antico, a graduate of Camberwell College of Arts' undergraduate painting programme (2019), creates canvases of crowded cherubic faces and Rubenesque figures that draw heavily from an engagement with art history, and the Renaissance in particular. Combined with a contemporary reconsideration of female figuration, sexual consent and body politics, Antico, born in Sydney but currently living and working in Berlin, embraces all shapes and sizes of the female form in oil and charcoal paintings that blur the boundaries between one body and the next. Loosely defined figures are lost within an abstracted mass of humanity, as limbs interlace and hands interlock in a corporeal celebration of sexual liberation, self-confidence and body positivity. Euphoria encapsulated, Antico's moments of carnal, spiritual or emotional climax are rendered in rich shades and warm hues that retain a sense of tenderness, as well as raw, energetic mark-making that imbues each painting with a feeling of dynamic motion.

In contrast, Hannah Knox, a British interdisciplinary artist who graduated with an MA in painting from the Royal College of Art (2007), cultivates calm contemplation from found fabric patterns. Her series of 'Shirt Paintings', initiated during the first pandemic lockdown in March 2020, a time when all our worlds became suddenly smaller and inward introspection or an investigation of our immediate surroundings was perhaps inevitable, focus on flattened portrayals of familiar fashions. Painted on linen, the same material of the subjects' own making, Knox's still lives of incorporeal clothes remove the figure from conventional figuration, allowing for abstraction from any pre-existing personal associations. Reflecting on the power of clothing as a costume to craft identity, the inherent concealment that comes from the act of wearing and the current scrutiny placed

on fast fashion and its problematic production, Knox's textile trompe l'oeil, which can vary in scale from the life-sized to the miniature or the monumental, leave ample ambiguity for a viewer to achieve vicarious attachment.

Such implied intimacy is also evident in the artworks of fellow British painter Tom White, another Camberwell College of Arts graduate (MA Painting 2021), whose portraits, while almost photorealistic in their appearance, aim to above all embody the essence of an individual. Working from his own preparatory photographs of family and close friends, a fertile foundation for imbued affection, White crops his figurative compositions in a style similar to that of photographer Bill Brandt, enabling the artists to both approach abstraction and capture those ephemeral moments of supposed privacy. Existing as often enlarged interpretations, White addresses an underlying tension between the artist and their subject, employing the aforementioned amplified scale alongside thick, indulgent areas of impasto and impassioned, expressive mark-making. Concurrently, through his refined representational proficiency and painterly precision White injects each artwork with immediacy and impermanence, cutting to the core of the sitter and making transient memories timeless or fleeting feelings unfading.



Ellen Antico, Closer, 2020. Oil on canvas, 116 x 110 cm, unique.





Hannah KNOX, Hawaiian Shirt: Turquoise Florals, 2022. Oil on linen, 70 x 55 cm, unique.



Tom WHITE, Holiday Toes, 2022. Oil on canvas, 50 x 40 cm, unique. © Ollo Weguelin.

*The exhibition will be complemented by a conversation between the artists in June.*

**Abstraction and Daydreaming opens on Tuesday 26 April 2022 and will be on display at Quo Vadis, Soho, until Monday 25 July 2022.**

# About the artists

Hannah Knox works primarily in the media of painting and installation, using a variety of materials. She completed an MA in painting at the Royal College of Art in 2007 and has since then been interviewed in publications such as Huffington post, Studio International and Hyperallergic. Knox has also lectured in painting at numerous institutions such as the Chelsea School of Art, Oxford Brookes University and UCA Canterbury, and her paintings are part of many private collections internationally - including the Fidelity Art Collection and the Government Art Collection. Her recent exhibitions are A Mark Extended at Wasserman Projects, Detroit (2021); Greetings From Miami at Hashimoto Contemporary, New York (2020); solo exhibitions - Tempur, CSM Project Space, London (2015) - and group exhibitions such as Autocatalytic future games, No Format, London (2015), to name a few. Knox's upcoming solo shows this year are scheduled at Four You Gallery and Frans Kasl Projects.

Ellen Antico is based in Berlin and works primarily in the medium of painting. She completed a BA in Fine Art at the University of the Arts London in 2019. Antico's work has been shown at Every Woman Biennial, London (2021), as well as the exhibition TOTAL RECALL at the Galerie Burster, Berlin.

Tom White is a painter based in London. He completed an MA in Fine Art at Camberwell College, University of Arts London in 2021. That same year White undertook an artist residency at Blue Shop Cottage AMASSA Residency, Maroux, France. His work also featured in multiple publications, such as The Sunday Times Culture, Country & Town House, and Create Magazine throughout 2021. White's recent exhibitions include ASSEMBLE, VO Curations, London (2022); London Grads Now. 21, Saatchi Gallery, London (2021); Under The Same Sky, Safehouse 1, London (2021); Dix Artistes, St Clar (2021); UNMUTE, Copeland Gallery, London (2021).

# About Quo Vadis

Beyond the great edifice of Quo Vadis is a historic Soho restaurant and members' club with a colourful past and a timeless allure.

Formerly a brothel and a home to Karl Marx, the Great Dame of Dean Street continues to draw an eclectic and epicurean crowd, attracted to the good things in life.

The restaurants serve seasonal, regional British fare, with a menu conjured up by Jeremy Lee and his team.

An exuberant private members' club, with two bars and its own restaurant, meets every requirement from dusk until dawn.

Quo Vadis also boasts three handsome private dining rooms, both beautifully appointed and very well attended to.

# About Roman Road

Roman Road, founded by Marisa Bellani in 2013, grew organically from a project space to a gallery through establishing itself as a space of reference for contemporary art and photography. Located in London, Roman Road has recently redefined itself with a more fluid and cooperative approach, becoming a platform for collaborative exhibitions since the end of 2019. In 2017 Roman Road also added a research cell and an online journal to its activities in order to expand its horizons and to share with its audience information and knowledge that would go beyond art. The gallery has established a qualitative programme of around ten shows annually, including participations at notable international art fairs. Over the years, Roman Road has represented a talented roster of artists, among which Antony Cairns and Alix Marie, who have also seen their works exhibited in such institutions as Tate Modern, Stedelijk Museum and Musée des beaux-arts Le Locle. Since its marked shift to a collaborative platform, Roman Road supports young artists in expanding their careers and further learning to put together an exhibition and take the opportunity to push their practice further.

## *Contacts*

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