

## Cross Lane Projects at Vestry Street, London

presented by Rebecca Scott and Mark Woods

### Tableaux II: Painting as Stage

curated by Dereck Harris

Exhibition runs from **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April – Sat 4<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

Opening Hours: **Thursday / Friday/ Saturday: 12pm – 5pm**

**PV: Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 6-8pm**

**Talk Event: Thurs 2nd May (6-9pm)**

Artists: Emilly Allchurch (TBC); Peter Ashton Jones; Louise Bristow; Chris Bucklow; Noemi Conan; Dan Coombs; Mick Finch; Dereck Harris; Glenys Johnson; Alison Jones (TBC); Neil Tait; Stella Whalley

This proposal is for a group exhibition including ten painters, all of whom work in a figurative mode and utilise a stage-like space or Tableau. They all construct the pictorial space of a theatre with a central stage and feature spatial plains that are parallel to the surface of the canvas. These plains echo the space in which the viewer stands and present a parallel world where the characters portrayed appear absorbed in their own drama.

The Tableau is a device used throughout the history of painting as a form of display, often bearing the look of a constructed theatrical arrangement; an artificial space, but one which evokes the idea of a reflected world, where the audience is implicated or even has a role to play.

Manet's painting *A Bar at the Folies-Bergeres* is a wonderful example of all of this at play, as the male customer who is shown approaching the Bar is reflected in the mirror behind the Barmaid, who stares blankly out at the viewer. We partially assume the role of customer as we approach the painting surface and as the Courtauld website explains....

*Manet has shifted the reflection to the right. The bottles on the left are similarly misaligned in the mirror. This play of reflections emphasises the disorienting atmosphere of the bustling Folies-Bergere. In A Bar at the Folie-Bergere, Manet created a complex, absorbing composition and one of the iconic paintings of modern life.*

Each of the painters in this proposal uses the convention of the Tableau as an entry point for their own thoughtful reflections on the political, the personal, the imaginary, or the philosophical mythopoeic residue of lived experience.