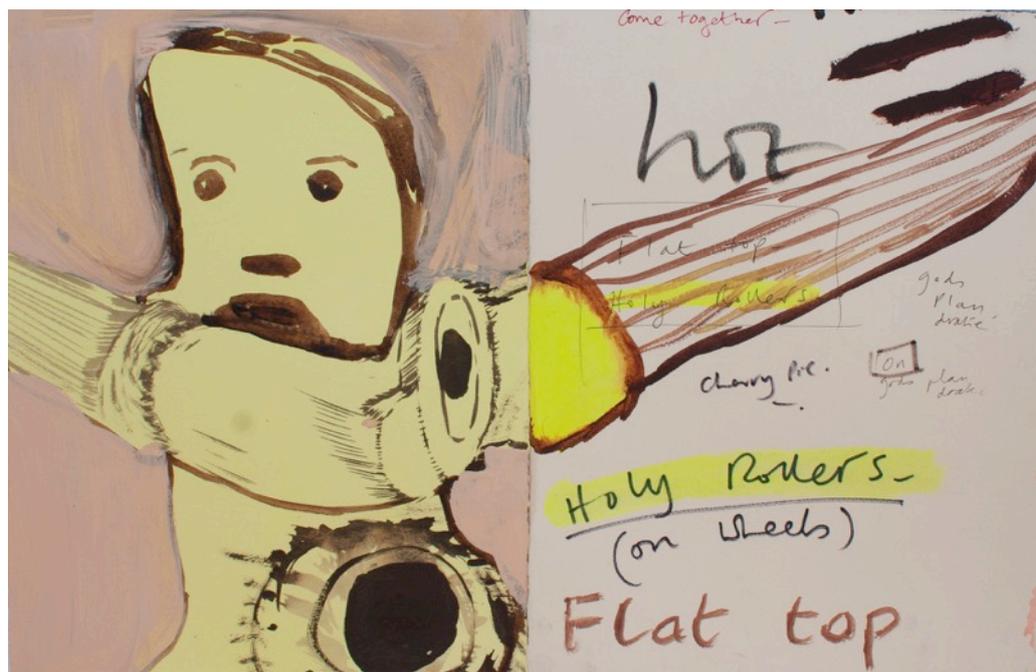


Press Release

Simon English *Smile Please*

Works on paper and sculptures, 2014-2018.

21 July – 22 September 2018. Private view, Saturday 21 July, 6:00pm – 8:00pm.



PEER presents *Smile Please*, a significant new body of 'painted drawings' by **Simon English**, accompanied by other recent works on paper and rarely seen sculptural assemblages created by the artist between 2014 and 2018.

English's prolific practice is primarily drawing based. Using ink, pen, graphite and watercolour, he pairs, sequences and arranges these drawings in grids often comprising more than 100 works on a single wall. This regular and rational arrangement gives order to what is an overwhelming, changing, seemingly diaristic, kaleidoscope on the artist's psyche. Gay culture, pop music, love, loss and recovery are key thematic threads in English's work though spontaneity and action remain, and a giving over of himself to the blank page.

English has created a range of graphic languages, from intricate line drawings of imagined botanicals, to anamorphic cartoon-like people, creatures and buildings that mutate into fantastic, sensual or homoerotic entities. Detail and clarity is weighed against other passages in English's work that are loosely drawn and roughly painted, where colour is washed and gesturally dripped over large areas of paper.

Writing infiltrates much of English's work, as interior monologues, doodles from phone conversations, confessions, snippets from overheard conversations, lyrics from songs on the radio, and incidental soundbites from popular culture. By the compulsive act of making, English confronts and works through profound personal experience. The title of the exhibition, *Smile Please*, is taken from a written element of one drawing and is at once both a banal and heartfelt expression.

Although English's drawings have been widely exhibited since the early 1990s, he only began making sculptural installations in 2014 and *Smile Please* is the first UK presentation of a new large-scale sculptural installation. PEER's street window will be transformed into a huge vitrine displaying assemblages created from discarded materials collected on English's many walks around London. Some works are simply re-contextualised detritus, others have a more intentional grandeur. Like the drawings, the temperaments of these works fluctuate, but exhibited collectively they exude a playfulness and pure enjoyment at the re-purposing and re-animating of the discarded.

In March 2018, the artist's new book, *SIMON ENGLISH: my big self decoy justin beiber*, was launched in the UK by Black Dog Publishing, with contributions from Sally O'Reilly, Laurence Scott and Hendrick Jackson & Verena Stauffer. Paperback, 160pp, price £24.95.

For further information, images and interview requests please contact Janette Scott Arts PR on janette@janettescottartspr.com or 07966 486156.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Smile Please by Simon English, 21 July – 22 September 2018, **PEER**, 97/99 Hoxton Street, London N1 6QL. Opening hours: Wednesday – Saturday, 12:00pm – 6:00pm. Free admission. Telephone 020 7739 8080. www.peeruk.org

Simon English lives and works in London. He emerged on the London art scene in 1994 with an exhibition of paintings at Saatchi Gallery as part of Young British Art III. He has become best known for his large and small-scale works on paper, often described as painted drawings. He has exhibited internationally at The Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen, Denmark; Musee D'Art Contemporaine de Val de Marne (MAC VAL), Paris France; Arken Museum of Modern Art, Denmark; The Aldrich Museum, Connecticut, U.S.A; Sammlung Essl, Vienna, Austria; Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg, Germany; Paisley Museum and Art Galleries, Scotland; Le Musee de Cagnes Sur Mer, France; The New Art Gallery, Walsall, and Tate Britain, London, England; Kunsthal KAdE, Amersfoort, The Netherlands; Galerie Delacroix, French Institute, Tangiers, Morocco; and Galerie du Jour Agnes B, Paris, France. English is represented by Volker Diehl, Diehl, Berlin, Germany. www.simonenglish.com

PEER is an arts organisation that has commissioned and presented more than a hundred exhibitions, publications, events and public realm projects over nearly 20 years. Based in Shoreditch since 1999 and on Hoxton's High Street since 2002, its core ethos is to engage the widest possible audiences by offering high quality art as part of daily life. PEER has done this through its ambitious programme of projects with many celebrated artists such as Fiona Banner, Martin Creed, Siobhan Hapaska, Anthony McCall, Bob & Roberta Smith, and Danh Vo, amongst others. PEER offers both emerging and established artists the opportunity to test bold ideas in an intimate environment that stimulates experimentation and dialogue. PEER completed a major capital project in April 2016, reopening with a new façade, renovated galleries and a re-landscaped surrounding public realm with public artworks by Chris Ofili and London Fieldworks.

www.peeruk.org



SUPPORTED BY THE PAUL & LOUISE COOKE ENDOWMENT

Image: *Flat Top Rollers*, Simon English, 2018.